Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, 1 December 2015 4:00–6:00 PM, MCV Campus, Larrick Center, Court End Ballroom
http://www.maps.vcu.edu/mcv/larrickcenter/

Attendance:
Present:  Alcaine (EDU, Alt. for Robnolt), Alford (ARTS), Alvarez (HAS), Artello (WS), Baranoff (BUS), Bodnar-Doren (HAS), Boyes (HNR), Brookman (SOM), Brown (NUR), Carroll (SOM), Chen (EDU), Coe (DEN), Coogle (AHP, Alt. for Jamerson), Cummins (HAS), Daugherity (HAS), Davis (VCU-L), Franzak (BUS, Alt. for Smith), Fraser (SWK), Freyer (ARTS), Gaphery (VCU-L), Hargraves (EDU), Harrison (HAS), Hsu (SOM), Hylton-Gravatt (PHA), Jallo (NUR), Kaziewicz (UC), Kidd (SOM), LaRose (SOM), Le (SOM), Lee (BUS), Lister (SOM), Lodge (UC), McVoy (SOM), Nicholson (HAS), O'Neal (RetFac), Octave (DEN), Ottens (SOM), Patton (ARTS), Pellegrini (DEN), Ratliff (SOM), Rector (HAS), Rodriguez (HAS), Saladino (HAS), Samso (SOM), Secret (SWK), Seinfeld (SOM), Shriar (WS), Smith (UC), Street (HAS), Totah (HAS), Wayne (EGR), Weatherford (StAff), Wen (ENG), Westcot (UC, Alt.), White (Webmaster), Xu (EDU), York (SOM), Zhang (EGR)

Absent:  Anthony (HAS), Bedell (StAff), Conlon (SWK), Crislip (HAS), Dawson-Cruz (HAS), DeAngelis (ARTS), Dodson (SOM), Easley (ARTS), Hobgood (SOM), Israel (ARTS), Ogbonna (PHA), Parsons (SOM), Puri (SOM), Sabik (SOM), Vanderbilt (SOM), Wagner (AHP), Zhou (SOM)

Procedural Items:
4:00 PM  Call to Order  Holly Alford

4:02 PM  Minutes of November 3rd meeting  Scott Street
Approved as presented by unanimous vote. Minutes will be posted online at the Faculty Senate website at facultysenate.vcu.edu.

Guest:
4:05 PM  Sustainability Plan  Erin Stanforth
Erin presented a draft of the 2015–2020 VCU Sustainability Plan. Contained therein are helpful hints for reducing waste, community engagement, and recycling. Once the plan is finalized, a copy will be provided to the Faculty Senate for posting at facultysenate.vcu.edu.
Diversity: 4:15 PM  Diversity Discussions  Holly Alford and Mary Secret
Senators were asked to discuss diversity-related issues, and what are things that we Faculty Senators can do to help resolve these issues. Conversations began at the individual tables (3–7 people per table), and then were expanded throughout the room. Some of the items discussed included:

- Required diversity training for all faculty (not just for MCV Campus faculty).
- How do we address diversity issues in our individual departments and/or fields of study?
- We may teach diversity topics in some of our classes, but how do we assess student understanding/learning of these diversity topics?
- Students don’t always speak up when they have issues…they typically wait to comment through social media instead of at the moment in a face-to-face manner.
- How do we respond to students feeling marginalized in the classroom?
- How do we address faculty feeling marginalized by the students based upon their race and/or gender?
- Faculty will become more attuned to diversity once the faculty become more diverse.
- Faculty Senate could become an “incubator” for growing new faculty from under-represented groups by sponsoring an internship/externship/training program, and this could be co-sponsored with iCubed and the Office of the Provost.

Guest: 5:00 PM  iCubed – http://icubed.vcu.edu/  Dr. Aashir Nasim
Dr. Nasim, Director of the Institute for Inclusion, Inquiry, and Innovation, spoke about iCubed. In iCubed’s first six months, Dr. Nasim has met with many stakeholders across campus, and he is glad to finally be able to meet with the Faculty Senate. He presented the concept for iCubed and stressed that diversity, inclusion, and transformation should be part and parcel of the overall university plan. So far, they’ve received 9 proposals for their programs (multi-school, some community partners, multi-disciplinary), and sponsoring recommendations will be presented to Provost Hackett soon. There followed a Q&A period, and one of the topics discussed was the idea of faculty cluster hiring that Dr. Nasim mentioned in his presentation. More information can be found on the new icubed.vcu.edu website.

Faculty Senate Business: 5:20 PM  President’s Report  Holly Alford
Holly and June have been invited to participate in training on dealing with threat assessment and dealing with micro-aggressions in the classroom. Look for presentations next semester for the full Senate.

VCU’s new capital campaign will start with faculty and staff in the spring. Donors may give to any VCU fund desired. More details next semester.

5:25 PM  Advocacy Day – January 14th  Pat Cummins & Carmen Rodriguez
First Thursday of legislative session (been doing this since 2003). Folks will initially meet at the Theater Row building, then position papers, details, and assignments will be distributed. This event is coordinated with AAUP and Faculty Senate of Virginia. More details will be distributed via email to the Senate membership.
**Guest:**

5:30 PM **Provost’s Report**

Provost Gail Hackett

With a continued recovery in state finances, the state government is looking to increase base funding for higher education, including potential raises for faculty out of that base.

Provost Hackett introduced the newly-hired Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Kathy Bassard (covers basically anything related to personnel, including hiring, P&T, retention, etc.).

President Rao has scheduled a mandatory meeting for his entire senior leadership team (cabinet, deans, provost’s office, etc.) on diversity and inclusion at VCU.

Searches are under way for the Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences (airport interviews during winter break). Finalists for Dean of the School of Education are currently on campus, and it is hoped that a dean will be hired by the start of the new semester.

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5:40 PM **Questions / New Business**

Mary Secret

Alan Lee mentioned his concerns that no time-table has been implemented for formally assessing shared governance annually. In contrast, he is “pleased as punch” that the Provost’s Office is being proactive in obtaining governance documents from the various schools across the university and is working to establish proper governance documents for the schools that lack them.

A faculty member from the new Art Education Ph.D. program (Ryan Patton) brought up a concern that K-12 teachers tend to take many classes during summer. Some universities (e.g. Univ. of GA) have a method to “bank course release time” so that faculty who teach during the summer can have release time during the fall or spring. He was wondering if any other faculty were interested in investigating this further for possible implementation at VCU. A respondent mentioned that summer enrollment drives summer employment currently, so this model might not be of interest or practical use to many departments or programs.

Jimmy Ghaphery gave a brief statement on the availability and usefulness of open-access resources and encouraged faculty to search the term on Google to learn more about the possibilities for participation in open-access resources and what their place may be at VCU. Provost Hackett also mentioned that she has been working with the VCU Librarian, John Ulmschneider) towards progress in this area.

Rosalyn Hargraves mentioned that the Affirmative Action Committee of the Faculty Senate is considering investigating faculty retention and if Black faculty are leaving at a higher rate than faculty of other races/ethnicities. Holly Alford also suggested that exit interviewing should be implemented at VCU so that we can learn more about why faculty are leaving VCU.

Mary Secret then mentioned that a number of departments/units use student evaluations of faculty as a means to assess teaching effectiveness possibly because they are unaware of any other instruments. If anyone is aware of better instruments/methodologies, please tell Mary.

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5:55 PM **Adjournment**

Holly Alford