



FACULTY SENATE Est. 1991

Chairperson
Ronald M. Zaccari

Vice Chairperson
Louis Levy

Executive Secretary
Christine James

Parliamentarian
Jim Muncy/Richard
Haptonstall

MEMORANDUM

To: Ronald M. Zaccari, President

From: Christine James, Executive Secretary

Date: Friday, June 1, 2007

Subject: 2007 Annual Report of the Faculty Senate

Each Faculty Senate meeting of the academic year 2006-2007 began with opening remarks by the President, keeping the Senators updated on campus issues and projects. After his remarks, the meeting was turned over to the Executive Secretary. During each meeting, the statutory committees updated the Senate on their activities since the previous meeting.

In addition, there were several major issues considered. The following presents a summary of these activities during each meeting of the academic year.

SEPTEMBER:

The President began the meeting by updating the members of the Faculty Senate on the current status of the salary studies being undertaken on faculty and staff salary data. An external audit of Valdosta State University's financial processes was positive, and enrollment and credit hour production was up more than 4% over the previous academic year. A new Director of Plant Operations, Ray Sable, was hired and began to work with Faculty Senate committees, including the Environmental Issues Committee. Building plans for a new Student Union were finalized, with demolition and reconfiguration of Hopper residence hall to follow. The future of the University Council was addressed, and plans were made to allow a General Faculty vote on changes to the University Statutes, updating a variety of titles in the Statutes, and including the previous year's Faculty Senate language regarding items that the Faculty Senate approves and the procedures to follow if the President either signs or does not sign those items.

Louis Levy discussed the new Student Success Center, and the new advising manual and advising workshops to be held on campus.

The Institutional Planning Committee revisited its charge, and began to assess its role as a potential planning unit with representation on the University Council.

The Faculty Senate voted to approve a Core Commonality spreadsheet to assist advising of transfer students in the University System of Georgia schools.

New signs were introduced in the Nevins Hall parking lot at the request of the Faculty Senate.

The Faculty Senate voted to approve a new Portal (Email and web usage) Policy for the University.

A Sick Leave Hours Bank was being discussed at the state system level, with our campus contact, Denise Bogart.

A variety of changes to the institutional contribution to Optional Retirement Plans (ORP) were announced in August, and our Faculty Senate as well as a number of other Faculty Senates around the state addressed the issue in open discussion and followed discussions of the Ad Hoc Council at the state level.

Faculty Senators asked about raising the amounts available for Faculty Development awards, and were encouraged to submit proposals in Word .doc format. Louis Levy entered an initiative in the Strategic Planning Database asking for additional Faculty Development funding.

Faculty Senators expressed interest in TurnItIn.com software licensing for the University, and Louis Levy entered an initiative to fund the cost through the Strategic Planning database.

Faculty Senate orientations for new Senators and any past Senators requesting a refresher were presented by the Executive Secretary.

OCTOBER:

The President began the meeting by updating the Faculty Senate on the proposed Health Sciences and Business Administration Center as well as the North Campus Master Plan. The plan includes a variety of partnership ventures between VSU, South Georgia Medical Center, and the Medical College of Georgia. A new parking deck is also planned.

Louis Levy presented the work of the Academic Committee. A variety of new degrees have been proposed: the Doctorate of Public Administration degree, to be acted upon during this academic year; The full proposal for an undergraduate degree in Dance, and the final draft of the letters of intent for a Ph.D. in Social Work, a Ph.D. in Communication Disorders, and a master's degree in Communication Arts were prepared.

Betty Paulk presented on the LibQual study of library service satisfaction, to be taken by a broad selection of campus members.

The Faculty Senate received updates about the ORP changes including communications with the Chancellor and the American Association of University Professors. VSU and AAUP held a forum on campus to discuss the ORP changes.

The Committee on Committees and the Executive Committee reviewed the constituency of the Faculty Senate, and it was noted that most other Senates in the state system do not determine their number of senators based on a ratio with the Ex Officio/Administrative members of committees; rather, most state system schools determine the number of senators in relation to the total number of faculty members on campus. Because of recent hiring and adding of 40+ new faculty positions, we discussed the possibility of moving from a 4-senators-to-1-ex-officio ratio to an 1-senator-for-every-8-faculty-members ratio. No determination was made as of January 2007, but the issue may be revisited.

