

Vanderbilt University
Faculty Senate Meeting
November 10, 2005, 4:10 p.m.
140 Frist Hall, School of Nursing

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes of September 8, 2005

Note: Minutes can be found on the Senate website at:

<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/facultysenate/files/090805facsen.pdf>

Report of the Executive Committee

John A. McCarthy, Chair of the Faculty Senate

Update on the Freshman Commons:

Presentation by Katherine Morgan, president of Student Government Association,
and Kyle Southern, president of Interhall Council

Presentation by Howard Sandler, Associate Provost of Special Projects

Committee on Academic Programs and Services (Senator Karen Campbell, Chair)

Report and recommendation on proposed new Master of Fine Arts in Creative
Writing (College of Arts and Sciences)

Senate Affairs Committee report (Senator Cathy Pettepher, Chair)

Report on activities since October 6, 2005 meeting

New business

Good of the Senate

Voting Members present: Adams, Ahner, Barry, Barz, Burk, Campbell, Carter,
Casagrande, Cummings, Dowdy, Ellingham, Emeson, Friedman, Fuchs, Galloway,
Heflinger, Hodges, Jennings, Lachs, Levine, Link, McCarthy, McCarty, Peebles,
Pettepher, Porter, Reisenberg, Sandler, Smith, Smrekar, Steinberg, Tolk.

Voting Members absent: Barnett (regrets), Benbow, Bradford, Conway-Welch (regrets),
Ernst (regrets), Flake, Fogo (regrets), Foster (regrets), Gabbe (regrets), George (regrets),
Griffin, Hearn (regrets), Hetcher, Hoffman, Hudnut-Beumler, LeBoeuf, Neely (regrets),
Rubin, Schmidt, Shyr (regrets), Tarpley (regrets), Wait, Washington (regrets), and
Wasserstein (regrets).

Ex Officio Members present: Gotterer, Kovalcheck, Sandler, and Thompson.

Ex Officio Members absent: Balsler, Barge, Brisky (regrets), Chalkley, Gee (regrets), Gherman (regrets), Hall, Jacobson (regrets), McNamara, Outlaw, Perfetto, Schoenfeld (regrets), Spitz, Summar (regrets), Williams, and Zeppos (regrets).

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The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Chair John A. McCarthy. Minutes from the 9/8/05 meeting were reviewed and a motion was made to approve them. Motion passed unanimously.

Next Item on the Agenda – Report of the Executive Committee

Chair McCarthy gave an overview of the work of the Senate from the last year, as well as the issues that the Senate is currently working on (see the text of his comments below):

Actions Taken since last meeting

1. We wish to build on the history of success of the Faculty Senate in implementing new policies and initiatives in the past several years
 - a. conflict of interest
 - b. classified research
 - c. standards of conduct
 - d. agreement on how the Faculty Manual is revised
 - e. new Master of Science in Finance degree approved
 - f. faculty survey
 - g. agreement on broadening the pool of candidates to serve on the ad hoc grievance committee
 - h. agreement to archive Senate related materials and documents in the Faculty Senate Office.
 - i. COIA: the FS supported changes to the Scholarship for Athletes program to develop principles, rules, and best practices for academic integrity
 - j. Expanded and upgraded office space for the Faculty Senate
 - k. Quick agreement to expand child care services
 - l. Quick agreement on the need to expand mental health care services

2. I sent a memorandum to all elected senators following the Oct. 6 meeting indicating what actions would be and already had been taken since our special session. I am happy to report the following steps accomplished:
 - a. At its monthly meeting with Provost Zeppos and VCHA Jacobson (on 12 Oct.) and with Chancellor Gee (on 28 Oct.), the EC discussed the frustration expressed by some senators at the special October 6 meeting of the FS. All three expressed their desire to do what they could to counteract that feeling. All of us are unanimous in believing that we must jointly work to dispel any sense of distrust if we are to have any hope of focusing

our energies and talents on achieving Vanderbilt's lofty academic goals in the near future.

