

Faculty Senate Minutes
March 19th, 2013
350 Lavery Hall

Attendees: A. Lynn Abbott, O. Balci, J. Bassett, L. Cooper, R. Cothren, R. Dalloul, C. Eska, H. Gindlesberger, R. Goss, B. Hausman, S. Hein, T. James, S. Karpanty, I. Lazar, M. Marchant, S. Markham, M. Maycock, N. McGehee, J. Merola, K. Niewolny, C. Noirot, M. Patil, B. Pencek, , W. Reed, S. Rinehart, K. Rojiani, Y. Stivachtis, , E. Vance, B. Vinatzer, B. Vogelaar.

Absent with prior notice: B. Jones, B. Klein, A. Puckett, H. Quesada Pineda

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

I. *Introductions*

II. *Approval of Agenda and Minutes from February 2013*

- Approved

III. *Question and Answer Session with Provost McNamee*

- I have asked Provost McNamee to update us on next steps in distance learning at Virginia Tech as a follow-up to our Fall 2012 conversations. I also asked him to update us on next steps in the search for Dr. Wubah's replacement as VP for Undergraduate Education and an update on faculty raises.
- Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Jack Finney, and Dr. Randy Collins (a visiting American Council on education fellow from Clemson U.) will also be attending our meeting.

The Provost started with discussion on Online Education. There is tremendous amount of attention, interest, enthusiasm for MOOCs. Some believe that it will change education in US. Currently a number of prestigious universities are offering open-access online courses. The question remains as to how long it will remain free? We need to consider the correct approach for VT.

VT has a very robust program, e.g., online Masters in IT. Excess revenue is being shared back to departments. There are many online UG/Grad courses as well as partly online (hybrid) courses. IDDL works on course development with FDI helping faculty develop the skills.

The Provost believes that things are changing quickly. We have to think strategically. Up to now it has been faculty driven with no strategy from the top. We need a strategy and Prof. Randy

Collins (an Associate Dean and professor from Clemson) who is on a one year fellowship from the American Council on Education is helping us do it. He comes with no baggage and will try to understand where we are and what we might do. He is meeting with a lots of folks, for example, students have different perspective from faculty and administrators.

The Provost was skeptic about MOOC. While universities like MIT views it as philanthropic venture with no expectation of earning money, private companies are interested in making money.

We can take advantage of free course work. The faculty can decide if we accept credit based on MOOC. We can add a testing requirement if required.

The faculty then asked a number of questions:

Question: The business model seems to be broken (the Provost agrees). Online education is our future and when we do it correctly we would be proud of our online degree. Online courses are needed but how do we get time to create content? Also, how do we make sure that the focus on online education does not degrade on-campus instruction.

Provost: We provide an experience – residential. The fundamental model is not changing - no online undergraduate degree is in the plan. Some online courses as well as hybrid courses may work, e.g., video for teaching and in-class for problem solving. The Board has strong support for VT brand and know that if online education if not done correctly, it can dilute the VT brand. Faculty have to buy into the strategic plan for online education. Administration does not want to be a road block. IDDL - Enterprise model is 12 years old and needs to be updated.

Provost also mentioned that Daniel Wubah is leaving to become Provost at Washington & Lee U. and that it is a good time to reevaluate leadership structure – should enrollment, financial aid, registrar, and IDDL all be under that position. He is seeking “words of wisdom” from the faculty.

The Provost then discussed the upcoming salary increases. He believed merit based process will help us. We will know the details after Board approval in June.

Next the Provost mentioned the status of the Strategic Plan implementation. The VPs and deans have provided 1-page plan for implementation. It is still quite ambitious especially since we do not have the monies yet.

Finally, the Provost talked about CLE. The CLE committee is looking into it. The draft plan is good but needs to be bolder. There are computational thinking and discourse requirements. The Provost likes to think about double majors and major-minors.

Questions: Are you interested in tracking majors and double majors. And are the departments who provide second major disadvantaged?

Answer: They track credit hours and degrees. From their point of view there is no difference between first and second major. Both departments should get credit for graduating the student.

Q: Will double majors create problems for resource allocation?

A: Yes and so it will be phased in. Typically ,resources should follow workload.

Q: Will humanities folks take science minors.

A: Yes. Engineering Education minor will soon be accessible to non-engineering majors.

Q: Teaching online is not necessarily efficient. It may take more time/effort but technology can enhance student learning. We need to be proactive in communicate.

A: We are not winning the debate in national media. Hopefully the press will move on to something else eventually. We are trying to impart wisdom to students. Students are not that thrilled with online as of now.

IV. *Informal vote of endorsement on Policy 13000 on Intellectual Property*

- Vote done by survey tool. 21 in favor, 3 opposed.

V. *Nominations for 2013-2014 officer elections and committees and commissions*

- President Nominee: Joe Merola
- VP Nominee: Mayur Patil

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

- Please see the Forum on our Scholar page.
- April Meeting:
 - Visit by Mr. Jason Soileau (Asst. VP, Office of University Planning); Jason will brief us on two major campus planning projects, the Precinct B (which includes Multi-Modal Transportation Facility) and the renovations of the Corps of Cadets section of campus.
 - Discussion with officer candidates for 2013-2014

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.