



VCU

Faculty Senate

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes — January 30, 2018

Court End Ballroom, Larrick Center, 4:00 – 6:00 PM

<https://maps.vcu.edu/mcv/larrickcenter/>

Present:

Alcaine (EDU), Alford (ARTS), An (NUR), Arrington (ARTS), Artello (WS, Alt. for Moslow-Benway), Bodnar-Deren (HAS), Bosco (BUS), Boyes (HNR), Branch (VCU-L), Coston (HAS), Crookendale (VCU-L), Cummins (HAS), Daugherty (HAS), Dawson-Cruz (HAS), DiazGranados (MED), Docef (EGR), Dula (BUS), Faris (ARTS), Franzak (BUS), Fueglein (UC), Ghosh (MED), Goldberg (MED), Gregory (NUR), Hawkins (StAff), Hogan (MED), Jallo (NUR), Jamerson (AHP), Jin (WS), Jones (EDU), Klein (ARTS), Kopryanski (ARTS), Kunkes (StAff), Lockeman (MED), Lodge (UC), Manjili (MED), Nadpara (PHA), Nicholson (HAS), Ottens (MED), Pellegrini (DEN), Price (RetFac), Ramsey (MED), Rivera (HAS), Robnolt (EDU), Rodriguez (HAS), Russell (DEN), Samsó (MED), Secret (SWK), Sherrod (ARTS), Street (HAS), Sun (MED), VCU Adj. Fac. (Rudy), VCU-Q (Khaled), Wajciechowski (EDU), Wayne (EGR, Alt. for Wen), Wike (SWK), Wunsch (DEN, Alt. for Cox)

Absent:

Anthony (HAS), Bostian (BUS), Dixon (PHA), Frankenhoff (MED), Fraser (SWK), Gronert (HAS), Hsu (MED), Jones (HAS), Kidd (MED), Kornstein (MED), Le (MED), Mansfield (EDU), Rafiq (MED), Roberson-Nay (MED), Stevenson (HAS), Waugh (MED), Williams (AHP), York (MED), Zhang (MED), Zhou (MED)

Procedural Items:

4:08pm--Call to order

Scott Street, President

Minutes from December 5th meeting

Brian Daugherty, Recording Secretary & Treasurer

- Daugherty announced that Bullet Points have been distributed, and all minutes uploaded to the Faculty Senate website. Daugherty reminded faculty senators to introduce themselves before offering comments or questions during meetings.

Guests:

4:10pm--Provost Office Report

Aashir Nasim, Interim Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

- Discussion topics: Nasim noted that VCU is in the midst of job searches for about a dozen administrative positions, and adding to its staff of academic advisors. He noted that VCU has had more success recruiting underrepresented and minority faculty members in recent years. Nasim explained that he is serving in an interim role as Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs until someone is hired to fill the

position, which was recently vacated by Kathy Bassard. Nasim mentioned that the Provost's Office is now engaged in the promotion and tenure process, and is submitting recommendations for applicants currently under review.

- Senator Wayne asked about the search for the Vice President for Research and Innovation, and Nasim responded that the search is ongoing and that it will be continued until the position is filled.
- Senator Artello asked about exit surveys of faculty members who depart VCU, determine new ways of retaining underrepresented and minority faculty members. Nasim responded that VCU recently updated its exit survey and that the university has partnered with COACHE (of Harvard), which focuses on issues related to retention, and has also been in consultation recently with deans across VCU in terms of developing and implementing more proactive and effective retention strategies.
- Senator Manjili asked if there was any correlation between faculty rank and retention, and Nasim responded that he did not have data in that regard. However, Nasim noted that when we lose faculty at higher ranks, it does substantial damage to programs and the broader university, and that is therefore something to consider.
- Senator Cummins asked about James Cooper, a new hire in the Provost's Office. Nasim responded that he will report to Dr. Noble-Triplett, who oversees Academic Affairs, and that he comes highly recommended from his previous institution.

Faculty Senate Items:

4:25pm--Nominating Committee

Scott Street, President

- Discussion topics: Street announced that now is the time to set up a Nominating Committee to solicit candidates for officer positions in next year's Faculty Senate. Street nominated Holly Alford to chair this year's Nominating Committee, and Senator Pellegrini seconded. No other senators were nominated or volunteered. Senators elected Alford to the position.

