



VCU

Faculty Senate

FACULTY SENATE COMMITTEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(over past 5 years, 2013-2018)

ACADEMIC and PROFESSIONAL STATUS:

- Collected shared governance statements and philosophies from sister colleges, drafted the original shared governance statement, and continued to work on this endeavor until adoption by Faculty Senate, University College, Provost, and President.
- In 2014, urged the Provost to consider multi-year contracts for term faculty throughout the university based on the success at University College. The Provost announced May 2017 about the expansion of the program across the university for term faculty meeting the policy requirements.
- In academic year 2014-2015, drafted a survey about student course evaluations to examine their use for faculty evaluations.
- In academic year 2015-2016, encouraged the Provost to evaluate the annual review procedures for faculty. In particular, we noted that the appeal process did not allow for appeal beyond the dean's office and that in some departments and/or schools, student course evaluations are used as the sole determinant of teaching effectiveness. Based on our research and advocacy, a statement was added to the annual review policy that student course evaluations may not be the sole determinant. This policy was revised in 2017.
- Participated in the HR redesign and discussed definition of Teaching and Research (T&R) faculty and ways to create due process for professional faculty.
- Continues to advocate for improved faculty annual reviews. Since raises are being based on the annual reviews, a better measure is needed for teaching effectiveness. Student course evaluations have not been revised in the majority of schools since their inception in the 1980s.
- In academic year 2017-2018, continues to advocate for schools to develop annual review policies and procedures that are clear and promote transparency. Also exploring other ways to include students' voices in curriculum and developing more useful course evaluations to improve teaching and learning.
- Advocated for 10% raise at promotion, from 6%
- Held the successful symposium on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech in April 2018

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS and RESEARCH:

- Considered the proposed changes to the General Education curriculum and lauded the GedEd 30 committee's commitment to faculty input and shared governance. Will invite

GenEd 30 committee chairs to discuss faculty comments / concerns received during the open comment period and the next steps in the process.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES:

- The chair of the Academic Support Services subcommittee serves on the VCU Libraries Advisory Committee. VCU Libraries is now a member of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), joining Virginia Tech and University of Virginia as the only Virginia libraries in ARL. With the expansion of Cabell Library, there continues to be growth in the use of the library by students, so VCU is partnering with the Library of Virginia for an off-site storage facility, which will help make more room for students to work. Many materials have been moved to a storage facility and the turn around time when someone needs a book or other materials is usually 24 hours. The Tompkins-McCaw Library underwent a renovation in early 2017 but now with the new plans for the medical campus, the library will be moved, so plans are underway for this to happen. Finally, there has been an initiative for faculty to consider the cost of textbooks for their classes and to use open access materials whenever possible, in an effort to cut down on the costs for students.
- The major initiative for this committee during the 2017-18 academic year has been the availability of and access to instructional technology and media support services for faculty in the classrooms in which they teach. Technology in classrooms are either centrally supported by VCU Academic Technologies or departmentally supported. The committee is working to understand where the issues are happening and who should be contacted when issues arise. When faculty have an issue in a classroom, with technology or facilities, they can report a problem or request a service anywhere on campus through the Quik FM reporting system at quikfm.vcu.edu.
- Previous impact on campus bookstores and renovation of Hibbs.

ALUMNI AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

- ***Increased engagement and awareness of Alumni events and activities***
Representatives of this committee have served as a conduit for engagement with the VCU alumni office. Through the committee, representatives from the Alumni office have been invited to attend faculty senate meetings to provide presentations on related events and activities and to promote faculty participation.
- ***Increased presence in university level committees***
Representatives of this committee have increasingly served on related committees to promote faculty engagement, goodwill, and support for Alumni office programming. Representatives have served in the VCU Homecoming planning committee as well as taking part in Alumni month (usually taking place in April) events.
- ***Point of contact for Alumni Relations***

Representatives of this committee have served as a key point of contact for the Alumni office and their efforts and will continue to provide support and assistance with programming and related events in the future.

