

## **Faculty Senate Minutes; November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012; Pamplin 32**

Attendees: A.L. Abbott, D. Agud, G. Amacher, G. Back, R. Broadwater, V. Centeno, C.B. Cloyd, L. Cooper, R. Cothren, R. Dalloul, L. Geyer, R. Goss, B. Hausman, R. Hirsh, T. James, B. Jones, S. Karpanty, B. Klein, I. Lazar, J. Lo, G. Luttrell, S. Markham, S. Martin, M. Maycock, N. McGehee, M. Moehler, K. Niewolny, C. Noiro, M. Patil, B. Pencek, H. Quesada Pineda, W. Reed, S. Rinehart, K. Rojiani, D. Smith, Y. Stivachtis, C. Stovall, E. Vance, B. Vinatzer, B. Vogelaar, J. Wilkins, A. Zajac

Absent with prior notice: N. Arav, C. Eska, J. Floyd, K. Hosig, J. Settlege

The President of Faculty Senate, Karpanty called the meeting to order at 5:15pm.

### *I. Introductions*

### *II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes from October 2012*

Approved

### *IV. Update from Board of Visitors November Meeting*

Karpanty updated the Faculty Senate on the board meeting.

- There are plans in work, as per communications with Provost's office, for a small raise in the coming (2%) with some additional merit-based component possible, see memos from your Dean's Office. Even though Virginia Tech hopes to be around 60 percentile in terms of salaries in comparison to our peer institutions, we are languishing at around 20 percentile.
- Distance learning was discussed and Faculty were directed to Provost's presentation on Scholar site. Weakness of the proposal was the lack of incentives. There are also plans for summer school and winter break module, though again the incentives seem to be minimal (attract graduate students maybe).
  - Board wants the goals and metrics to be aggressive
  - Students are resistant to the idea, especially worried about cheating in online context.
- Several points were raised
  - There needs to be comparison between the in-class vs online outcomes
  - Various types of online or technology enhanced education needs to be handles separately. Not all online courses are automated. There is also a possibility of hybrid courses with part online component.
  - Scaling up of online courses is different for different courses. Same with automation.

- It may be good to expose the students to online instruction but the process may be driven by revenue generation. The focus should be on learning and engagement.
- We should make it possible for collaborations with others (at least other state schools) via online instruction. Tuition sharing (and other financial) agreements should be established.
- Faculty should take the lead or else we will have to follow what administration comes up with. Any task force on this should have majority of faculty. We are seeking information from Provost's office on next steps in distance learning and in process for incentives for summer and winter terms.

III. *Discussion on revisions, restructuring of our Curriculum for Liberal Education (CLE) in the context of the university's long range plan—5:20-6:20*

Dr. Dan Thorp, Professor of History, Director, Curriculum for Liberal Education

- The current CLE is discussed at <http://www.cle.prov.vt.edu/>
- Office was created to have one person to keep CLE moving. UCCLC is primary committee on which the CLE is reviewed and updated, but lots of turnover and closed for summer.
- Reports to Wubah. Ambitious schedule for revised curriculum. UCCLC has been talking for a year. Draft this semester and next semester with discussions and workshops with colleges. No final plan yet. Design the best general education possible without constraints of practicalities for now.
- Consensus on number of things: No change in number of hours 33-36 for general education - lower bound due to certification - upper bound from deans
  - Foundational level - discourse (writing or communications) - 9 hours - increase the amount that students write, should be over the whole curriculum, English AP not useful for discourse requirements because too much time without writing (if AP is awarded), also the course is not taught in an environment like (research) university. 6 hours of freshman, 3 hours second or third year (English department or student department), hope that students will be writing in capstone seminar/design.
  - Mathematical/computational - still use calculus maybe as required for some but maybe computational thinking (rigorous framework for problem solving which is similar to computer programming from some perspectives) or statistics for others
  - Integrated studies - science, social sciences, humanities, arts, take 6 each in three of the four (not the one related to students primary department), possibility of topics based interdisciplinary courses on say diversity, globalization, sustainability, different perspectives on same problems, two courses and two faculty to get together.

- Capstone general education course, UCCE least agreement, came from students. Bring students together at the end. For example, 14 students from 7 colleges was done with success. Students want a hands-on problem based course but difficult to scale up. We could have a simplified idea for example to read economist and have a discussion with students from different colleges provide input from their respective perspectives.
- Some of the discussion that followed included:
  - Unworkable in the financial context because the resources are not provided anyway. Any changes need to have required resources allotted.
  - There was some discussion on co-taught courses. There was concern that faculty would not want to teach them but be forced to. Also, financial models may not incentivize this. This is ideal for senior faculty as well as other faculty who love teaching CLE.
  - There was also a concern that while we want to create a flashy new CLE, we are devaluing the current CLE and courses in it. There seems to be a presumption that we are not already doing integrated studies. We need to list courses that already do it.
  - Finally the absence of assessment was a concern. How and why change if we cannot assess if we are doing fine and where we need improvement. Faculty are busy so more time to do this cool stuff does not exist unless of course more faculty lines are made available.

V. *Request to Fill Vacant Governance Positions*

- Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs – 2-yr term needed (ends in 2014); Meets about once a month, usually 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday, 2pm, Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> is next meeting.
- Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies—1 substitute for Fall only, late Wed. afternoon, 330-5pm.

VI. *Open discussion of any items related to Commissions and Committees*

- Please see the Forum on our Scholar page. I will ask that Commission and Committee Chairs, or Faculty representatives, provide updates either directly to this Forum or through me to this Forum
- Rector Mike Quillen will be visiting at our December meeting

VII. *New Business*

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.