Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda
September 17, 2021, @ 2:30pm
Via Zoom

Senators Present:

Montasir Abbas, Masoud Agah, Onwubiko Agozino, Diane Agud, Susan Anderson, Richard Ashley, Jonathan Auguste, Joseph Baker, Arthur Ball, Azziza Bankole, A.K. Ward Bartlett, Andrew Binks, Virginia Buechner-Maxwell, Tanyel Turkaslan Bulbul, Scott Case, Guopeng Cheng, Benjamin Corl, Ashley Dayer, Robert Dunay, Stuart Feigenbaum, John Ferris, Becky Funk, Dave Gregory, Joe Guthrie, Kevin Heaslip, David Hicks, Bob Hicok, Daniel Hindman, Ran Jin, Brett Jones, Eric Kaufman, Brooks King-Casas, Bettina Koch (Alternate for Paul Avey), Vivica Kraak, Leigh Anne Krometis, Crystal Duncan Lane, Evan Lavender-Smith, Justin Lemkul, Jonathan Maher, Jason Malone, Caitlin Martinkus, Frances McCarty, Rachel Miles, Cayce Myers, Michael Nappier, Amy Nelson, Aaron Noble, Gregory Novack, Thomas O'Donnell, Sarah Parker, Bruce Pencek, Christopher Pierce, Thomas Pingel, Patrick Pithua, Nicole Pitterson, Robin Queen, Steven Rideout, Susanna Rinehart, Micah Roos, Tom Sanchez, Charles Schleupner, Peter Schmitthenner, Ashley Shew Heflin, Richard Shryock, Ryan Stewart, Laura Strawn, Jay Teets, James Tokuhisa, Diego Troya, Kwok Tsui, Robert Weiss, Cynthia Wood, Yan Xu, Liqing Zhang (74)

Guests:

Lori Buchanan, Jennifer Case, Joe Eska, Kimberly Filer, James Hawdon, Alex Kinnaman, Lee Learman, Edward Lener, Robin Panneton, Michael Pleimling, Ellen Plummer (11)

(85 attended via Zoom)

Call to Order by Senate President Robert Weiss at 2:35pm

1 Consent Agenda and Approval of Minutes

- Approval of the Faculty Senate Agenda for September 17, 2021.
- Approval and posting of the Faculty Senate meeting minutes from September 3, 2021 (Link)

The consent agenda was presented and a motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Robert Weiss and was seconded by Monty Abbas. With no comments or objections from the floor these items were passed by unanimous consent.

2. Brief Announcements and Updates (Robert Weiss)

- Google Workspace User Case Collection (Space Usage Check: Link)

- The [Google Workspace Program Steering Committee](#) is continuing to explore the file storage needs of faculty. Currently, it would be helpful for them to have specific examples of how Google Drive is being used.
- If you or one of your colleagues is a heavy user of Google Drive and would be willing to share their needs, please contact Robin Queen (rmqueen@vt.edu).

- Feedback on the Use of Masks in the University Environment
Robert Weiss asked the senators to send the feedback to him (weiszr@vt.edu)

- Beta users for the SharePoint
Robert asked senators to respond to emails from Robin for beta testing of the SharePoint site.

- Robert also asked if the senators have received the message from Provost that was sent out early on 9/17/2021 that was to be forwarded from the department heads.
  - If the email was not received Robert asked senators to email him if they had not received the email and he would forward the message.
  - To change the modality, the faculty can decide the changes based on the needs of the course and to ensure a healthy learning environment.

3. **Curriculum Approval Process (Bob Hicok) [Link](#)**

- Bob Hicok introduced the work group members. He discussed the current curriculum and new program review and approval processes
- Reviewed the statistics of the time spent between consecutive stages of 15-day review, GCC review, and resolved stages.
- The proposals are rarely changed after the 15-day review and GCC review, but it still needs a considerable amount of time for approval.
- The proposed new curriculum approval process will only involve the Department and College reviews.
- The program approval process will have a few additional steps, in addition to the curriculum review which will significantly reduce the time spent on curriculum and program review.
- The new system gives the curriculum committee chairs at the department and college levels to review the proposals.
- Discussion
  - The proposed change will also involve the GCC, colleges, and university administrators providing their input.
  - At this point, the response to the proposal in the president's council on governance has been positive.
  - Faculty must maintain ownership of the course content and syllabus.
- Bob asked the senators to share the draft document with their units and collect and send any feedback (Hicok@vt.edu). More updates will be provided in about one month.

4. **OSP Faculty Workgroup - Contract Negotiation (Monty Abbas)**

- The workgroup focused on the contractual delay problems starting in Spring 2019. The workgroup used surveys to collect feedback from faculty and discussed with Theresa Mayer (VP for Research and Innovation at that time). The issue is related to the long delay in contract negotiation for projects and the lack of workload status tracking systems. In 2019/2020, two surveys were conducted.
- In the feedback, more comments were related to the contract negation delays and lack of communication from OSP staff members.
- Faculty suggested increasing capacity by hiring more professional staff and training existing staff to meet the established goals.
- February 2021 - a Faculty Senate workgroup and OSP have collaborated to improve the contract negotiation tracking through increased transparency and the development of Summit Agreements.
- Faculty Senate should lead the work to develop the progress tracking dashboard.
- Feedback from academic units was requested on the following questions

  (1) Have faculty experienced any noticeable change in contract/agreement negotiation delays/issues since February 2021

  (2) Is there any input from the unit faculty they would like to share with us?

  (3) Do unit faculty have any suggestions or feedback regarding the progress and suggestions for things to track in the dashboard?

5. Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign (Edward Lener and Dean Learman) [Link](#)

- Edward Lener (Library) introduced the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign (cvc.hr.vt.edu) and the recent progress of fund raising.
- Dean Lee Learman (VTCSOM) also reviewed the updates for the 2021 Campaign and discussed the goals: increase overall giving, boost participation levels, and reduce the number of undesignated gifts.
- In the 2021 Campaign, the goal is $390,000 between October and December.
- Dean Learman asks the senators to help VT achieve its CVC campaign goal.
- Questions can be directed to Edward Lener (lener@vt.edu) and Dean Lee Learman (llearman@vt.edu)

6. Close-door Discussion (Faculty Senate Officers)

- Robert Weiss made the motion to start a close-door discussion at 3:57pm, seconded by John Ferris.
- Robert Weiss made the motion to end the close-door discussion at 4:20pm, seconded by Stuart Feigenbaum.

7. Open Discussion

- A faculty Senator reported slow PCR tests and potential impact of the football games on teaching.
- Robert Weiss has confirmed with the administration that the faculty can change the teaching modality temporarily for public health related reasons as was stated in the 9/17/2021 letter from Provost Clark, which is publicly posted (https://www.provost.vt.edu/provost-messages/faculty-appreciation.html)
- Students in the School of Public Health have formed the COVID -19 Crushers and offer some resources: https://publichealth.vt.edu/research-engagement/covid19/covid-crushers0.html
- Email from Dean of Student's Office and Schiffert to Department Heads discouraging faculty from asking for negative covid tests from symptomatic students prior to allowing them to return to class because Schiffert is overrun. (https://www.provost.vt.edu/provost-messages/student-absences.html)
- Robert Weiss also discussed that the faculty should not police the mask wearing in the public space.

7. Adjourn

- Robert Weiss made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Stuart Feigenbaum.
- The meeting was adjourned at 4:34PM.