Faculty Senate Meeting

October 3, 2006
Forum Room (Student Commons, MPC)

Present: Andrews, Beck, Black, Bostic (ALT), Boyle, Bradner, Briceland, Brookman, Bukaveckas, Burch, Canfield, Cooper, Churn, Coggins, Cotter, Donnell, Dupree, Fauri, Dukat, Ellington, Elmore, Elsea, Essah, Farmer, Getty, Gordon, Gongora, Green, Grimes, Johnson, R. Johnson (ALT), Klenke, Lafazani, Lewis, Martin, Masho, McDonnough, Miller, Murphy-Judy, Perberdy, Philipsen, Pitts, Poynor (ALT), Price, Quillan, Ratz, Ream, Reardon, Richardson, Robnolt, Secret, Selinger, Simons, Sirica, Smith, Spede, Spindle, Straus, Sterling, Street, Szari, Taxman, Wenger, Wooldridge, Salyer (ALT), Kuhn (ALT).

Absent: Betzhold (EXC), Corey (EXC), Cummins (EXC), Deanda, Fernandez-Ward, Grizzard, Hope (EXC), Huband (EXC), Ingroff, Kester, Lampert, Lebman, Mills, Nichols, Sherman, Tepper

Agenda

President Murphy-Judy called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes from September (awaiting approval—see Blackboard)
2. Dr. Rodriguez on Honor System Draft: The next University Council meeting is 10/19. If they can’t reach a full vote on the draft, then they’ll push it back to the Nov. meeting. The Board of Visitors need a completed draft by their February meeting, so time is of the essence.

   Senator Briceland distributed a handout that detailed concerns with the draft as it currently stands. Senator Briceland is part of an ad hoc committee that met several times over the spring and summer to address the Honor System and many of this committee’s major concerns were incorporated into the present version of the Draft. However, Senator Briceland has outlined for us some concerns that still exist. The Senate discussed some of these concerns in great detail. One issue is who the document is intended to speak to (faculty or students). It was discussed that mostly faculty would be reading this document, so the issue of audience remains with the current draft. Secondly, the Academic Integrity Officer’s roles and responsibilities are not clearly outlined in the current draft. One idea put forth is that faculty who file cases should be
contacted for their input on how the system has worked (faculty input into this process is a key issue for many Senators). Another issue of major concern is the lack of a provision for regular review of the Honor System (every 3 years, every 5 years). Past President Lewis noted that the policy was articulated but that procedures were less so, such that procedures might be easily changed without faculty oversight. Senator Briceland suggested there be a faculty “observer” of this system in action. Senator Simons then asked for comments, and there was a partial consensus that the Honor System Draft is much improved from the last time Senate saw it. Dr. Rodriguez noted that there was an effort to streamline the process for dealing with Honors violations and also noted that it is difficult to determine possible outcomes of the System’s revision based on the document design. He also reaffirmed his idea that the Honor System guidelines should be an educational tool. Many Senators expressed concern over the fact that Faculty Senate approval is not part of the “overall approval process.” Senator Briceland then made a motion that stated that Faculty Senate could not give its full support of this Draft if the provisions outlined in his document were not met. All senators voted “yes” to this motion. Senator Turner then made a motion to make a provision for Faculty Senate approval of the revised Draft before it moves to University Council. All senators present voted “yes” to this motion. Senator Lewis then made a motion to approve the Honor Code as amended “in spirit” by Dr. Briceland. All senators voted “yes” to this motion. Dr. Rodriguez then stated that these concerns would be incorporated into the University Council meeting. Another idea was also mentioned: the subcommittee could work on these issues, and if the revised Draft is not acceptable, then faculty can raise this issue at the University Council and Board of Visitors meetings.

3. Allison Weinstein (www.voteNOva.org): The “so-called marriage amendment” should be widely opposed by faculty because it will destroy our chances at gaining partner benefits (even for unmarried straight couples). If this amendment passes, it’ll hurt our opportunities for attracting and retaining some very good faculty. We will also lose our hard-earned benefits that we’ve already gained for partners (gym use, etc.). Senators were given pamphlets and flyers outlining the problems with this issue. It was noted that there will be a student rally on October 24 at 4pm and suggested that Faculty Senate might align with AAUP in raising awareness about this issue.

