



VCU

Faculty Senate

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – October 27, 2020

4:00 – 6:00 PM

<https://tinyurl.com/faculty-senate-vcu>

For complete minutes and related files, see: <http://www.facultysenate.vcu.edu/>

Please email ecarpenter2@vcu.edu with questions or corrections.

Procedural Items:

Call to order, Welcome

4:00-4:02

Nancy Jallo, President

Minutes from meeting September 1, 2020

4:02-4:05

Everett Carpenter, Recording Secretary

After review of the minutes from last meeting there were two errors. Corrected content has been put on the website and the broken link to the refer a student for help is below.

<https://keeplearning.vcu.edu/help/>

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScpO42w9fDfl3gB51H2eo1AyG8ovyNqwazlz5tGBFN2r38F6A/viewform>

Shared Governance

1. Provost Office Report

4:05-4:20

Gail Hackett, Provost for Academic Affairs

- *Promotion and tenure taskforce committee has been charged - This new group will look at personnel policy and procedures deal with all faculty particular with tenured faculty. Did ask taskforce to also look at term taskforce work as well. Issuing a survey with institutional research to identify the range of issue facing faculty. So if you have concerns, questions, issues, and contact the co chair Jill Gordon, Wilder School, jagordon@vcu.edu and Curtis Sessler, Department of Internal medicine (curtis.sessler@vcuhealth.org).*
- *Pursuing health insurance for grad students and first professional students (undergrads could opt-in). Currently looking at options and hope to be making decisions for next year. Every external body makes the comment we need it.*
- *Memos outcoming - one summarizes the resources for students dealing with the upcoming elections. And the other from (Provost and Art Kellerman) about a personnel memo encouraging everyone to take special situation of the COVID pandemic in all personnel actions, P&T, annual review, etc. This urges every administrator to consider the special considerations resulting from the COVID crisis. Also allow personnel to change workload mid-year if necessary. Allow as much flexibility as possible for personnel regarding to childcare, etc. Deans and Chair are all on board in providing as much flexibility as possible.*

- *Canceled spring break as part of the spring calendar, the Public Health Response Team recommend dropping spring break despite objections from the students. This was primarily to help discourage student travel. There are inserted a couple of "reading days" during the semester, calling them wellness days. There are some issues about the rename due to official rules regarding the definition of reading days.*
- *Expressed thanks for following COVID rules and helping keep infections low.*

QUESTIONS:

- *Is attrition between fall and spring is still a concern. Yes, we always have some attrition between sessions, and there is concern given the unknown nature of the crisis.*
- *There will not be an online fee for courses during the spring semester.*

2. Faculty Senate Officers/University Committees-Standing

4:20-4:35

President Highlights from Nancy Jallo

- *Provost search - coming out of president office. We have been assured that classroom faculty from both campuses and ranks will be on the committee as well as students and BOV representative. First meeting second week in November. There will be multiple opportunities for all senators to provide input on the search. This will include the search firm will provide a forum where there will elicit faculty comments on the most important attributes for a candidate. Etc. The firm has asked for best days for them to meet with faculty senators. The search firm will be at the Dec 1st FS meeting. In the meantime, talk with your units and get feedback that we can share with the committee and firm. There will be a survey coming out for faculty and students to provide input.*
- *Leadership has received comments about the election and those were shared with Provost which lead to the statement from her office.*