Jay Rickman suggested that a student photo feature be introduced in Banner, and the issue was remanded to the Technology Committee.

The members of the Environmental Issues Committee worked with Jim Black, Bart Greer, Ray Sable and other members of campus leadership holding meetings and retreats to combine efforts and create a comprehensive, campus wide Environmental Policy.

Michael Noll requested that an official crosswalk be created on Georgia Avenue, leading to the gravel parking lot, similar to the new crosswalks on Patterson and Brookwood.

Committees of the Faculty Senate were reminded to place their contact information and By Laws on Reserve in the Odum Library to comply with requirements for open meetings.

The Statutes changes under review were edited to include reference to our direct contact with the Executive Vice Chancellor, rather than the Chancellor.

Michael Noll requested that the Student Health Center send faculty members notification whenever any student visits the Student Health Center, and the issue was remanded to the Student Services Committee to address whether or not the extensive legal and privacy issues would prohibit such notification.

Members of the Faculty Senate requested that table microphones be given out during the meeting to address concerns with the acoustics in the Magnolia Room.

NOVEMBER:

The President began the meeting by reminding the Faculty Senators of the General Faculty meeting to be held to discuss the changes to the Statutes in January and the need to have a quorum at the meeting, and that if no quorum was made, then online voting procedures would need to be utilized two weeks after the General Faculty meeting and discussion.

Louis Levy discussed a new film on plagiarism, produced by the Odum Library. The enrollment numbers for the Spring semester were up by approximately 5%. Several site visits for accreditation took place on the campus during the semester, and the results were excellent. NCATE recommended that all teacher certification programs within the College of Education were met at all levels. Marriage and Family Therapy had their initial accreditation with one recommendation. VSU's collaborative program with Valdosta Technical College in the area of Dental Hygiene had two recommendations and one commendation.

The Committee on Committees planned next elections of Faculty Senators and at large committee members for the Spring of 2007.

The Academic Scheduling and Procedures Committee presented its data concerning the timing of Spring Break at University System of Georgia schools, and concluded that the great majority of schools do not assume or guarantee that their spring break will match local grade, junior high or high school spring breaks.

Michael Noll presented a report detailing the arguments in favor of spring break matching local schools. The motion made by Michael Noll after presenting the report was not seconded.

The Technology Committee had been asked during the previous academic year to review the possibility of e-rates for online courses; while the committee itself felt positively disposed toward e-rates, the staff members in Finance and Administration and Distance Education would need to be consulted and address the issue after reviewing e-rate policies of other University System Schools.

The next legislative breakfast with local elected officials, state representatives, and members of the AAUP was announced.

The Faculty Senate voted to give five minutes to a presentation by students on the activities of their environmental group and working towards green energy policies and projects on the VSU campus.

FEBRUARY

The President began the meeting with a summary of the General Faculty meeting on Friday, January 12, 2007 and the voting on the most recent revisions to the University Statutes. One hundred sixty-two general faculty members attended the General Faculty meeting and provided excellent recommendations regarding the proposed changes to the VSU Statutes. Since the necessary quorum was not present at the scheduled General Faculty meeting, an online vote took place within a two week period. Two hundred twelve general faculty members voted online: 198 voted to endorse proposed changes and 14 voted against revisions. Overall, the online vote documents a 93.3% endorsement. The revised Statutes were submitted to the Board of Regents and approved at their March meeting. Related to the changes in the Statutes, the Faculty Senate, COSA, and Student Government Association each received two additional seats on the University Council.

The President also presented information on construction projects on the campus, the formation of a new Auxiliary Services Real Estate Foundation, Inc. to oversee construction projects, and the new projects involving collaboration between the University and Medical College of Georgia, and South Georgia Medical Center.

