Date: Tuesday, February 10, 2015

Place: Fralin Auditorium, Fralin Life Science Institute

Time: 5:15 p.m.

Chair: Bernice Hausman

Minutes: Rebecca Miller

Attending: Monty Abbas, Shelly Mayock (for Robin Allnutt), Susan Anderson, Nahum Arav, Richard Ashley, Joseph Baker, John Barrett, Robert Bush, Daniel Breslau, Virgil Centeno, Benjamin Corl, Rami Dalloul, Charlene Eska, Felicia Etzkorn, John Ferris, Rosemary Goss, Ralph Hall, Bernice Hausman, Wat Hopkins, Kathy Hosig, Bradley Klein, Chad Lavin, Jenny Lo, Gerald Luttrell, Rebecca Miller, Sakiko Okumoto, Paulo Polanah, Wornie Reed, Susanna Rinehart, Scott Salom, Hannah Scherer, Heinrich Schnoedt, Deborah Smith, David Tegarden, Eric Vance, Layne Watson, Philip Young, Anne Zajac, Carl Zipper

Quorum was not met, with only 39 faculty senators in attendance.

Guests: Donna Young (AAUP staff representative), Hardus Odendaal (Virginia Tech Faculty Senate Past President), Barbara Ellen Smith (local AAUP chapter President), members of Virginia Tech's Staff Senate, and student leaders

Meeting purpose: Regular Faculty Senate meeting

Agenda items: Approval of the agenda

                Approval of the minutes from the December 2, 2014 and January 20, 2015 meetings

                Announcements

                New business

                Old business

Faculty Senate President Bernice Hausman called the meeting to order at 5:16 p.m.

Agenda item 1: Approval of the agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was seconded and passed by unanimous decision.

Agenda item 2: Approval of the minutes from the December 2, 2014 and January 20, 2015 meetings

President Bernice Hausman suggested minor amendments to both sets of minutes. Minutes for both the December 2, 2014 meeting and the January 20, 2015 meeting were approved as amended by unanimous decision.

Agenda item 3: Announcements

Faculty Senate President Bernice Hausman made three brief announcements:

The Faculty Senate still needs to identify a University Council replacement for Spring 2015. We have 7 total seats on University Council, and we need to make sure that these seats are filled.

The February 24, 2015 Faculty Senate meeting will focus on the Faculty Senate response to the Revision of General Education proposal before University Council. Faculty Senate representatives to University Council can discuss the initial discussion at UC on February 16, 2015 and consider senate action ahead of the March 2, 2015 meeting at which the UC is expected to vote.

Faculty Senate and Staff Senate will be participating in a competition to raise money for and awareness of the Faculty and Staff dependent scholarships to VT. The competition will not be the amount of money raised but the number of individuals contributing. Minimum contributions will be $5. More information about this activity will be disseminated as the details are worked out.

Agenda item 4: New business

AAUP presentation of shared governance principles and recommendations

Uwe Tauber introduced Donna Young, Senior Program Officer from the national AAUP office, who delivered a short presentation and facilitated a discussion of shared governance. The presentation was entitled *Strengthening the Faculty's Role in Governance*, and was tailored to address Virginia Tech's governance structure. The presentation emphasized that three groups (governing boards, administration, and faculty) usually share university governance, and that faculty should have primary responsibility in certain areas including: curriculum, subject matter, methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and admissions standards. Ms. Young identified Virginia Tech's governance model as the "stakeholder model," as faculty are considered constituents who should be consulted rather than primary decision makers in certain areas. In this model, faculty, students, and staff often have an equal voice in discussions. Ms. Young indicated that this model is not the most effective, since all voices should not be equal in shared governance.

Ms. Young made the following recommendations for changing Virginia Tech's governance structure in order to make it more of a shared governance structure:

- Organize
- Know AAUP governance principles
- Build coalitions
- Take responsibility
- Administer governance survey/gather information
- Look to peer institutions
- Set our own narrative (don't let others define our role)

Discussion of shared governance

After Ms. Young's presentation, the floor was opened to senators wishing to further discuss shared governance at Virginia Tech. The discussion centered around several specific topics:

Shared governance as a professional responsibility. Since Virginia Tech currently has as new President, and will soon have a new Provost, now is the time to move toward changes. As faculty members, we have a professional responsibility to become involved in shared governance, and try to make changes at the institutional level that will allow faculty members to truly take on this responsibility.

Different roles in shared governance. One senator mentioned that roles can often be a bit blurred, since many administrators are also faculty, and many graduate students may teach classes, for example. Ms. Young indicated that, in AAUP, administrators do not have voting rights in faculty decisions, since they serve a different role in the university setting. Similarly, she noted that graduate students who teach should have a voice in curricular decisions.

