

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
November 28, 2017

IN ATTENDANCE:

Monty Abbas, Alan Abrahams, Biko Agozino, Diane Agud, Robin Allnut, Susan Anderson, Richard Ashley, Osman Balci, Arthur Ball, Jacob Barney, Michael Borowski, Carlyle Brewster, Tanyel Bulbul, James Campbell, Virgilio Centeno, Stefan Duma, Alan Esker, John Ferris, Matthew Gabriele, William Galloway, LuAnn Gaskill, Leon Geyer, Ellen Gilliland, Tracy Gilmore, Nicolin Girmes-Grieco, James Hawdon, Bob Hicok, Kathy Hosig, Eric Kaufman, Bradley Klein, Bettina Koch, Roberto Leon, Chang Lu, Eric Lyon, Shelly Martin, Margarita McGrath, Cayce Myers, Sean O'Keefe, Marie Paretti, Susanna Rinehart, Hans Robinson, Todd Schenk, Brett Shadle, Richard Shryock, Gary Skaggs, Ryan Speer, David Tegarden, Jim Tokuhisa, Benjamin Tracy, Kelly Trogdon, Diego Troya, Bruce Vogelaar, Layne Watson, and Ryan Zimmerman. (54 senators).

ABSENT:

Masoud Agah, Mehdi Ahmadian, Gregory Amacher, Bonnie Billingsley, Bryan Brown, Robert Bush, Candace Fitch, Joseph Gabbard, Sierra Guynn, Roger Harris, Sara Jordan, Zachary Mackey, Mike Nappier, Philip Olson, Doug Patterson, David Radcliffe, John Richey, Tina Savla, Eric Smith, Stephen Smith, Jim Spotila, Divya Srinivasan, Dean Stauffer, Cornel Sultan, and Dwight Viehland. (25 senators).

1) Agenda

The agenda was approved.

2) Minutes

The minutes from the November 14, 2017 meeting were approved.

3) Approval of an appointment to University Council

Bob Hicok was elected to serve on University Council.

4) Q & A with Rector Dennis Treacy

After introductory comments that touched on his history as a student at Tech, his professional career, and his time on the BOV, Rector Dennis Treacy responded to questions and comments that ranged from "How does the BOV evaluate the president?" to a concern about the distance between administrators and faculty.

Throughout, he stressed the importance of communication, which he views as a process of active and mutual engagement, not just discussion. He believes the Beyond Boundaries vision is essential to the success of Virginia Tech, and that Destination Areas, because they will "engage students and faculty in real-life problem solving," are an effective way of preparing students for the kind of broad understanding and adaptability employers want.

As the questions and comments became more pointed (there were, for example, several comments that major changes, such as DAs and the PIBB, have been initiated without much faculty involvement), Rector Treacy consistently spoke of the need for faculty to express their

views to the President and Provost. In order to foster greater connections between the different levels of governance, he offered to visit Faculty Senate more often. Though the discussion went beyond its allotted time, it still had to be cut short.

4) EFAR status

In response to the requirement by some colleges that faculty use Symplectic Elements (EFARs) for faculty activity reporting next year, Hans Robinson presented a letter on this subject that he would like to send to the Provost. With slight modifications, the letter was approved by the Faculty Senate.

5) Discussion on governance reform

After a brief discussion, a motion was passed to form a committee that will explore ways to improve faculty voice in governance. The committee will be chaired by Bob Hicok.

6) Additional business

Todd Schenk offered to write up a resolution in response to the tax bills working their way through congress, some versions of which would remove the current tax exemption for tuition waivers and reductions. He will post the resolution on-line, so that senators may vote on it.