As a result of the salary study undertaken and mentioned in the September meeting notes, President Zaccari also announced in this February meeting that VSU received approval to proceed with the implementation of phase I of the salary plan which includes \$600,000 in the initial phase - \$300,000 for faculty and \$300,000 for staff. An additional \$600,000 will be included each year

from the 2008 and 2009 VSU budgets, thus converting a total of \$1.8 million for the multi-year salary plan. This VSU salary plan is separate from merit increases from the state; therefore, VSU employees who receive an increase as part of phase I of the salary plan would also be eligible to receive a merit increase. 221 individuals received salary adjustments during Phase I – 56 faculty and 165 staff. The faculty senators were especially grateful to hear this news and applauded President Zaccari for his efforts.

During the Academic Committee report, Vice President Louis Levy congratulated the faculty on the positive faculty accomplishments and their annual evaluations from the past calendar year. Vice President Levy also announced changes to the Commencement ceremonies to be held in May, with a change to six smaller ceremonies rather than two larger ceremonies.

New proposals for new graduate degrees were welcomed at the state level, and a review of the withdrawal policies in cases of student plagiarism before the midterm were undertaken by the Educational Policies Committee.

Jay Rickman, Chair of the Committee on Committees, presented updated information on committee structures, and led the vote on the two additional seats on the University Council that were awarded to the Faculty Senate. The two seats were awarded by vote of the Senate to the Chair of the Institutional Planning Committee and the Chair of the Environmental Issues Committee. The Executive Secretary of the Faculty Senate remains on the University Council as well.

Michael Davey, as Chair of the Academic Honors and Awards Committee, made a motion to cancel honors day and have an honors dinner closer to the date of commencement. The motion was approved.

A new Faculty Evaluation Model was submitted to the Faculty Senate, and remanded for review by the Faculty Affairs Committee Chaired by Marty Williams.

New versions of the Authority to Travel and Travel Expense Statement Forms were provided for the Senate to disseminate their use on campus.

The Faculty Senate also provided the annual Administrative Evaluations to all faculty through campus mail. The evaluations were returned to the Office of Strategic Research and Analysis with a record-setting 38% participation rate.

The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate announced its annual review of the By Laws of the Faculty Senate, and requested suggestions for changes. No changes were suggested.

Denise Bogart, Director of Human Resources and Employee Development, continued to keep the Faculty Senate informed regarding changes to the ORP (Optional Retirement Plan) Institutional Contribution and its related legislation at the state level.

President Zaccari informed the Faculty Senate that the City of Valdosta has signed the permits to install a traffic light at the entrance to main campus on Patterson Street as well as placing an additional traffic light at the intersection of Patterson Street and College Street. The traffic lights were expected to be installed between spring break and the month of June.

The Faculty Senate approved a motion to allow John Wright, Assistant Director of Student Life, to speak about the upcoming Relay for Life, a cancer charity fundraiser to be held on campus in April.

MARCH

President Zaccari announced that a developer would be selected at the end of March for upcoming projects that include the demolition of Hopper Hall and the renovation of Georgia and Reade Halls. VSU received permission from the Board of Regents to demolish three existing buildings, including the old white warehouse located on North Campus, 114 Georgia Avenue (currently occupied by Parking and Transportation) and the former Auxiliary Services building on Georgia Avenue. The demolition of the three buildings was also reviewed and approved by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division.

Vice President Louis Levy updated the Senate on the work of the Academic Committee and the Deans' Council, where Levy charged all deans to assist their respective departments in reviewing the catalog listing of assessments and general educational outcomes in preparation for the upcoming SACS visit.

The Faculty Affairs Committee of the Senate met and reviewed the Faculty Evaluation Model, and planned to present a couple of friendly amendments at the Faculty Senate meeting in April.

The Educational Policies Committee of the Senate, represented by Registrar Chuck Hudson, recommended revisions to the "withdrawal from courses policy" so that students would not be allowed to withdraw from courses to avoid sanction for academic dishonesty.

The call for Annual Reports of the Standing Committees of the Faculty Senate was issued, as they are due every year before the May meeting of the Faculty Senate, and meetings to draft the reports would need to be called well in advance. Information from last year's committee reports was provided in the Agenda of this March meeting.