- b. We also reached immediate agreement on the appropriateness of appointing a member of the Student Life committee to the Campus Security Task Force. Apologies were made for not having done so immediately, even though the faculty was already represented on the Task Force. In the future the FS would be consulted as a matter of course. Stokes Peebles attended an open forum on November 1 as our representative. I also attended (and saw Karen Campbell in the audience).
- c. In the EC's meeting with Chancellor Gee, he expressed a willingness to consider issuing a clear statement of his hope that the Faculty Senate would be assured of his desire that it adopt a proactive stance in advancing best practices at Vanderbilt.
- d. In order to promote better communication, the Provost agreed that a periodic posting of updates of progress and actions was a good idea.
- e. The Provost has made available to the Faculty Life committee a white paper on expanded child care to assist it in finding the best solution to a pressing problem of accommodation.
- f. A.-J. Levine, Chair of PEAFF, and I met with the Provost to determine whether there was further room for agreement on Senate-approved changes to the grievance system. The meeting proved to be both instructive and productive, such that we are in agreement on about 70% of the proposed changes and have a deeper appreciation of why some suggestions are less desirable. In the near future, the Provost and A.-J. will be able to provide greater detail.
- g. Deliberations on the motion made on Oct. 6 to recommend a structural change to ensure an independent role for the FS in nominating senators for service on committees, task forces, and commissions have taken place. You will hear more about this item a bit later.
- h. Moreover, Chancellor Gee expressed his intent to involve the Senate in planning a series of mini-seminars designed to refine best strategies for excellence. The idea has been seconded by the Provost. The EC has discussed how the Senate might take the initiative in planning some of these seminars. We seek your input. The first two mini-seminars planned are (1) computational biology and (2) medicine, health, and society.
- i. Communication was cited as one of the areas that could be improved. Steps still to be taken focus on advertising the work of the FS within the University community more widely. The responsibility for these efforts

would logically fall to the Secretary of the FS and/or the chair of Senate Affairs. This is one of the topics for tomorrow's meeting of the EC and the Chairs of Committees.

- j. Also in the future is the suggestion to publish an executive summary of Senate actions; this would be in addition to the customary postings of such actions on the FS website.
- k. On October 10, the EC met with several deans to explore areas of possible collaboration. Among the topics discussed were the role of the centers and departments in shaping intellectual life. A major accomplishment for them was the FS passage of rules for making changes to the Faculty Manual.
- l. With Lisa Ellis and Andy Richter, the respective chairs of the Medical School Staff Conference and the University Staff Conference, I also explored areas of common concern. As a result of that meeting, Lisa and Andy also visited the Faculty Life Committee.
- m. The outstanding grievances (one heard by the ad hoc Grievance Committee, the other by Student Life) have recently been resolved.
- n. Finally, I am pleased to report that the FS has received much positive PR in the past two weeks. The Senate invited Notre Dame President emeritus Rev. Edward "Monk" Malloy to address the Senate on shared governance. He was also invited to participate in an open forum cosponsored by the FS and the CSRC on Intelligent Design on the afternoon of October 27. We had booked a room for ca. 50 people and actually drew an overflow crowd of ca. 90! The proceedings have been posted on the website of the CSRC and a feature article will be included in the *Vanderbilt Magazine* mailed to 85,000 alums. The key role of the Faculty Senate in making this happen has been widely acknowledged. Many thanks to those senators who helped make Father Malloy's visit a genuine success (e.g., Joey Barnett, Norman Tolk and many others). The EC believes that such "outreach" activities designed to contribute to the shaping of the intellectual life of the University should be a staple of FS university-wide involvement beyond our monthly meetings and the work of the standing committees.
- o. Just this past week the BOT met. As chair of the FS, I was invited to address the BOT combined committees on Academic Affairs and on Public Affairs. My topic was the FS focus on academic initiatives. I highlighted the challenge of interdisciplinarity in graduate education. A link to my remarks has been posted on the FS website for the curious among you. I will be meeting with Bill Bain, Chair of the BOT committee on Academic Affairs in early December. In his remarks to the BOT at the two luncheons I attended, Provost Zeppos paid high tribute to the Faculty Senate and its valued role in shared governance.

