

Remarks made during the BOV Meeting

Kerry J. Redican

President, Faculty Senate of Virginia Tech

August 27, 2007

Thank you Mr. Rector. Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen.

It is an honor to represent the Faculty again this next year. It is highly unusual for a Senate President to serve two consecutive terms. I'd like to take the opportunity to bring you current as to why I am here making this report and not Valerie Hardcastle. Valerie recently accepted the position of Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Cincinnati. Valerie did share with me that it was an extremely difficult decision to leave Virginia Tech, but it was an opportunity that she couldn't refuse. Valerie would have been an outstanding Faculty Senate President. Newly elected Vice President Hardus Odendaal felt he was not ready to transition to President. He wanted to serve his term as Vice President in order to gain a better understanding of university governance. Immediate past Presidents Sam Easterling and Susanna Rinehart are both still on the Faculty Senate but because of administrative assignments were unable to serve as President this year. Susanna and Sam, like Valerie would have done an outstanding job.

These events left myself as the only officer eligible to serve and I was willing to serve once again this year. It was not a difficult decision: I have the opportunity to once again represent the best and brightest scholars in the world and work with a Board of Visitors and University Administration committed to shared governance. This year should be especially challenging in light of the events of April 16th.

Due to the circumstances and timing of being re-elected President the agenda for the upcoming year is still being defined. However, I do anticipate that the work of the Senate will be focused on the following issues.

1. **Faculty Salary Benchmarking**. There have been some changes in our peer institutions and this has implications for our mutual goals of our salary structure reaching the salary 60th percentile of our peer institutions.
2. **Faculty Club**. President Steger generously provided funding last Spring Semester for refreshments at a weekly "faculty social" - a precursor to an official Faculty Club. These Tuesday afternoon weekly socials were well attended and appreciated. Faculty are eager to have a dedicated space, where they can meet and network.

3. Professors of Practice. We have had previous discussions regarding the 'Professor of Practice.' Because of concerns expressed there is a need for further discussion by both the Faculty Senate and CFA. I anticipate reaching some closure this year.

4. Student Evaluations of Teaching. We expect to see major changes in how faculty are evaluated by students. It is a complex issue and the common form we have been using, Student Perceptions of Instruction (SPOI) is outdated and both the form and protocols for evaluation need revision.

Also, as the year unfolds, we will see other faculty related issues work their way from Commissions and Committees to the Faculty Senate for discussion and support.

I can't emphasize enough how much faculty appreciate your commitment to shared governance. I am looking forward to working to representing my colleagues again this year.

Thank you.

Staff Senate Constituency Report to Virginia Tech Board of Visitors

August 26, 2007

Judy Alford, Staff Senate President

Rector Lutz, members of the Board of Visitors, President Steger, administrators and guests. It is an honor and privilege to speak to you about Virginia Tech's Staff Senate.

The Staff Senate is actively involved in University governance and we are honored to have the opportunity to serve on the many committees and commissions of this great university.

Given our broad scope of responsibility, the Staff Senate has identified certain goals for this year.

- **Promote Diversity:** In an effort to enhance understanding and bring about an appreciation of diversity, the Staff Senate will host a variety of programs and speakers throughout the year that will help with this process. By working with the Multicultural Affairs office we will have the opportunity to expand and enhance our knowledge to achieve this goal. Staff Senate is again this year supporting the Multicultural Faculty & Staff Luncheon.
- The Staff Policies and Affairs commission is working on developing a staff emeritus award and a staff leadership award. The Commission will work with human resources in supporting and educating staff on the guidelines for reporting diversity accomplishments. We will continue to support the Staff Employee of the week program. This program features staff that were nominated for the President's and Governor's award as employee of the week. We have received numerous positive comments about the program from employees and supervisors.
- **Communication:** We will continue to improve communication by working to make staff aware of programs and activities that reinforce the importance of being involved in governance. One of the primary areas of concern will include efforts to reduce confusion on the Staff Senate participation. Some staff are confused as to who belongs to the senate and how one would go about joining staff senate. We are using the website and listservs to better inform employees of who their staff senators are and how the staff senate is working for their betterment.
- Staff Senate will continue working with the staff associations. In June the senate approved the association for the Provost Office and office of Outreach and International Affairs.

- Assist with providing information to staff and non-student wage employees regarding the Higher Education Act. We have several senators serving on the Employee Advisory Committee and will have updates at each senate meeting.
- We have formed a committee that will write a proposal for a staff national leadership conference. This committee will gather information for hosting this conference at Virginia Tech. We are also in the process of making a list of universities and their staff governance units for participation in the conference. The target date for the conference is summer 2008.
- We are supporting the benefits fair on October 31st.
- The McComas Leadership Seminar will be held on May 1st, 2008. The committee will meet soon to begin planning the program.

Staff Senate Speakers:

Ms. Linda Woodard was the speaker for July. She provided an overview of shared governance as a refresher for senators and orientation for the new senators. Linda also updated the senate on the Employee Advisory Committee.

Dr. David Ford spoke in August. Dr. Ford presented a program on the university mission and strategic plan. This will assist committees and commissions as we set the goals for the upcoming year.

The speakers scheduled through November are Mr. James Hyatt in September, Mr. Kevin McDonald in October and Mr. Sherwood Wilson in November.

