

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

September 2, 2022, @ 2:30pm

Pamplin 1045 or Via Zoom

Check-In:

Senators Present: Scott Case, Nicole Pitterson, Justin Lemkul, Greg Novack, Alexander Leonessa, Thomas Pingel, Evan Lavender-Smith, Jason Malone, Diane Agud, Rebecca Hester, Stuart Feigenbaum, David Hicks, Nate King, Christopher Pierce, Ashley Wilkinson, Gonzalo Montero, Nicholas Robbins, Ran Jin, Susanna Rinehart, Brad Klein, Diego Troya, Jay Teets, AK Ward, Andrew Binks, Wesley Gwaltney, Bettina Koch, Brett Jones, Azziza Bankole, Robin Queen, Scott Huxtable, Jim Hawdon, Luca Massa, Steve Rideout, Jim Tokuhisa, Virginia Buechner - Maxwell, Aaron Noble, Rachel Miles, Joseph Baker, Guopeng Cheng, Tanyel Bulbul, Eric Kaufman, Vivica Kraak, Laura Strawn, Robin Panneton, Monty Abbas, Rick Ashley, Layne Watson, Robert Weiss, Susan Anderson, Virginia Buchner-Maxwell, Peter Schmitthener, Nate King, Hilary Bryon, Onwubiko Agozino, Luca Massa, Nicole Pitterson, Kwok Tsui (57)

Guests: Ron Fricker, Chloe Robertson

Call to Order by the Senate President Robert Weiss at 2:34pm**1. Approval of Agenda and Minutes (Robert Weiss)**

- Consent agenda was adopted:
 - Minutes for August 19, 2022 ([Link](#))
 - Agenda for September 2, 2022

Business Agenda**Old Business****2. Updates**

- Briefly discussed the process for getting updates from University Council, Commissions, and Committees. The Operations Officer will send out an email to the chairs or points of contact prior to each FS Cabinet meeting. Cabinet will discuss the updates and request additional discussion of topics during the full Faculty Senate meetings.

New Business

3. Academic freedom and freedom of expression case studies and breakout discussions

- Case studies were discussed in breakout rooms, both online and in-person (not a mix of both).
- Two case studies were utilized from a set of scenarios developed for use at the BOV retreat in August.
- During the breakout sessions, senators discussed each scenario using the following questions.
 - What are the most important facts of the scenario?
 - What should the VT Faculty Senate's stance be?
 - How should VT Faculty Senate engage in this situation?
- The senate then heard a recap of the discussion at the BOV retreat by the Faculty Senate president.
 - Additional scenarios may be considered at future meetings we the Senate continues to discuss Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression.

Open Floor Discussion

4. Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Concerns

- Concerns were raised that the number of accommodations being requested and the timing of these requests throughout the semester were making classroom management challenging.
- Senators voiced frustration with the SSD office and how the accommodation letters were worded and at times the accommodation requests were not reasonable based on the course design and content.
- Some faculty noted that course modification that resulted from accommodation requests have allowed for positive changes within their classroom
- Challenges with the logistics of meeting the accommodations were raised and the need for additional support from administrative offices was needed to ensure these accommodations are provided.
- The Senate plans to begin discussions with the SSD office to discuss possible improvements to the process and an improved partnership between the SSD office and faculty to be able to provide the best experience for students.

5. Reflection on the first week of class

- Please email Robert Weiss about this; there was not enough time at the end of the meeting to discuss this. If senators would like to update Robert with how students and faculty members are doing during the first week of classes, especially with a shift

away from virtual and hybrid classes and back into more “traditional” formats (in-person, no masks required, etc.).

6. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:15PM.