Committees

- *Academic Continuity - The committee suggested that there would be 5 days added throughout the semester. These suggestions were taken into consideration, but there was a need to start late in order to help try and avoid the flu season. Some units have started voting on open ended questions for course evaluations which were created by this committee.*
- *REAL Committee - On track to be included in Fall 2021. Need more tenure track faculty on committee. Encouraging faculty in the various units to apply for a REAL designation. There are probably many courses which could count but are being left out. <https://real.vcu.edu/>*
- *SRPP Committee - Winding down as it moves to implementation. Working to put together the final suggestions. Some suggestions were to provide resources to encourage team research, how to improve facilities, etc. This was a good truly collaborative committee pulling together faculty across campus which should result in a strong final suggestions committee. Looking for ways to engage community in the research that we are doing at VCU. Try to modify P&T guidelines to really recognize this collaborative community research. This was further reinforced by the I3 initiative on community research. Making sure to have a good definition for community to help provide opportunity greater interactions with HBCUs. From Icube CEnR model = Community-engagement Research model.*
- *COVID advisory planning committee - at will testing is starting. The administrative team is more unified at this point and more informed. The format has changed to more of sending in questions and allow for more time to discuss the concerns. If there are any concerns from faculty senators regarding the COVID response, send them to one of the representatives such as Neno Russell, Elizabeth Canfield, or Mary Boyes.*

- *Colleen Bishop is on Academic continuity committee wants to have focus groups, if you want to be in a group about classroom technology, please reach out to Valerie Robnolt. There is now a student technology advisory committee, but there is not a formal faculty advisory committee. Maybe that will be one of the recommendations from the focus groups, let Valerie know.*

3. Feedback/Discussion FS Breakouts Sept 29,2020

4:35-4:50

Valerie Robnolt

Discussion on the breakout groups from last meeting. For details see attachments. Here are some highlights.

- *How can we involve alumni involved more? There was some good suggestions given. There is a scholarship fundraising campaign underway with alumni to help make up for shortfalls from COVID funding for students. There are several examples of ways that faculty have been supporting their students. But we also need support since we have many of the same problems with child care, etc. After the anti-racism statement, how can we reach our goal. There are several different activities going on around campus, maybe we can try and help get the word out to faculty about all these resources. Working with Aashir Nasim's office to create a repository. Recognizing that we are already over-worked therefore how can we really do all these other activities. Maybe over the break review a selected article for discussion at January meeting.*
- *Kim Case is looking for scholars with a background in anti-racist pedagogy to join her in a small group to think through future CTLE plans and initiatives. Please reach out to her if you or others in your unit are interested.*

Information

4:50-5:05

1. Annual VCU Security Report

Assistant Chief Nicole Dailey

- *See attached presentation and link for a video*
- *They are following several COVID safety protocols when interacting with community. There are now going through a remodel as a result of all the community concerns. Pleased to report that many of the recommendations which were already underway. There is also a community committee of 30 who will report to the co-chairs (one from each campus). It is an independent committee. Any concerns email safetymodel@vcu.edu (<https://administration.vcu.edu/engage/safety-model/>) There was already a move to reallocate funds from policing to other programs such as student ambassadors. This helps to minimize the impact of having a uniformed officer response.*
- *Any questions or follow-up on the presentation reach out to Nicole Dailey*

2. Budget Issues and Concerns

5:05-5:15

Matt Conrad J.D. Executive Director, Government and Board Relations.

- *Where we wound up after the special session of the general assembly. We have worked hard for the past 3-5 years to differentiate ourselves from the other top tier research universities in the state. We have pressed these differences with legislature to help us achieve all our priorities at end of the regular session. This included more financial aide, pay raises, support for Massey Cancer, etc. But as COVID happened, the governor stopped the allocations for the time being and called a special session. They just finished conference reports. Ended up better than expected back in May. VCU received highest amount 10M in general fund support which can be used in a flexible manner, also unallocated the base increases in salaries, they included 1500\$ bonus will be paid on September 2021. In addition, they created a 120M pool for universities to apply for reimbursement for COVID crisis. We would also 10M addition funds and 20M on healthcare to help cover costs. We also got right of first refusal for the ABC facility on*

hermitage road. The general assembly did continue our building priorities. So can move to Arts and Innovation Building planning phase with VCU covering costs and getting reimbursed down the road when they get the OK to build.