The issue of Spring Break was also discussed, and it was noted that the vote on each year's calendar in advance would involve some debate, and that the vote on the issue would involve some difference of opinion and the vote would probably be split when the calendar would be presented by the Academic Scheduling and Procedures Committee at the next Senate meeting.

A few Faculty Senators also asked questions of clarification on the Salary Study and were provided with further data by Strategic Research and Analysis.

APRIL

President Zaccari updated the Senate on VSU's emergency notification plan. The University System of Georgia appointed a task force several months ago to review each USG institution's plan. Dr. Zaccari encouraged everyone to review the Valdosta State University Emergency Quick Reference Guide that Mr. Bob DeLong, Director of Environmental and Occupational Safety, and the staff of Environmental and Occupational Safety developed. The guide instructs everyone

on the proper procedures for handling a crisis situation. Administrators, faculty and staff received a copy of this document during December, 2006. New VSU employees also receive a copy of the document at their orientation session. The number of emergency phones on campus was increased to 35. Patrols on campus were increased, and new additional lighting has been installed on campus. Connect-ED, a campus alert system providing instant phone messages, was purchased in December 2006 and the software has been pilot-tested during the last several months. The information was especially important given violent events at Virginia Tech this same April.

Vice President Levy informed the Senate that Dr. Sheri Gravett is chairing the VSU General Education Program review. Additionally, Dr. Dorothy Leland is the chair of a USG committee that is reviewing the framework of the core curriculum. Neither the General Education Program nor the core curriculum has been reviewed since VSU converted from quarters to semesters. The reports and strategies from these two committees will be discussed at the VSU General Faculty meeting during Fall, 2007.

The Committee on Committees continued its process of elections and committee assignments for Academic Year 07-08.

Marty Williams, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, presented friendly amendments to the Faculty Evaluation Model for Senate approval. A motion was made to accept the friendly amendments and the motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Carol Barnett, current Chair of the Academic Scheduling and Procedures Committee, provided background information regarding the proposed 2008-2009 Academic Schedule. The committee voluntarily surveyed faculty and students during Fall semester, 2006. The results of the survey, along with additional information regarding other USG institutions spring breaks, was presented to the Faculty Senate in November, 2006 and are included in the appendices of these minutes. Also, Dr. Barnett noted that the VSU Student Government Association voted 20 to 1 in favor of keeping Spring Break in the middle of the semester. As the committee deliberated about the 2008-2009 calendar, they invited several constituencies to address their February meeting. These constituencies included representatives from the Lowndes County and Valdosta City School systems and Michael Noll of VSU. After carefully considering the information gathered, the committee unanimously approved the proposal that is included in these minutes as Appendix C. Dr. John Hummel called the question. Fifty-four senators voted to proceed with voting on the calendar without any discussion and 12 senators voted no, indicating they preferred to discuss the calendar before voting on it. A motion to pass the calendar as a whole was made and 56 senators voted to approve the calendar as presented by the committee and 10 senators voted against the calendar. The calendar was approved as presented by the Academic Scheduling and Procedures Committee. The most controversial aspect of the discussion was the timing of Spring Break. The outcome of this vote determined that the VSU Spring Break remains in the middle of the semester (not in April when local grade schools and junior high schools tend to place it) for the 08-09 Academic Year.

The Environmental Issues Committee had worked throughout the 06-07 year on a comprehensive Environmental Management Policy for the campus. Vice President Jim Black stated that members of the Environmental Issues Committee and others met to review Section 1 of the Environmental Policy. He noted that Section 2 is not eligible for change, as it refers to a variety of federal and state regulations. A meeting to review Section 3 was also scheduled; however, a quorum was not present so another meeting to review Section 3 had been scheduled for April 20th. The EIC shared its recommendations with the Faculty Senate, the Council on Staff Affairs, and the Student Government Association. A final review of the proposed policy was scheduled to be presented to the University Council in May. Mr. Black thanked Dr. Richard Carter, Chair of the Environmental Issues Committee, as well as the Student Government Association, members of S.A.V.E., Mr. Ray Sable, Director of Physical Plant and Facilities Planning, and the staff of Physical Plant and Facilities Planning for their assistance.

