Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, September 30, 2014, 4-6 p.m. Court End Ballroom, Larrick Student Center, MCV

Attendance:

Present  Alcaine(EDU alt for Robnolt), Alford(ARTS), Alvarez(HAS), Andrews(BUS), Baranoff(BUS), Bedell(StAff), Brookman(SOM), Brown(NUR), Carroll(SOM), Chen(EDU), Chestnut(HAS), Colello(SOM), Crislip(HAS), Davis(VCU-L), DeAngelis(ARTS), Dragoscu(SOM alt for Bachmann), Easley(ARTS), Falyar(AHP), Fauri(SWK), Fortney (UC alt for Cates), Freyer(ARTS), Gaphery(VCU-L), Goerzig(WS alt for Artello), Harrison(HAS), Honnold(HAS), Hylton-Gravatt(PHA), Israel(ARTS), Jallo(NUR), Kaziewicz(UC), Lee(BUS), Listort(SOM), McVoy(SOM), Nicholson(HAS), O'Connell(SOM), Octave(DEN), O'Neal(RetFac), Ottens(SOM), Patton(ARTS), Pellegrini(DEN), Puri(SOM), Rapchick (StAff), Ratliff(SOM), Rector(HAS), Rhodes(EDU), Rodriguez(HAS), Saladino(HAS), Secret(SWK), Seinfeld(SOM), Street(HAS), Totah(HAS), Vijayakumar(BUS), Wagner(AHP), Wayne(EGR), Wickham(SOM), Wike(SWK alt for Conlon), Wise(SOM alt for Sabik), Xu(EDU),

Absent  Coble(DEN excused), Dodson(SOM), Gannaway(SOM), Hobgood(SOM), Jones(SOM), LaRose(SOM), Marinello(SOM), Morgan(PHA), Parsons(SOM), Shriar(WS), Sims(HAS), Smith(BUS), Smith(UC), Weaver(SOM), Zhang(EGR)

Procedural Matters: President June Nicholson called the meeting to order at 4 p.m. and reviewed the agenda. Minutes were reviewed and approved.

Guests: Remarks and Q and A by Dr. Michael Rao and Dr. Sheldon Retchin:

President Rao thanked President Nicholson and noted that, through many conversations with her and Senator Fauri and other faculty senators, he is aware of issues that are of concern to faculty. President Rao made the following points:

• We have made much progress on the goals of the Quest for Distinction, and now, given the current fiscal situation, we are reviewing how to go forward with Quest given the constraints of existing resources
• Interim Provost Wiencek will be convening a group to review Quest goals for the next couple of years, mindful that the focus needs to remain on student success and that the heart of student success is the faculty
• Budget issues are major; we have not had the kind of fiscal latitude to be as competitive as we need to be to retain tenured and tenure-track faculty; there is continued concern about balance of adjunct to tenure-track faculty
• A comprehensive compensation study is underway; part of the goal of the study is to consider HR policies and the distribution of resources in a way that will improve compensation, especially to ensure faculty retention
• The university challenge is to match resources with our vision; this is difficult to do given the current incremental budget system i.e. resources go to existing expenses with additional yearly add-ons if available rather than being distributed based on a careful review of what is needed to meet university and program goals -- including increased faculty compensation
• We are moving toward a new budget model that allocates resources to identified needs rather than to where they have always gone historically; this new budget model will help pave the way for faculty salary increases and other budget priorities
• Questions from faculty:
  Q =  How long will it take to implement the new budget model?
      A =  3 years for full implementation, over the course of 3 phases
  Q=  Will there be tuition increases?
      A =  hopefully tuition increases will not be necessary, but we cannot know for sure because of the need to manage some basic expenses that have automatic increases (health care costs, VRS), no matter what we do to manage expenses
  Q =  What are our plans to recruit and retain minority faculty? AA faculty continue to decline
A lack of adequate numbers of minority faculty is university-wide concern, especially given the mismatch between student body and faculty; we need more information about why some faculty leave and ways to become more aggressive, proactive and creative in our search and recruitment process as well as identifying some incentives for different recruitment models.

- Other discussion points:
  - We have worked hard to develop good relationships between administration and faculty and want to maintain and grow these relationships; shared governance is one way to do this
  - We have devoted startup money to cluster hires
  - The university priority is to increase compensation for the current faculty; focus on faculty who are currently at VCU
  - There is continuing concern about faculty members who are leaving the university; despite the surge in excellence hires a couple of years ago, our faculty numbers remain the same

Senior Vice President and CEO of Health Sciences Sheldon Retchin thanked the Faculty Senate for the opportunity to speak, acknowledged the competency of the VCU administrative team and the enormous collaboration between the two Monroe Park and MCV campuses, and complimented President Rao for achieving differential, and advantageous, treatment of VCU for the first time in a fiscal down cycle. Additional comments were:

- Days of double digit tuition increase are over; we need to be more resourceful and aware of the high cost of student debt
- Faculty diversity issues:
  - We have some funds that have been offered to the deans to bring in underrepresented faculty and some of these funds remain unused
  - We will need to continue to use search firms to recruit a diverse faculty but also need to do a better job when we bring recruits in for campus interviews
  - We need to mentor and encourage folks to go into health care and particularly to recruit for people for human health
  - We need to consider recruiting and offering incentives for minority faculty such as training as educational scholars

Faculty expressed concerns/questions for Dr. Retchin about
- Valuing ‘difference’ in all sense of the word
- Considering the possibility of tuition forgiveness and housing packages that are not necessarily compensation.