5. John Bennett on ORP issues: (see handouts and HR website). John Bennett spoke to Senate in response to Senator Morgan’s concerns about faculty choices concerning their own investments. Mr. Bennett is part of a committee (that includes Senator Pitts) that oversees these investments and that approves funds for faculty
choice. The goal is to have at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of this committee be faculty members. This committee operates under ERISA guidelines, and has a fiduciary responsibility to provide funds w/ minimal risk. One proposal Mr. Bennett suggested was to have faculty nominate funds that they’re interested in and then the committee will see if these funds “work out” over time (if they’re viable w/ minimal risk). Mr. Bennett also outlined their commitment to investor education (they are on campus twice a month) and he asked for our help spreading the word about investor seminars and help sessions. There was a concern over high-yield funds, and “volatile” funds (i.e. shouldn’t we be able to choose high-yield or “volatile” finds at our own risk?) and then the question was raised of who would take responsibility if there was a major loss due to investing in such funds. Senator Lewis suggested there be an annual newsletter outlining issues with investments and giving information. Another Senator mentioned that the lack of “socially responsible” funds was an issue, and Mr. Bennett replied that their primary concern is risk/return criteria. Staff Senate President LaForest Williams asked Mr. Bennett to attend a Staff Senate meeting.

5. **LaForest Williams, Staff Senate President** :Ms. Williams discussed the importance of Faculty Senate’s collaboration with Staff Senate. She also discussed Staff Senate’s proposal to have one of their members be represented on the Board of Visitors. Virginia Tech has already done this. There was a motion to support Staff Senate’s proposal for representation at the Board of Visitors and all Senators voted “yes” to this motion. Ms. Williams was happy to report that Staff Senate was at 100% membership and that they’ve raised quite a bit of money ($10,000, $6000 going to scholarships). Ms. Williams reminded Faculty Senators to please support staff when they need to attend Staff Senate meetings. President Murphy-Judy added that time at Staff Senate meetings should be considered part of the work day. **Visit the Staff Senate website!**

www.vcu.edu/staffsenate/ The Faculty Senate would like to thank Ms. Williams and Ms. Mooney, the Vice-President of Staff Senate who had to leave early, for coming to the meeting and speaking with the Faculty Senate.

6. **Wes Poynor report on Grievance Panel**: Senator Poynor is the chair of the University Grievance Panel. Their main goal is to resolve problems. Check out the website: http://www.vcu.edu/provost/univ_policies/facgriev.htm (The links at the top of the page don’t work, so you need to scroll down the page to read a certain section). When there is a problem, the next person “up the ladder” usually mediates the problem. From the Grievance Procedure Document:

This grievance procedure does not circumvent established administrative channels.
Thus any complaint concerning any condition that is believed to be detrimental to the complainant's professional development or personal well-being shall first be directed in writing as described below:

1. Type I - Grievances concerning salary issues, nonrenewal of nontenured faculty, or promotion or tenure issues not covered by the FACULTY PROMOTION AND TENURE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

   In the informal stage, complaints should be directed to the appellant's chairperson who will review the merits of the complaint and pass a recommendation on to the school dean or other appropriate administrator for reconsideration. At each step of this review, the complainant will have an opportunity to explain the complaint in writing or in person, at his or her option, to the appropriate administrative officials.

2. Type II - Grievances other than those concerning salary, nonrenewal of nontenured faculty, promotion or tenure.
   a. Complaints against a member of the complainant's department shall be explained to the department chairperson. When the complaint is against the chairperson it shall be explained to the dean of the school.
   b. Complaints against a member or chairperson in the complainant's school, but not a member of the complainant's department, shall be explained to the dean of the school.
   c. Complaints against a member of another school shall be explained to the deans of the schools involved.
   d. Complaints against an administrator shall be explained to the next higher administrator.

There are more details where that came from, so check out the entire document. Donna Brodd is coming to talk to Senate about what she does in her position. Senator Turner raised the question of the possibility for a group grievance. Senator Poynor said that there couldn’t be a group grievance, but an individual might be able to file a complaint on behalf of a group concern.

7. **Liz Canfield:**
   a. The Blog and the BB site: We have both (Folks can get to the blog from the FS website). The blog is still being worked on. Liz is trying to figure out how to “brand” it. Right now it’s an amazing orange.
Minutes and other important information will be posted on the blog. Minutes will also be posted on the FS Blackboard site. If you are not on the Bb site, please email Liz Canfield at ercanfield@vcu.edu

b. Climate Survey: Underway—Early October
c. Telecomm’ed meeting—Coming in December. Check the blog for details!

8. **Discussion of finding means for Faculty Senate to represent A&P faculty and adjunct faculty:** These folks have little/no say in what goes on at the University. President Murphy-Judy charged the Academic/Professional Status Committee to look into viable ways to represent both groups, provided they want representation.

9. **Committee and East/West campus reports (if any)**—There were no reports.

10. **Upcoming meetings:**
   a. Frank Macrina in November about CP1 and CP2 (conflict of interest)
   b. ICF (Christopher Burnette)
   c. Classroom Technology report by Dan Ream

11. **Upcoming Events:**
   a. Fall Fest, Oct. 13-15
   b. Advocacy day, January 11, 2007
   c. Intercultural Festival (spring, 2007)
   d. Board of Visitors November 15-16