3. In sum, we have not only been busy but successful in promoting FS objectives. The entire Faculty Senate can feel good about the public recognition that its many active members have received in the past month. We can feel confident that Senate members will serve on all important committees and task forces, if that is our desire. Our collaboration is welcomed with open arms. We have been challenged to be proactive in making Vanderbilt the only place you would ever want to be at!
4. Looking forward, you can expect a return at our December meeting to an elaboration of best strategies for Vanderbilt in the near future. That meeting will begin with remarks by Provost Zeppos and VCHA Jacobson. We are considering a second special session of the FS in January and part of our regular meeting in February 2006 will be devoted to the financial challenges of conducting research.
5. An opportunity for proactive involvement by the FS is offered by the next item on the agenda: The Freshman Commons.

Next Item on the Agenda – Update on the Freshman Commons

Chair McCarthy then introduced Katherine Morgan, president of the Student Government Association, and Kyle Southern, president of Interhall Council, to give an update on the Freshman Commons from the students' perspective.

Kyle began by saying that the Commons will consist of 10 residence halls on the Peabody campus. Eight faculty members will live and interact with the students, along with the Dean of the Commons. He said that they have created a student advisory board called Common Ground to advise the Dean of the Commons (and Howard Sandler, in the meantime). Kate echoed his sentiments and said that she is encouraged by student participation in the project thus far.

Chair McCarthy then turned the floor over to Howard Sandler to give his presentation on the Commons (insert link to PPT presentation)

After his presentation, he mentioned that there are periodic updates on the College Halls website. He said that his role is to be the point person for the faculty, and he welcomes faculty involvement in the project. He then asked for questions.

Senator Karen Campbell: There are no faculty members involved here. What are going to be the roots of communication so that faculty can be involved?

Howard Sandler: He said that it is a two-way street, in terms of communication. Both groups need to start getting together and talking about how faculty members can get involved. He said that the Honors Council is a good example of how students and faculty can work together.

Senator Campbell: Would this be the Dean of the Commons' job description?

Howard Sandler: Yes. We should know who that person is in April or late spring.

Kate Morgan: Yes, then there will be that one person who will be in charge of this. The hope is that the freshmen in 2008 will take over the programmatic functions that Common Ground has outlined.

Chair McCarthy: Part of what we have been endeavoring to do is to start this conversation. We have already been in touch about submitting a joint proposal from the Senate and student groups to work on details together (e.g., via the small grants program). Student Life shouldn't be the only committee working on this project.

Senator Ronnie Steinberg: I think that the university has done an excellent job in diversifying its classes. Has any thought been given to who the freshmen will be that we will be attracting (in terms of serious academic students)?

Howard Sandler: This is exactly the question that drove the design for the Commons.

Senator Steinberg: Rush has a bigger impact on my students than I have.

Kate Morgan: That is a good point that has not been directly addressed yet, but is very important.

Senator Steinberg: I also hear you saying that the faculty needs to become a more intellectual community rather than a "publish or perish" one.

In the interest of time and with apologies, Chair McCarthy limited the discussion, reiterating that this is only the beginning of the dialogue. He thanked Kyle and Kate for their participation.

Kate Morgan then gave a quick review of the drop/add policy information that was distributed to all senators. She said that students want a longer time (14 days instead of 7 days) in order to drop/add classes. She mentioned research that they did on top 30 universities. Most of these universities have a drop/add period of longer than 7 days. She then asked for comments and questions.

Senator Craig Anne Heflinger gave her perception of how disruptive the drop/add period is for professors.

Kate Morgan: Are there serious oppositions to extending the drop period?

Senator John Lachs: Some classes are in demand. It would be counterproductive if students can only drop and not add.

Chair McCarthy suggested that the Senate think about the resolution and craft a response later to the SGA resolution.

Next Item on the Agenda – Report and recommendation on proposed new Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing

Chair McCarthy turned the floor over to Senator Karen Campbell, chair of APS.

Senator Campbell said that the Department of English has proposed an MFA in Creative Writing. It has been through all of the proper channels and it is very well supported. The consensus on the APS committee was that it was a strong proposal and we support it.

Senator John Lachs had questions about how many students per year would be involved in the program. Karen said 12 students total.

