

Vanderbilt University  
Faculty Senate Meeting  
December 9, 2004  
4:10 p.m.  
140 Frist Hall

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes of November 4, 2004

Note: Minutes can be found on the Senate website at:  
<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/facultysenate/files/110404facsen.pdf>

Report of the Executive Committee

Robert Thompson, Chair of the Faculty Senate  
-Developments on the University's conflicts policy  
-Upcoming COIA meeting at Vanderbilt in January

Remarks by Chancellor E. Gordon Gee

Update on Town Hall Meeting and Ongoing Discussion on Classified Research  
Senator Jason Morrow, Chair of APS Committee

Update on Faculty Survey Task Force  
Senator Stan Link, Chair

Overview of Anticipated Benefits Discussion during AY 2004-5  
Robert Thompson, Chair of the Faculty Senate

New business

Good of the Senate

Adjournment

Voting Members present: Adams, Anderson, Barnett, Barz, Campbell, Casagrande, Conklin, Cummings, Ellingham, Fleetwood, Fuchs, Gabbe, Goldfarb, Greene, Griffin, Haglund, Hawiger, Heflinger, Hoffman, Hudnut-Beumler, Lachs, LeBoeuf, Levine, Link, McCarthy, McCarty, McGill, Morrow, Perkins, Pettepher, Sevin, Shyr, Summar, Tellinghuisen, Washington.

Voting Members absent: Benbow (regrets), Booth (regrets), Bradford, Conway-Welch, Eigen, Flake, Foster, Galloway (regrets), Hetcher, Heyneman, Hodges, Masulis (regrets), Neff, Peebles (regrets), Porter, Schmidt, Syverud (regrets), Tarpley (regrets), Tolk, Wait.

Ex Officio Members present: Gee, Gherman, Gotterer, Kovalcheck, Ramsey, Zeppos.

Ex Officio Members absent: Balsler, Barge, Brisky (regrets), Chalkley (regrets), Farran (regrets), Hall, Jacobson (regrets), McNamara, Outlaw, Perfetto, Schoenfeld (regrets), Spitz, Williams.

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The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Chair Robert Thompson. Minutes from 11/4/04 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 Bob Thompson first reported on the Conflict of Interest issue; he gave a brief history of the issue over the last two years. He said that the process has been positive, and he thanked the Provost for his responsiveness to this issue. He also reminded senators that while the Senate does not have final authority over any changes made, the Senate has been very involved in the entire process.

He then mentioned the upcoming meeting on January 6-7, 2005 of the Coalition of Intercollegiate Athletics hosted by Vanderbilt. Past Senate Chair Ginny Shepherd is facilitating this event, and Senate Program Coordinator Andrea Hewitt has helped with the planning of this meeting. Senators Doug Perkins and Stokes Peebles will represent Vanderbilt at this meeting.

Chair Thompson next asked senators for their input on whether to hold the special executive session of elected senators only on January 13, 2005. He opened the floor for discussion.

Senator Karen Campbell asked if this would be a good time to bring up the Living Wage issue. Chair Thompson responded that he thought it would be more productive to have this discussion at a meeting of the full Senate. Senator Dan Fleetwood voiced his agreement. Senator Marie Griffin asked to take a vote after the Living Wage issue was discussed later on the agenda. Chair Thompson agreed and then asked for further discussion on whether to hold the special executive session. Hearing none, he then introduced the Chancellor.

**Next Item on the Agenda - Report from Chancellor Gee**

Chancellor Gordon Gee began by saying that the recent Board of Trust meeting went well. He mentioned that the topics that were discussed by the board were: 1) freshman commons and residential colleges, 2) why we do research at the university, and 3) teaching and undergraduate research (this was a panel that Chair Thompson and Senator A-J Levine participated in). He said that the board is going through a transition time since term limitations have been introduced. He asked senators to send him any suggestions for potential board members.

Chancellor Gee also mentioned the Classified Research Town Hall meeting, and that he was troubled by the term “patriotism” being introduced into the discussion. He said that any decisions made about classified research should be made for the good of the university. He also stated his support for the evaluation of university administrators and said that he will be working to make this happen soon.

Finally, regarding the Living Wage issue, Chancellor Gee said having a meeting without him or other university administrators present would be wrong. He said that he has strong views on this issue and he believes that the university is in the most politically, substantive, and morally correct position. He expressed concern about a discussion without an opportunity to have all of those issues fully discussed and fully understood and the implications fully clarified. He urged anyone who wants to discuss that issue to discuss it, but he intends on being present wherever that discussion takes place. He said that then we can have a discussion that will show the clarity and the moral values that we have at this institution. He ended by saying that he hopes that his needs, wants, and desire will be heard on this issue.

He then opened the floor for questions and comments.

Senator Campbell commented that any discussion of the Living Wage initiative in a closed session would also be talked about in an open session of the Senate. Chancellor Gee replied that he would object to having a debate when the issues are not fully understood. He said that this is not about “star chamber issues,” but rather it is about clarity in terms of discussion with the full facts in front of us. He said that he doesn’t believe that a discussion of this issue should be held in any executive session and that he will object to an executive session on this topic clearly and unequivocally, concluding that he would be there. Senator John McCarthy subsequently asked the Chancellor if there are other issues that would raise his concerns about an executive session discussion, giving two examples. Chancellor Gee responded that the living wage was distinctive-- if the Senate wanted to meet in executive session on that issue he would stand out front with a placard.

Senator Michael Goldfarb asked what motivated the need to explain to the Board of Trust about the importance of faculty research. Chancellor Gee responded that he wanted them to understand that the main function of the university is teaching and research—it is what we are about.

Senator Jacek Hawiger asked about the relocation of graduate student housing due to the residential colleges project. Chancellor Gee responded that the current graduate housing is substandard and that the administration has made this a priority to provide better housing for graduate students.