4:35pm--Higher Education Advocacy Day

Carmen Rodriguez, State Legislative & Statewide Relations Committee Co-Chair

- Discussion topics: Rodriguez discussed Higher Education Advocacy Day and thanked those helped set up the event, and those who attended. Rodriguez discussed the two position papers that were emphasized; one focused on the budget, and the second supported a bill that would have allowed higher education institutions to provide tuition waivers to dependents of faculty/staff. The latter proposal was killed in committee yesterday.
- Senator Burgess asked if the General Assembly committee provided any justification for killing the proposed bill. Rodriguez said that some assembly members felt it might lead to higher tuition, and others said that faculty are already highly paid.
- Senator Price asked if legislators had data on the cost of the tuition remission/proposal, and Rodriguez announced that such data was not available.
- Rodriguez asked senators if anyone knew about the legislative history of this issue, or specifically which bill prohibited institutions from doing so. Some senators noted that VCU Health System has some allowance in this regard, but that funds most likely come from a private source. Senator Alford said that some had proposed that

faculty members be allowed to hand over their own ability to enroll in classes on to their dependent children.

- Senator Alcaine mentioned that, within the Wilder School, there is an office that does outreach, and that might be useful in pushing forward such an initiative. Street reminded senators that any such effort would have to be coordinated with the President's Office.
- Senator Cummins reminded senators that we do have access to email list serves at the deans' level, in order to spread the word about such initiatives among faculty.
- Senator Burgess noted that the state's biennial budget is approximately \$107 billion, which could easily cover such an expense. He added that it is essential to get more faculty members to cover out for Higher Education Advocacy Day in future years.

4:45pm--President's Report

Scott Street, Faculty Senate President

- Discussion topics: Street discussed Faculty Senate's next meeting, which is February 6 on the Monroe Park Campus, when President Rao will address the senate. Street noted that President Rao will discuss general education revisions and updates at VCU, as well as priorities that Rao has tried to address with the Virginia General Assembly (faculty salaries, and student aid, especially).
- Street announced that VCU's Calendar Committee is being restructured, and that those in charge are seeking more faculty involvement and input. Street specifically asked for faculty volunteers from the Schools of the Arts, and Engineering.
- Senator Secret reminded senators that faculty voices on such committees often seem to be nonexistent, or neglected. Secret suggested that Faculty Senate seek greater faculty representation on all such committees. Street agreed, and noted that this issue has been brought to the attention of the administration.
- Senator Sherrod asked if the academic calendar also includes the Final Exam calendar, and Street announced that he believed so, but was not sure. Sherrod responded that the School of the Arts often has conflicts with Final Exams and that the Arts would benefit from having input in this regard.
- Senator Goldberg noted that, in the VCU Health system, administrators also play an out-sized role in faculty affairs, and that it will be important that faculty sit on VCU Health committees also.
- Senator Boyes raised the related point that faculty members are often overworked, or teaching at the time that committees meet, and that such committees may need to make adjustments in order to accommodate faculty members.
- Senator Klein suggested Faculty Senate could develop a list of potential committee members to draw from when the need for new committee members arises.
- Street announced that Senator Cummins' husband was recently diagnosed with cancer, and that she has taken part-time leave this semester to help with his care. Senator Jallo distributed a few cards to sign and send to her, to show our support.

5pm--"Bylaws of the Faculty" and "Standing Rules of Faculty Senate"

Scott Street, Faculty Senate President

Joan Pellegrini, Credentials and Rules Committee Chair

- Discussion topics: Street explained the purpose of the Bylaws of the Faculty, and noted how these rules are different from the Standing Rules of the Senate. The definition of Faculty Senate, and its charge, however, are located within the Bylaws of the Faculty. Recently, it became apparent that portions of both documents are outdated, and could be improved with some adjustment and revision. As a result, a committee was charged to do so, and it has provided recommendations.
- Street noted that updating the Bylaws of the Faculty will entail more work (than revising the Senate's Standing Rules) and that the process to do so is unclear.
- Both documents are available on the Faculty Senate website. Street asked senators to consider the two documents and to offer recommendations for improvement.

5:45pm--Faculty Senate Committee meetings

- Remaining senators met with their respective committees.

Meeting adjourned at 5:55pm. Minutes respectfully submitted by Brian Daugherty.