CREDENTIALS and RULES:

- Oversee and enforce attendance regulations
- Grant exemptions to attendance requirements for individual Senators when necessary
- Reapportion Faculty Senate seats annually as specified in the Bylaws and Standing Rules
- Reapportion Grievance Board seats annually as specified in the VCU Faculty Mediation and Grievance Policy
- Review and propose revisions to the Bylaws of the Faculty and Standing Rules of the Faculty Senate
- Revisions to the Faculty Bylaws, Standing Rules of the Faculty Senate, and Faculty Senate Leadership Guidelines

ECONOMIC STATUS, BUDGET, and PLANNING:

- Efforts focused on discussing budget and finance issues and initiatives that have the potential to impact faculty with VCU administrators. This has included periodic meetings with administrators, participation in lobbying state legislators over issues related to fringe benefits, and membership on several university-level committees.
- In 2017, the committee has been participating in the university's budget model redesign, and helping to communicate potential impact(s) of this redesign on faculty.
- In 2018, the committee's focus will be on the initial rollout of the university's budget model redesign.

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE:

- Instrumental in initiating the VCU Climate Survey
- Fought for Equity in pay for women
- Instrumental in establishing the position of VP for Inclusive Excellence
- Issued The Faculty Senate Resolution Concerning The Decline In Black Faculty (August 2015)
- Participation in the development of the 5 year Diversity plan
- Participation on the Learning Council
- Launched the Board of Visitors and Faculty Senate Lunch Presentations that provide the members of the VCU Board of Visitors a more personal look at some of the outstanding faculty at VCU and their impact on students. (Feb 2016)
- Issued Faculty Senate Resolution on Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion (November 2016)
- Helped develop the definition of 'faculty' for HR Redesign (Jan 2017)

- Brought faculty voice to the Diversity Strategic Action Plan and continues to monitor the progress of the plan
- Continued participation on the Council of Inclusive Excellence

STATE LEGISLATIVE and STATEWIDE RELATIONS:

- **Maintains a strong alliance with the Faculty Senate of Virginia**
(<http://facultysenateofvirginia.org/>)
 - ~ A representative of this committee attends the Faculty Senate of Virginia meetings. These meetings are held once in the Fall and once in the Spring and are hosted by colleges and universities across the Commonwealth.
 - ~ In Fall 2017, VCU hosted the Faculty Senate of Virginia meeting at the Larrick Center. The committee was responsible for planning this meeting which included the participation of Matt Conrad, Executive director of government and board relations at VCU, as guest speaker. Dr. Rodriguez, co-chair of the committee is also currently serving as secretary of the Faculty Senate of Virginia (2017-2019).
- **Develops and maintains a positive relationship with the State Legislature**
 - ~ Worked in collaboration with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the Faculty Senate of Virginia to develop legislative strategies and prepare position papers to present to legislators during Higher Education Advocacy Day (VHEAD).
 - ~ During VHEAD 2018, one position paper focused on encouraging legislators to invest in higher education as they considered the amendments to the 2018-2020 biennial budget. A second position paper presented information about a bill that would allow institutions to provide tuition waivers to dependents of faculty. HB 1425, sponsored by Delegate Debra Rodman, “authorizes public institutions of higher education to grant full or partial tuition waivers to dependent students of faculty members employed by the institution, to be paid out of the institution’s non-general funds. The bill would also authorize public institutions to enter into reciprocal agreements that would allow the dependents of faculty to use waivers at other public institutions that are party to the agreement”. On January 29th 2018, a member of the committee had the opportunity to speak on behalf of the bill at the House Appropriations Higher Education Subcommittee. However, the bill was tabled (i.e. defeated).
- **Encourages faculty participation and serves as host to those attending VHEAD**
 - ~ VCU Faculty Senate serves as host to faculty and students attending VHEAD. Members of the State Legislative and Statewide Relations Committee have been responsible for reserving the venue, arranging for catering as well as actively participating in VHEAD. The committee has been actively working to encourage faculty to participate in VHEAD. During VHEAD 2018, 6 faculty from the Biology Department participated in VHEAD for the first time.

STUDENT AFFAIRS:

- Continued efforts in connecting the VCU Faculty and Student leadership

WEBSITE and SOCIAL MEDIA:

- Developed and maintained an informational website that facilitates communication between Senate leadership and VCU faculty at large
- Created a Facebook page
- Modernized communications for the Faculty Senate