Build coalitions. Ms. Young noted that there is "strength in numbers" and that administrators will listen when they think there is a movement toward change shared by larger numbers of faculty. She indicated that the AAUP has a survey that the Faculty Senate can use in order to gain a better understanding of campus culture. Furthermore, a national organization overseeing a campus has more strength than individuals working together on a campus may have.

Looking at peer institutions. A senator asked Ms. Young if she could identify any positive examples of shared governance. She indicated that there are some good examples, even though it is a national trend for faculty to engage less with university governance, and that she will follow up with the VT AAUP chapter leaders with a few of those examples. Ms. Young also stated that the VT AAUP chapter needs to seriously think about our biggest hurdle, which is that faculty currently have no role in the decision making structure at Virginia Tech. She suggested that we look at both UVA and Radford University for better structures that integrate faculty into the decision making process.

Educating faculty. A senator noted that many faculty are unaware of the process that the Board of Visitors (BOV) uses before voting on an issue. Most faculty, for example, do not know that the BOV often goes from no understanding of an issue to voting on it within a single meeting. We need to take the responsibility of educating our faculty on what the current process looks like before we can build consensus toward changing it.

Improving communication. It was noted by many senators that the Virginia Tech governance structure includes many broken lines of communication. For example, a Dean's Council and a Department Heads Council both exist, but neither have worked with the Faculty Senate.

Areas in which faculty need more responsibility/voice. Throughout the discussion of the current governance structure, a number of issues that faculty should have a role in at Virginia Tech, but currently do not, were highlighted. These issues include:

- Curriculum changes
- *Faculty Handbook* changes
- New guidelines for promotion and tenure
- New initiatives for measurement and assessment

Agenda item 5: Old business

Developments with the general education revision since its passage at CUSP

President Hausman reported that the Committee on Undergraduate Studies & Policies (CUSP) passed the proposal for the revision of Virginia Tech's general education curriculum with a vote of 20-something in favor of the changes, 3 against (which included 2 faculty senate representatives and 1 College of Science representative), and 2 abstentions (one of which was the College of Liberal Arts & Human Sciences representatives). President Hausman noted that it was particularly significant that the two Colleges that offer at least 90% of the coursework included in the new curriculum did not vote in favor of the revision.

President Hausman also shared her attempt to collaborate more closely with the Provost, Jill Sible, and Rachel Holloway in order to develop a compromise to the revisions that would incorporate some of the Faculty Senate's concerns. President Hausman met with the Provost, and together they decided that President Hausman would put together a small committee of faculty that would create a friendly amendment to address the Faculty Senate concerns. In order to start this process, the Provost suggested that President Hausman meet with Jill Sible and Rachel Holloway; however, during this meeting, President Hausman noted that it became clear that Jill Sible and Rachel Holloway were unwilling to accept any friendly amendment to the document. President Hausman followed up this meeting with a note to the Provost, in order to bring him up to date on the situation. He responded to her email with an email that stated that the current proposal is acceptable and that he hoped the Faculty Senate would accept it.

President Hausman stated that she is not in favor of sending forward to University Council the resolution that the Faculty Senate wrote and approved to send to CUSP. She also indicated that she hoped not to speak about the curriculum changes at the University Council meeting so that it will be clear that opposition to the revision is more widespread than herself.

After President Hausman's report about the proposal, a broader discussion among senators highlighted a number of significant items related to possible methods of moving forward.

Strategies for the University Council vote. Several strategies for sharing the Faculty Senate perspective at the University Council meeting were suggested, including:

- Encouraging University Council representatives to speak with their own faculty, and start a conversation among their own faculty about the curriculum revisions.
- Encouraging faculty senators to work with their college University Council representatives to continue the conversation by sending them the Faculty Senate objections and perspectives.
- Having one University Council member, perhaps a Faculty Senate representative, to ask for a 6-week deferral of the vote.
- Working with our colleagues to build capacity. There are 23 faculty on University Council, and 76 total members. Other members include 7 staff and 10 students.

There will be time between the first and second readings, and the Faculty Senate will use this time to continue to discuss strategy.

Understanding the protocol on first readings at University Council. The protocol for first readings of resolutions at University Council is that documents are read, but that not much discussion takes place. It was suggested that Faculty Senate representatives to University Council be ready and willing to comment on the document during the first reading, which is scheduled to take place at the University Council meeting on Monday, February 16.

This discussion led to a motion that Faculty Senate representatives to University Council announce to University Council on February 16 the opposition to the general education revision as proposed. The motion was seconded, and passed with a vote of 31 senators in favor, no opposed, and 1 abstaining. It should be noted here that a quorum of senators was not present during the vote.

Next meeting: Tuesday, March 17, 2015, 5:15 p.m. in Pamplin 32

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.