Dr. Retchin noted the importance of maintaining the spirit of discussion such as this one at Faculty Senate. President Nicholson concurred and thanked President Rao and Senior Vice President and CEO of Health Sciences Retchin for their openness and availability to Faculty Senate. Vice President H. Alford thanked J. Nicholson for her leadership and noted that this is the first time that President Rao and Vice President Retchin have addressed the Faculty Senate jointly.

**Updates:**

- **Faculty senate committee membership:** Vice President Alford noted that the committee membership assignments have been made; each member of the Faculty Senate should now know his/her committee membership; if you do not know your committee membership, please e-mail Alford ASAP

- **VCU Rules and Procedures and Mediation Training:** M. Miller reiterated the need for faculty and staff mediators. Dr. Miller urged anyone who is interested to attend the informational session on Oct 8; a 1 ½ day formal mediator training will follow on Nov 13 and 14.

Dr. Miller also noted that she and Dr. V. Robnolt, former chair of the VCU Grievance Panel, will reviewing the Rules and Procedures policies to expand the scope of the policies beyond students to address policy and procedural violations by faculty and staff. They expect this review to be completed within the next few weeks. The Integrity and Compliance Office oversees compliance with the Code of Conduct.
Faculty Affairs: R. Andrews reported that this committee remains focused on shared governance and continues to work closely with the Interim Provost J. Wiencek.

Faculty Senate By-Laws: S. Street reported that the Credentials and Rules committee will be working on revising the Senate by-laws and standing rules; please let him know if you are willing to become involved.

Board of Visitors (BOV): Immediate Past President D. Fauri reported that the BOV understands and is sensitive to issues around faculty compensation. Fauri continues to emphasize faculty concerns and implications about receiving compensation in the form of bonuses rather than salary increases.

Several questions were raised from the floor about the BOV’s decision to grant bonuses recently to President Rao and Vice President for Health Sciences and CEO of the Health System Retchin, particularly in light of the current budget cuts. Discussion points:
- BOV has a strong belief that the bonus packages should drive the long-term goals of the university; this is common practice in the corporate world.
- However, there is a problem with corporate model applied to university, especially since the corporate model isn’t being followed in the corporate world.
- Many university administrators are uncomfortable receiving bonuses or raises when faculty do not and often use the money to make contributions to various university scholarship funds.
- If administrators are using their raises to make university contributions, this information should be made public.
- Raises for top administrators, especially during a time when faculty are not receiving raises, creates poor morale among faculty.
- It is important that the issues/concerns about top administrators raises be expressed openly; Interim Provost Wiencek will carry these faculty Senate concerns back to President Rao.
- Faculty Senate Leadership group will continue the discussion about Faculty Senate response to the administrator raises at the next leadership group meeting on October 21; all senators are welcome to attend.

Guest: Wanda Mitchell, Vice president, Inclusive Excellence: Dr. Mitchell noted that inclusive excellence is integral to the university; her division is a resource to provide educational materials to help all units develop initiatives that promote diversity. Also, it is important for the university to enhance the climate of diversity; even if we are successful in recruiting a diverse faculty, without a climate of diversity, we will still have a revolving door with faculty leaving.

The Division of Inclusive Excellence houses 5 offices; Institutional Equity and Education; Americans for Disabilities; Faculty Fellow for Diversity Faculty Research Mentoring; Diversity Education and Retention Initiatives; Diversity Education and LGBTQ. Key initiatives focus on diversity-centered leadership and professional development programs for faculty, staff and students; programs to foster inclusive teaching pedagogies (such as managing classroom discussions on diversity topics and the appreciation of differences); intergroup dialogue programs to address difficult issues; and special incentives to entice and recognize the infusion of diversity into scholarly inquiry. In addition, the Division now has oversight of the Great Place Initiative.

Dr. Mitchell invited up to five members of the VCU Faculty Senate to a workshop next Wednesday, October 22, from noon-2:30 pm, on Unconscious Bias and Micro-aggression; alternate times are 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

President’s Report: President Nicholson reminded everyone of the upcoming Higher Education Advocacy Day in January 2015, noted that D. Fauri will be developing a report to BOV for their December meeting, and thanked Dr. Wiencek for attending Faculty Senate meetings and being such a great liaison between faculty and administration.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.
Minutes respectfully submitted by
Mary Secret, PhD
Recording Secretary
October 20, 2014