Meeting Agenda, Tuesday, March 3, 4-6 p.m., Court End Ballroom, Larrick Center, MCV
http://www.vcu.edu/maps/acmap/wm

Attendance:

Present: Alcaine(EDU alt for Xu), Alford(ARTS), Alvarez(HAS), Andrews(BUS), Artello(WS), Bachmann(SOM), Baranoff(BUS), Brookman(SOM), Brown(NUR), Carroll(SOM), Colele(SOM), Conlon(SWK), Crislip(HAS), Davis(VCU-L), Easley(ARTS), Falyar(AHP), Fauri(SWK), Ghaphery(VCU-L), Hargraves(EDU alt for Rhodes), Harrison(HAS), Hodder(SOM alt for Larose), Honnold(HAS), Hylton-Gravatt(PHA), Jallo(NUR), Jones(SOM), Kaziewicz(UC), Lee(BUS), Lister(SOM), McVoy(SOM), Nadpara( PHA alt for Morgan), Nicholson(HAS), O’Connell(SOM), Octave (DEN), O’Neal(Retfac), Ottens(SOM), Patton(ARTS), Pellegrini(DEN), Puri(SOM), Rapchick (StAff), Ratliff(SOM), Rector(HAS), Robnault(EDU), Rodriguez(HAS), Secret(SWK), Seinfeld(SOM), South(HAS), Street(HAS), Totah(HAS), Vijayakumar(BUS alt for Smith), Wagner(AHP), Wayne (EGR), Weatherford(StAff alt for Bedell), White(VCU-L)

Absent: Cates(UC), Chen(EDU), Chestnut(HAS), DeAngelis (ARTS), Dodson(SOM), Freyer(ARTS), Gannaway(SOM), Hobgood(SOM), Israel(ARTS), Marinello(SOM), Parsons(SOM), Sabik (SOM), Saladino(HAS), Shriar(WS), Sims(HAS), Smith(UC), Weaver(SOM), Wickham(SOM), Zhang(EGR)

Procedural Items: President June Nicholson convened the meeting at 4:03. She reviewed the agenda and recommended rearrangement of several items due to scheduling issues of various individuals who were making reports. Minutes of January 27 and February 3 meetings were reviewed and approved.

Nominations Senate Officers 2015-16: D Fauri reported on the Nominating Committee recommendations for Faculty Senate officers for 2015-2016:
- President – Holly Alford, School of the Arts
- Vice President – Mary Secret, Social Work
- Corresponding Secretary -- Michael McVoy, MCV
- Recording Secretary – Scott Street, Humanities and Sciences
- Monroe Park Representative-- Jennifer Wayne, Engineering
- MCV Campus Representative – in process

This slate will be presented for a vote at the March 31 (April) Faculty Senate meeting. Individuals elected will serve for one year. Nominations from the floor were welcomed and will remain open for one week.

Promotion And Tenure Compensation: Vice Provost for Faculty Recruitment And Retention Dr. Tim Davey reported that his office is considering a recommendation to award promotion increases based on a percentage formula rather than on a flat rate as is the current practice. VCU promotion increases are the lowest in Virginia and have remained at the current level for several years: $1,000 for promotion from instructor to assistant; $1,500 from assistant to associate; and $2,500 from associate to full. UVA and William and Mary use a percentage increase for promotions as do most of our benchmark institutions. Dr. Davey’s office is proposing a 6% increase for each level. The proposal, if passed, would incur additional costs for the university, but the increased costs are expected to be sustainable. The proposal, which is intended to address issues around retention, is now before UBAC (University Budget Advisory
Committee). In response to questions, Dr. Davey noted that: a 6% increase still puts VCU at the lower end of our peer institutions, most of which are at 8 – 10%; the 6% is a viable place to start; adjuncts are not included in the proposal; the details for how the proposal would apply to MCV need to be worked out.

**China Initiative:** M. Brown, Executive Director of the Global Education Office, discussed the China Initiative, which is intended to increase opportunities for knowledge exchange and collaboration between China and VCU. The initiative is expected to double the number of students between VCU and China. Global Education Awards are available to help academic units further establish collaborative programs with institutions in China. We still have limited financial resources to fund student abroad travel and will need to focus on 1) interactions between international students and students here on campus and 2) virtual engagement classrooms that bring new technology to bear on meaningful and sustained classroom interactions. As we go forward with exchanges of faculty and students, we need to be aware of the differences between China and the United States in regard to academic freedom.

**Introduction of New Provost:** President Nicholson introduced and welcomed Dr. Gail Hackett as VCU’s new Provost and VP for Academic Affairs. Dr. Nicholson noted the close collaborative work between the Faculty Senate and the Provost’s office and reminded us of Dr. Hackett’s previous experience as Provost at University of Missouri, Kansas City in leading the strategic planning committee, in initiating programs for student success and diversity, in implementing a new budget model and in supporting online learning.

