Meeting, April 2004

Tuesday, April 6th 4:00PM                   Student
Commons Forum Room

Agenda

I. Minutes of March Meeting
II. President's Report
III. Action Items:
   Nominating Committee Report/Elections
   Faculty Member on Board of Visitors
   Resolution re: Domestic Partner Benefits
   Data Policy

IV. Presentations/reports:
   Master Site Plan -- Dr. Trani
   NCAA Report -- Dr. Daniels

V. For Presentation 4/6 and action on 5/4:
   Leadership Guidelines; Standing Rules
      -- Dr. Simons
   Research Personnel Policy
   Faculty Handbook -- Dr. Brodd

Minutes of the April 6, 2004 Meeting

Present: Abell, Abbott, Adera (Marilyn Buzzard as alternate), Anderson, Andrews, Beardsley, Bogacki, Boothby, Briceland, Brookman, G. Brophy, Carpenter, Certosimo, Cooper, Corey, Cramer, Cummins, Dent, Dery, Dewey, Donnell, Guidarelli, Hague, Harvie, Holmes, Iuorno (Ana Ingroff as alternate), Jeter, Johnson, Kester, Kinney, Korzun, Lamb, Lewis, Mays, McCain, McCreary, McDonough, McMahon (Pidcoe as alternate) McVoy, Munoz, Murphy-Judy, Nicholson, Pitts,
President Judy Lewis called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

1. The minutes of the March 2nd meeting were amended to add Bob Andrews’ proposal concerning the domestic partner benefits initiative and then approved.

2. President Lewis reported on the following…

   --The Student-Centered University Committee will meet on April 7th to summarize the findings of their focus groups.

   --A Faculty Senate of Virginia proposal concerning domestic partner benefits was distributed and Lewis announced that the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate of Virginia were being reviewed. The FSVA will meet April 24th at Sweetbriar College and VCU may send up to four representatives.

   --President Lewis opened the floor for nominations for the five names to be submitted to the Board of Visitors for their selection of a faculty representative on the Board next year. Judy Lewis, Dan Ream, Bob Andrews, Dianne Simons, and Wes Poynor were nominated and unanimously elected.

3. The Domestic Partner Benefits proposal was discussed. A motion was made that a secret ballot be used for voting. The parliamentarian reported that Senate bylaws were unclear about the use of secret ballots. A vote was taken about using a secret ballot and the motion was defeated. Pros and cons of the proposal were discussed. Bob Andrews suggested an alternate proposal in which each faculty member could choose a partner to receive benefits. It was noted that only campus-provided benefits, such as recreational facility access, are currently affected by this proposal and that health benefits, provided by the state, cannot be included. The proposal, which reads as follows, was passed by a majority vote.

   **Resolution**
Whereas, Virginia Commonwealth University has a non-discrimination policy that includes the prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation;
Whereas, Virginia Commonwealth University excludes employees in same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partnerships from certain benefits to which legally married employees have access;
Whereas, several of Virginia Commonwealth University’s peer institutions and universities and colleges in the Commonwealth of Virginia provide domestic partnership benefits;
Whereas, Virginia Commonwealth University is interested in recruiting and retaining the highest quality employees regardless of their marital status or sexual orientation;
Whereas, Virginia Commonwealth University promotes itself as a university that is welcoming to diverse groups of students, faculty and staff;
Whereas, the Faculty Senate believes the lack of domestic partner benefits is inequitable and not in keeping with the university’s non-discrimination policy;

The Faculty Senate therefore resolves that the university administration work with the members of the Board of Visitors and Faculty Senate of Virginia Commonwealth University to develop policies to provide domestic partnership benefits for both same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners.

The Faculty Senate further resolves that these policies should be established by the end of the 2004-2005 academic year.

4. **The Research Data Policy** was discussed once again. It was noted that the Senate has now reviewed this document for three years without closure. The term “ownership” was discussed at length.

**Wes Poynor proposed an amendment** to change the following wording in the Research Data Policy.

In the first paragraph, “exercise ownership rights and responsibilities” should change to “exercise their rights and responsibilities”.

In the second paragraph, the phrase "Ownership of original research records are essential" should read "The acquisition of, custody of, retention of, and access to original research records are essential".
On the last page of the policy, “research data belong to the university” should change to “research data derived solely from federal funding belong to the university”.

The Data Research Policy as amended by Wes Poynor was approved by majority vote.

5. President Trani presented the university master building plan through the year 2020. Associate Vice-President Brian Ohlinger will place master plan information on the VCU website.

6. Dr. Ken Daniels of the VCU School of Business gave a presentation on NCAA compliance and certification, which the NCAA will be doing next week. Daniels noted that athletes’ grades at VCU are not significantly different than average for VCU students. The athlete graduation rate is approximately 40% over the past five years. Dianne Simons reported attending a presentation on academic support services for athletes which she recommended be repeated for the Senate. Daniels also noted that basketball is the only sport at VCU that generates income—all others lose money.

7. President Lewis noted that the following items will be on the May meeting agenda:

---Leadership Guidelines and Standing Rules revisions will be discussed and voted on—including a change in attendance regulations.

---The Research Personnel Policy will be voted on in May.

---The revisions of the VCU Faculty Handbook will be voted on for approval.

Specific changes noted by Vice-Provost Donna Brodd include a requirement for faculty to submit transcripts to the Board of Visitors and all faculty must have course syllabi. The new Faculty Handbook will be published electronically only.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Dan Ream, Secretary

Posted by Neil W. Henry