I would like to take a moment to discuss the Physical Plant Operations.

Grounds Services maintains both the functional and aesthetic standards for 850 intensively managed acres, 20 miles of roadway, 20 miles of sidewalks, 70 parking lots, and a 4-acre duck pond. This responsibility involves multi-layered planning and coordination, as well as effective, quick response to a steady stream of daily demands.

The Landscape division is responsible for planting new trees and shrubs (approximately 300 trees in the last two years); renovating old landscaping sites; mowing and trimming campus turf; applying fertilizer and pesticides; pruning the campus collection of trees and shrubs; and installing and maintaining perennial and annual flower beds. This function is supported by a staff of 27 people and a variety of equipment. We currently have mowing machines that can cover up to 21' at a time.

Moving and Hauling manages the handling and transporting of office furniture, laboratory equipment, and a wide variety of special items. Moving and Hauling is primarily involved in coordinating this work among campus buildings and associated rental properties. Their moving staff is comprised of 3 employees and is supplemented by outside contract movers when larger moves occur.

Virginia Tech Recycling coordinates the educational and operational aspects of campus recycling, solid waste collection, and litter control. Additionally, the Virginia Tech Recycling office supervises yard waste mulching and composting operation, post-closure care of the Virginia Tech closed sanitary landfill, and various environmental restoration initiatives. Recycling has just received some addition staff and is in the process of bringing the recycling programs back. Since the mid '90's this function has been done by the solid waste collection staff. The total staff is 9.

Road Maintenance is responsible for the maintenance and repair of all campus streets, roadways, parking lots, and loading docks, including State Route 314, in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Virginia Tech Office of Transportation. In addition, Road Maintenance provides heavy equipment assistance for a broad range of in-house and contracted landscaping, utilities, and renovation work. This group is the driving force in keeping the campus open in weather related emergencies. Working with the landscaping crews campus roads, parking lots, and sidewalks are cleared during winter weather events. They also support the university Police Department and Parking Services with emergency road closings. This group has a staff of 11.

Constituency Report to the Board of Visitors, August 27th, 2007

-Brennan Shepard, Graduate Student Representative

Thank you Mr. Rector. Good afternoon Mr. President, distinguished Board members and guests. I appreciate the kind remarks and mention of my family, as I couldn't have told you who I am without telling you where I have come from. Growing up in Roanoke as a son and brother of Hokies, I've always felt a strong connection to Tech. I visited my brothers, took school trips to complete research in the library, and came to Tech for concerts and sporting events throughout my childhood. I always knew I would be a Hokie.

I left Blacksburg in 2002, after graduating with a degree in Political Science. I lived six cities before I made it back to Blacksburg, knowing all the while that I would attend Tech again. I'm now halfway through my Masters of Business Administration, President of the MBA Association, and Graduate Representative to the Board of Visitors. Tech accepted me last year provisionally due to my less than stellar undergraduate GPA. I hope that, at this point, I've reinforced the foresight of that decision.

As we move forward in the days since April, we will face a great many challenges that we've not only not prepared for, but in some cases never imagined. Flexibility will determine our success at adapting to meet the needs of students who were here last year, as well as new students who try to understand what the rest of us have been through. Throughout the orientation week, I spoke with incoming students about many issues, and one theme prevailed: They were all excited to be here at Tech. They chose to be a part of a healing community, to be a fresh voice among the weary. We must now harness that energy to motivate us

all to work to be the best ambassadors of Virginia Tech that we can. We must deal with these new challenges, while we continue to address those we faced in the past. We cannot afford to take a reactionary approach to governance. We must continue to look ahead and plan for the future.

As your graduate representative, my focus this year will be on community: our graduate community, and the Virginia tech community as whole. Students like me, who have ventured out into the working world, bring back a portfolio of experience that cannot be replicated in books or lectures. Experienced students can push classroom discussions to a higher level of reflection and understanding, and are valuable resources for colleagues outside of the classroom. That experience and maturity, however, is not free. Along with these students come needs that we must continue to address such as health care, specifically summer coverage which we are already working on, housing for non-traditional students and those returning to school with families, and funding, as few students leave the professional world without responsibilities that follow them.

Beyond preparing to attract more experienced, non-traditional students, there are steps we can take that will tie more closely together the community we have here already. I will to work with Dean DePauw to further interdisciplinary opportunities for graduate students to migrate outside of their program of study. Community building across disciplines while bolstering academic experience leads to graduates prepared to work with professionals of many fields. Branching outside of one's program can also create life-long interests, and provide a broader view of the world around us. I came back to school, not because I knew what I

wanted to do with my life, but because I knew that I could learn more about myself here than anywhere else.

This experience has already taught me that we have a wonderfully active and responsive administration. As students, we thank you for your tireless efforts over the last several months. I have spoken with many of you recently, and have received nothing but enthusiastic support. I would especially like to thank Ennis McCrery for her friendship and guidance throughout this process. Hers is a tough act to follow, and I will work hard to carry on her diligence and forward thinking in this position. And finally, thank you for the support that this Board has shown to students and staff alike, and thank you for allowing me to be a part of that with you. I am very excited to be here, and I look forward to working with you all throughout the year ahead. Thank you.