Chair McCarthy asked whether the fellowships earmarked for the new MFA represented new money or where they created by decreasing funding to other programs? Dean Richard McCarty replied that all money is new. He explained that not all students will be funded at first, but they are hopeful that some alumni will endow fellowships.

Chair McCarthy called for a vote on the motion to approve the program. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Item on the Agenda – Senate Affairs Committee report

Senator Cathy Pettepher, chair of Senate Affairs committee, then gave a report from the her committee on work they have done since the 10/6/05 special executive session on the non-binding motion brought up by John Lachs at this meeting. She reported that her committee looked at the motion. The committee worked on the wording of the motion and came up with several different wordings of it. The motion was discussed with the executive committee and the committee chairs. The ideas were also discussed in the monthly meetings of the Senate Executive Committee and with the Chancellor and Provost/VCHA. That information was filtered back to Senate Affairs. The Senate Affairs committee then thought that the motion should be presented by John Lachs if he still felt strongly about it.

Chair McCarthy thanked Senator Pettepher for her committee's hard work.

Next Item on the Agenda – New Business

Chair McCarthy then moved onto New Business. Senator John Lachs presented his motion:

“The close cooperation of the Faculty Senate and the university administration is vital for advancing the interests of Vanderbilt University. Accordingly, the Faculty Senate

requests that the Chancellor appoint a representative of the Senate to each university committee, task force and working group.”

Chair McCarthy opened the floor to discussion and limited discussion to ten minutes.

Senator Andy Porter: When you say representative of the Senate you don't mean senator?

Senator Lachs: No.

Dean Richard McCarty: I am on the Safety Task Force. So, I am also a senator. But I think you mean elected senator.

Senator Porter: My concern was that I don't want to be on all of these committees.

Senator Campbell: I'm concerned about leaving the mechanism unspecified. I would like to change the wording to specify that the Chancellor consult with the Senate Executive Committee.

Senator Norman Tolk: One of the issues here is that whoever is to be the representative should also report back to the Senate and keep the Senate informed. The reporting function is key.

Senator Michael Hodges: I assumed we meant elected senators, too. If we are going to spell it out, we should put that in there.

Howard Sandler: One possible solution is to designate someone as the Senate's representative. Then you could ask that person to report to the Senate.

Senator Ron Emeson: I appreciate the conciseness of the wording, but we need to make it more specific.

Senator A.-J. Levine: I'm concerned about the probable inefficiency of having a designate come report to us. Why not have reports from these committees instead?

Senator Cathy Fuchs: I'm concerned that we are tying ourselves down to details that we might not be able to fulfill.

Senator Bruce Barry: I don't see that this is a problem. I think the intent is to keep Kirkland Hall from cutting out faculty voices.

Senator Lachs: I think that the problem is the flow of information from Faculty Senate to these task forces, not the other way around.

Past Chair Bob Thompson: The wording is problematic since the Senate itself doesn't meet but 8 times per year.

Senator Fuchs: Commented that she is worried that the Senate is caught up in the details.

Senator Stan Link: Remind everyone that one of the other reasons to bring this up. There has been redundancy of work between university task forces and Senate committees. There is a disconnect between the Senate's work and the administration.

Chair McCarthy: The "redundancy" is by design. At its August 2005 retreat the EC and Chairs of the standing committees agreed that we should tie our activities into the Academic Mission Design. Both the Chancellor and the Provost have said that the administration is committed to involving faculty members in major initiatives.

Senator Campbell: I don't share your optimism, John. I don't see how the faculty is involved in major initiatives.

Chair McCarthy explained that the Senate constitution requires that in order for a motion to be voted on, it must be presented to the Senate three days in advance of a meeting. There is a provision that allows for a vote to be taken at the meeting where the motion is presented, but two-thirds of the senators present must vote to suspend the original rule. Senator Bruce Barry moved to make a motion to suspend the rule. A vote was taken. The two-thirds majority was not met, so the motion presented under New Business cannot be voted on at this meeting.

Next Item on the Agenda – Good of the Senate

Chair McCarthy then called for business under Good of the Senate. Hearing none, he called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned 5:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Anne Heflinger,
Secretary