Provost Hackett commented on that fact that she is in a ‘learning mode’ with regard to VCU’s people, priorities and specifics but is impressed by our progress and success in dealing with promotions and regular salary increases in a short period of time. She acknowledged her long history and deep commitment to shared governance and noted that good administration and faculty relationships are vital for a university to go forward. In response to questions from the floor:

- She views VCU’s as being on a great trajectory as an urban, research, and community-engaged university with a strong commitment to student success; what distinguishes VCU is the culture, palpable energy, collegiality, commitment to students, and faculty and administration working together; she does not see many glaring problems but some areas for improvement.
- Her priorities, in the short run, are to meet and talk to as many people as possible and get to know the university and its facilities. In the long run, getting the budget to align with Quest will shape some of her priorities.
- In relation to new budget model, she is aware, based on her experiences at Missouri-KC, that there are many things to be careful about. In particular, we need to be sure that our budget model fits the goal of the university, especially when connecting revenue generation to units to incentivize goals.
- She understands shared governance to be based on transparency and trust and the willingness to “tell it like it is”.

**Resolutions for Dr. Sheldon Retchin and Dr. John Wieneck:** Vice President H. Alford presented resolutions honoring and thanking Drs. Retchin and Wieneck for their service and leadership (see below). The resolutions were passed unanimously.

**Announcements:** H. Alford encouraged everyone to attend the President’s Town Hall session on reaffirming VCU’s Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion. She thanked those who worked on the Faculty
Senate resolution concerning The Decline In Black Faculty and noted that Dr. Rao did charge his senior administration to take action. In addition, a task force, co-chaired by former university president Eugene Trani and Vice Provost for Inclusive Excellence Wanda Mitchell, has been formed to study the decline in black student enrollment and recommend ways to increase diversity at the institution.

Greg Weatherford (alternate) shared information about academic opportunities for VCU students based on the upcoming UCI Bike race, on behalf of the Division of Community Engagement. Faculty are encouraged to become involved by developing special topic courses, participating in the Great VCU Bike Race Book, or incorporating bike race involvement in existing courses. See Faculty Senate website for more information http://www.facultysenate.vcu.edu/2015/03/04/richmond-2015-bicycle-race-course-credit-options/

**Academic and Professional Status Committee Shared Governance Resolution:** A. Lee introduced a resolution for the Provost and the Vice President for Health Sciences to adopt the requirement that shared governance related data be developed and entered into WEAVE. This resolution will be presented for a vote at the March 31 (April) Faculty Senate meeting. Dr. Lee reviewed the working definition of Shared Governance and the WEAVE system as a place for Shared Governance data (see Faculty Senate website) and provided documents to support the resolution. Questions (Q) and answers (A) from the floor included:

- Q = who would enter the information into WEAVE; A = shared governance data will be part of annual report by the administrative unit
- Q = what is the status of the Focus Quest task group recommendation that shared governance be included in Quest; A (by Provost Wiencek) = the Administrative cabinet appreciated the concern about shared governance, but did not think it rose to the level of inclusion in the strategic planning document; however, they received much feedback on this and will consider it further before the document goes forward to the BOV.
- Q = is it really possible to quantify shared governance; A = operational definitions and ways to measure shared governance will occur at the unit level with consistency across units to be addressed
- Q = how will units be held accountable for developing and acting on shared governance data and who will monitor these processes and outcomes; A (by Provost Hackett) = it is a requirement of administration to ensure that WEAVE documents are in place and to work with deans and chairs in properly executing the documents; the onus of this responsibility is at the provost office

Other discussion points:

- The resolution is an attempt to institutionalize shared governance at the university level
- There are many different opinions about the interpretation of shared governance and the WEAVE resolution could be the first step in starting the conversation that will result in some common understanding
- The School of Dentistry is a model for communication and shared governance
- It should be required that all units post their by-laws
- Support for shared governance needs to be at the top levels of administration
- The resolution now reads that the Provost consider using WEAVE as one way to promote shared governance; she may propose other solutions in response to the resolution
- University Council is now studying shared governance and looking for structure for oversight of shared governance
• Should we have a structure that allows for groups of faculty to file grievances to be included in the current Grievance policy

**Course evaluations:** K. Artello asked for a discussion about issues and concerns around student course evaluations. Concerns were raised about: the ways that some department chairs use the course evaluation data; the fact that there are questions on the course evaluation that hold instructors accountable for factors over which they have no control; research on student course evaluations show that some student evaluations are based on demographics (i.e. white males are typically rated higher than other demographics) and that there is a strong correlation between high grades and positive evaluations. Faculty have a responsibility to demonstrate how students learn that goes beyond student course evaluations. Faculty Senate will continue this conversation.

**BOV Update:** President Nicholson noted that D. Fauri, Faculty Senate representative to the BOV, did an excellent job of providing information about shared governance and details and context of the Senate-approved resolution regarding the decline of black faculty at VCU.

**Spring 2015 Senate Elections:** President J. Nicholson encouraged every unit to have a system in place for getting Faculty Senate information back to their units. She noted that this was an important time for current Senators to help their colleagues become aware of the work that Faculty Senate does because elections to Faculty Senate would be occurring soon.

**President’s Report:** President J. Nicholson thanked Provost Hackett for her participation in the meeting and noted that Faculty Senators all look forward to working with her.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Mary Secret, PhD  
Recording Secretary  
March 13, 2015