- *There will be virtual Higher Education Advocacy Day this year. So any senator interested please reach out to Carmen Rodriguez or Pat Cummins for more information.*

3. University Faculty Grievance Panel
Chair's Annual Report August 2019-August 2020
Blythe Alison Bowman Balestrieri
L. Douglas Wilder School of Government
Faculty Senate

5:15-5:20

Annual Grievance Committee Report - Blythe Bowman-Balestrieri

- *The report was sent out last month, there have been some proposed policy changes on the table. Most of the proposed changes are to clarify the steps and timeline in the mediation process. The changes were sent to administration and is still being reviewed. So everything was reviewed according to old rules. There were 4 faculty grievances cases which do not fall under the prevue of other policies. One was inherited from Marilyn and went to full board review. Of the other 3, 2 were determined to be non-grievable, and the final one, is till pending after failing in mediation. <https://policy.vcu.edu/universitywide-policies/policies/faculty-mediation-and-grievance-policy.html>*

Faculty Senate Committees and Discussions

Faculty Senators
Link and Faculty Senate Committee Meetings*

5:25-6:00

Requests for Faculty Senators:

1) The Domicile Appeals Committee requests a faculty member to serve as a voting committee member on this new committee. This Committee has the final authority at the university for all appeals related to domicile for tuition purposes. The responsibility for this committee has recently transitioned from Student Affairs to Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM). The committee meets once a month. The length of the meetings can range from a couple of hours to closer to four or five hours. It depends on the number of appeals the committee needs to review. Also, the appointment is for a 2-year term, although committee members can be reappointed for multiple terms.

2) Serve on a Promotion and Tenure Task Force to provide a report by the end of May covering: An analysis of the scope of issues for term and tenure-track faculty members at VCU regarding the current promotion and tenure process; and recommendations about how VCU should handle those issues in regards to (a) process changes we should be making, (b) policy changes needed to support the success of term and tenure-track faculty members, and (c) strategies for supporting a talented and diverse group of VCU faculty members through the promotion and tenure process. Jill Gordon, Ph.D., Professor and Associate Dean of Faculty and Academic Affairs in the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs and Curtis Sessler, MD, Orhan Muren Distinguished Professor of Medicine and the Associate Chair for Faculty Development for the Department of Internal Medicine in the VCU School of Medicine, have agreed to serve as co-Chairs of the Promotion and Tenure Task Force and provide leadership to this important work.

Please let Nancy know and she will forward your name! Thanks!

Next Meeting: December 1, 2020 4-6pm Zoom

References:

September 29, 2020 Breakout Discussion Questions

1) How can we garner the assistance of VCU alumni in addressing some of the critical concerns facing the university at this time?

2) How are the faculty supporting students during this challenging time while also making sure that they are learning what they need to learn to meet the objectives of their courses. How are we receiving support and doing what we need to do to maintain our well-being?

3) What are some ideas for how to support our anti-racism goal. We've talked about doing faculty learning communities, but what are some other ways to facilitate learning and growing?

Anti-racism Statement of the VCU Faculty Senate:

The VCU Faculty Senate recognizes that structural and systemic racism across our educational and social institutions affect the psychological, physical, and spiritual well-being of our entire VCU campus and broader community.

The VCU Faculty Senate affirms the powerful statement made by Dr. Aashir Nasim to the Board of Visitors recognizing the lived experiences and rights of those who call attention to historical and present-day abuses of power and privilege. We pledge to fully support and help to implement the university initiatives identified in his report that are intended to eliminate bias, discrimination, and racism across our campus. *We as VCU Faculty Senators commit to learning about, developing, and engaging in concrete anti-racist work at both individual and collective levels to support our students, faculty, and staff, and to promote real and lasting change.*

Statement of Dr. Nasim:

[https://news.vcu.edu/latest/key-issues/Remarks by Aashir Nasim PhD](https://news.vcu.edu/latest/key-issues/Remarks%20by%20Aashir%20Nasim%20PhD)