Senator Richard Haglund asked how the size and constitution of the board compares to our peer institutions and what qualities we are looking for in board members. Chancellor Gee responded that we currently have 41 active board members and that this is in the

mid-range of peer institutions. He added that we are looking for board members who can advocate for the university, open doors for us, and who will make sure that we are doing our work well. He said that they must also have the time and energy to devote to the position.

### **Next Item on the Agenda - Update on Town Hall Meeting and Ongoing Discussion on Classified Research**

Chair Thompson then introduced Senator Jason Morrow, APS chair, to give a presentation on the current status on the work of the Classified Research Task Force (see presentation here: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/facultysenate/files/CRtownhall.ppt>).

Senator Morrow said that the task force plans to meet next week and invites senators and other faculty members to comment on the proposal. He added that the task force plans to introduce a motion to the Faculty Senate sometime in early spring. Senator Dan Fleetwood, task force chair, stated that there has been some discussion over email among the task force members that has been very productive. He added that much of the discussion that has occurred has focused on pragmatism, not principles. He said that more faculty members are interested in considering a limited, phased approach to classified research.

Senator Morrow opened the floor for discussion and questions.

Senator Doug Perkins asked if the task force email discussion was going to be available online. Senator Morrow said that it would not, but that Andrea Hewitt has put up a special section on the Senate webpage with comments from other faculty members about classified research (along with other relevant links). Senator Hawiger asked how top universities deal with this issue. Senator Fleetwood answered that they are divided—some allow classified research and some do not.

Provost Zeppos suggested that senators should familiarize themselves with what Vanderbilt already does with regard to classified research. For example, Vanderbilt already sponsors security clearances. He said that the question is not about whether faculty members can do classified research or not; rather, it is about whether or not Vanderbilt will sponsor this research and build buildings to house it. He concluded that both pragmatics and principles need to be discussed.

### **Next Item on the Agenda - Update on Faculty Survey Task Force**

Chair Thompson then introduced Senator Stan Link, chair of the Faculty Survey task force, to give an update on the task force's work. Senator Link first thanked the task force members (Tim McNamara, Dale Farran, and Gary Jensen) for all their hard work so far. He then gave a history of the faculty survey at Vanderbilt, explaining that, at first, the Provost's office wanted to use an adapted version of an online survey developed by MIT. After extensive review, the task force decided that the MIT survey was not in line with our goals. These goals are: 1) horizontal comparisons with other universities, 2)

vertical comparisons with previous surveys at Vanderbilt, 3) identification of administrative concerns, and 4) identifying issues that faculty members were interested in. He explained that the task force decided that the faculty survey should have four main sections: 1) Faculty morale and issues, 2) Administrative goals and concerns, 3) Senate goals and concerns, and 4) the last section has yet to be decided—possibly, it will include the question of benefits.

He said that the first two sections are being drafted by Associate Provost Tim McNamara. The other task force members have been charged with drafting a set of questions for the Senate section of the survey. He passed out this list of questions and asked for senators' input on the relevance of these issues. He said that the goals of this part of the survey were to evaluate the administration (both upper administration and departments/schools); to increase faculty involvement in university planning; and to look at issues of faculty life, student life, and facilities and infrastructure.

He added that a related concern was establishing a vertical comparison with past surveys. He said that the task force is attempting to identify the best cycle on which to do this (perhaps a three-year cycle). He said that the task force also wants to identify a standing mechanism by which to address the results of the survey, and that they are still discussing the availability of the survey results to the Senate. Also, he said that there are still logistical issues to be addressed. He then opened the floor for questions and discussion.

Dean Richard McCarty suggested that Lauren Brisky's office be contacted with regards to how the recent staff survey was developed.

### **Next Item on the Agenda - Overview of Anticipated Benefits Discussion during AY 2004-5**

Due to time restraints, Chair Thompson postponed this agenda item until a future meeting of the Senate.

### **Next Item on the Agenda – New Business**

Chair Thompson called for new business, and Senator Doug Perkins asked that the Senate consider a motion supporting the Living Wage initiative. Chair Thompson asked Senator Perkins and other interested senators if they would be willing to draft a statement for this motion. Senator Perkins agreed.

Chair Thompson then asked if there were any other pressing issues that needed to be discussed in a special executive session. Senator Craig Anne Heflinger asked about changing the Senate meeting times as this was an issue at the last special executive session. Senator Mark Ellingham, Senate Affairs chair, replied that his committee plans to conduct a poll on this issue soon.

Senator John Lachs asked about the current plan and timeframe for evaluating university administrators. Chair Thompson explained that the Senate Executive Committee will be working with the Faculty Survey task force and the administration on this issue. He

added that he is delighted with the progress on this issue and has been talking to Faculty Senate members from other universities about how they have handled this.

Immediate Past Chair Matthew Ramsey noted that there doesn't seem to be a need for a special executive session in January, but perhaps a regular session should be called instead. Senator Jacek Hawiger made a motion that a regular meeting of the Senate be held in January and the motion was seconded. Chair Thompson opened the floor for discussion. Senator McCarthy said that the Living Wage initiative and the evaluation of administrators should be on the agenda. Chair Thompson said that, at this point, the Living Wage initiative would be the only agenda item. Dean McCarty noted that it is difficult to make this decision with so many senators absent. Chair Thompson suggested that the special executive session should not be held in January, and, instead, this discussion should take place at the regular Senate meeting in February. Senator Hawiger withdrew the motion to hold a regular meeting in January.

#### **Next Item on the Agenda – Good of the Senate**

Chair Thompson then called for business under Good of the Senate, but there was none reported.

Meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marshall Summar,  
Secretary