



VCU

Faculty Senate

Faculty Senate Leadership Meeting Minutes — April 17, 2018 **Church Hill Room, Larrick Center, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM**

Attendance: Holly Alford, Kristin Artello, Ashley Brewer, Brian Daugherty, June Nicholson, Andrew Ottens, Joan Pellegrini, Maria Rivera, Valerie Robnolt, Carmen Rodriguez, Chris Saladino, Mary Secret, Scott Street, Jennifer Wayne

4:00pm--Call to order

Scott Street

Minutes from March 20th meeting

Brian Daugherty

4:05pm--Standing Rules of the Faculty Senate

Joan Pellegrini

- Street announced that Bylaws of the Faculty were presented to Faculty Council at its last meeting. Street explained that there was no dissent, and the bylaws will be presented to the Board of Visitors at its May meeting.
- Pellegrini announced that she received few substantive comments regarding the Standing Rules of the Faculty Senate, but did receive suggestions regarding wording and other minor considerations. Pellegrini reviewed the principal comments and received feedback from those present. Artello asked why oversight of shared governance was removed from her committee. Street responded that it will be returned to her committee's responsibilities. Robnolt asked about the role of deans in shared governance, and Secret responded that she sits on a committee focused on shared governance that is about to present its recommendations to University Council in May. Saladino announced that his department also recently tried to address shared governance in its bylaws, but the dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences said they were not consistent with those of the college. Saladino suggested that shared governance initiatives need some coordination across the various levels of the university. Street reminded senators that the Faculty Senate's leadership guidelines will be the next important Senate document to be revised.

Symposium on Academic Freedom & Freedom of Speech Committee Members

- Street announced that he has received a lot of positive feedback about the symposium from around the university. Street told senators he also now has a video of the keynote address, which will be posted to the Faculty Senate website. Street explained that we need to obtain evaluations of the symposium from attendees. Street thanked the committee for organizing the event, and asked if it would be a worthwhile event to replicate next year. Wayne pointed out that we could follow a similar format in the future, saving some preparation time. Nicholson asked how many individuals attended, and Street answered that the room was nearly full.

4:35pm--Committee Updates

- a. Academic and Professional Status — Kristine Artello: Artello announced that her committee's report on student teaching evaluations was recently disseminated, after

some additional corrections and edits; she indicated that response thus far has been mixed. Artello asked if Enoch Hale from the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence could speak to the Senate before he departs for a new position. Street responded that he would invite Hale to the last Senate meeting of the semester. Artello said that next year her committee will probably focus on the student evaluation process and faculty research, but the committee is also open to ideas.

- b. Academic Support Services — Valerie Robnolt: Robnolt has been working to improve classroom instructional technology. She plans to meet with technology specialists shortly, to determine ways to improve communication as well as access.
- c. Alumni and Community Relations — José Alcaine: Street explained that Alcaine is petitioning to be converted to term faculty, because he is currently not classified as faculty. The result of his petition will impact his committee as well as the Senate office of Corresponding Secretary, to which he was recently elected.
- d. Communication, Publicity, and Publications — Ashley Brewer: Brewer reported that she is still migrating content over to the new Faculty Senate website. Most of the agenda and minutes have been added, and she recently updated the home page. She asked senators to let her know if anyone has additional ideas for the website.
- e. Student Affairs — Chris Saladino: Student Government Association elections were recently held and the new officers are hoping to establish a more formal relationship with Faculty Senate.
- f. Diversity and Inclusion — Mary Secret: Secret expressed optimism about Aashir Nasim's hiring as Vice President for Inclusive Excellence, and said she or her co-chair (Stephanie Goldberg) will be taking part in a VCU committee related to this. Secret also said she and Stephanie will be joining the History and Community committee headed by John Kneebone about Confederate commemorations on campus.
- g. Economic Status, Budget, and Planning — Brian Daugherty: Daugherty announced that this committee is working on a Senate presentation related to faculty retirement plans during the fall semester, and a separate presentation related to how VCU's New Budget Model will impact faculty.
- h. State Legislative & Statewide Relations — Carmen Rodriguez: Rodriguez announced that Faculty Senate of Virginia met on April 7 at George Mason University. Rodriguez was elected as Vice President for the coming year. Those assembled congratulated her. At the meeting, the FSVA discussed increasing membership and member participation, as well as pressing matters related to higher education in Virginia. At the gathering, Rodriguez also learned that the American Association of University Professors has money set aside to help create an AAUP chapter at VCU, which she will be investigating.

5:45pm--Faculty Senate President's Report

Scott Street

- a. Board of Visitors: The next meeting will take place on May 11th.
- b. Aspen Institute Conference: Alford and Street represented faculty at this gathering, hosted by a consulting firm hired by the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia, which focused on transfer students (from community colleges into 4-year institutions). Street noted that VCU is working to make the transfer process simpler and more effective, primarily via the Provost's Office.
- c. Undergraduate Curriculum: Street asked if any senators are involved in the university curriculum movement; none responded in the affirmative. Street announced that a new committee has been formed in this regard, and Street will look into it and provide additional information in the near future.

- d. The Faculty Senate Fall Retreat will take place on Thursday, August 16th, from 2-6:30pm. Street asked senators to consider initiatives and priorities for next academic year.
- e. Street thanked (the 24% of) faculty who have contributed to VCU's Black & Gold development campaign.
- f. Street mentioned a lawsuit recently filed by L. Douglas Wilder against Dean John Accordino of the Wilder School, and stated that he did not believe Faculty Senate has a role to play in this particular case. However, Street said it seems important that VCU update its processes with regard to employment conflicts. Those in attendance discussed an appropriate Senate response, and the consensus was to create a Faculty Senate task force to investigate the issues.

5:55pm--May 1st Faculty Senate Meeting

Scott Street

- a. Agenda: Items on the agenda include: (a) budget update; (b) update from the Vice President for Administration; (c) general education; (d) update on the 2025 strategic plan (Quest); (e) update from the Center for Teaching and Learning
- b. Roundtable Topic?: priorities for next year?

Meeting adjourned at 6:25pm. Minutes respectfully submitted by Brian Daugherty.