An issue was remanded to the Educational Policies Committee regarding whether or how minors could be awarded after a (major) degree was awarded. Vice President Louis Levy then led the meeting, handling the yearly election of the Executive Secretary of the Faculty Senate and Christine James was reelected by acclamation.

MAY

President Zaccari opened the meeting with updates on the current legislative session, during which a variety of building projects on the campus were approved and funded.

Vice President Louis Levy provided the Faculty Senate with additional updates on accreditation of programs at Valdosta State, with all programs such as those in the Langdale College of Business Administration, the Dewar College of Education, having their accreditation renewed and receiving excellent reviews.

The Parliamentarian of the Faculty Senate, Jim Muncy, stepped down and Richard Haptonstall accepted the Parliamentarian position.

The Institutional Planning Committee agreed to begin including the minutes of the University Council meetings in their regular committee reports at Faculty Senate meetings as a means of strengthening the connection between the Faculty Senate and the University Council.

The Environmental Management Policy was presented by the Environmental Issues Committee, and was unanimously accepted and recommended for its final review in the University Council over the summer.

Dean Phil Gunter asked a question on Graduate Degrees/Doctoral Degrees and special exceptions policies for VSU current employees. This item is currently remanded to the Educational Policies Committee for its review and clarification (in 2004, the item was intended to include all graduate degrees, not only doctorate).

The Standing Committees of the Faculty Senate all provided annual reports, and their reports are available in the minutes of the May meeting of the Faculty Senate. The reports were some of the most complete and detailed that

the Faculty Senate has ever received, and items remanded to committees before the April meeting are in general resolved and reported on in these reports. Each report was voted and approved, and one committee was up for its three year review, the Student Activities Committee. This Committee was reviewed and revised during the academic year, and its revision was unanimously approved and the committee was renewed for three years at this Faculty Senate meeting, until May 2010. All other standing committees will be up for three year renewal in May 2009.

1. Environmental Issues, Richard Carter
2. Academic Scheduling and Procedures, Carol Barnett
3. Academic Honors and Scholarships, Michael Davey
4. Athletics, Jim Muncy (Proxy: Michael Noll)
5. Educational Policies, Peggy Moch (Proxy: Theresa Thompson)
6. Faculty Development and Research, Richard Amesbury
7. Library Affairs, Apryl Price
8. Minority and Diversity Issues, Clemente Hudson
9. Student Activities, Kenny Ott (Proxy: Patrick McGuire)
10. Student Services, Cheré Peguesse
11. Technology, John Samaras (Proxy: Bob Williams)

Executive Secretary's personal goals for the Faculty Senate for the year past, 2006-2007:

1. Have all Faculty Senate committees provide contact information and or meeting information at the Reference Desk of the Odum Library – Done
2. Have all Faculty Senate committees review and provide current copies of their committee By Laws to both the Executive Secretary and the Reference Desk of the Odum Library -- Done
3. Have all new Faculty Senators attend training sessions by October -- Done
4. Have the Faculty Senate gain a greater role in Planning and Strategic Budget activities – This was originally conceived as giving the Senate access to the Strategic Planning Database, but the Executive Committee of the Senate decided together that providing per se “Senate” Goals, Initiatives and Action Steps would be counterproductive. Instead, this goal came to pass through the added representation on the University Council. This is probably the best way for Senate committees to achieve their goals, since membership on the Council brings with it responsibility and public accountability for all involved. I believe the participation of the Faculty Senate's additional members has been excellent so far. Done indirectly.
5. Increase accountability for Faculty Senate attendance and participation – This is a difficult goal, and one that has more to do with the Committee on Committees and its routine record and attendance keeping than the Executive Secretary herself or himself. There are a number of Senators

with attendance records that, according to the By Laws, are now required to be removed from the Senate. For political reasons and because of the difficulty of the Committee on Committees' work in staging special elections to replace lax senators, I have to acknowledge that it is an area in which the committee prefers to tread lightly and I will respect their wishes on the matter. I do suggest, however, that the Committee on Committees should be the Committee consulting with Ann Lacey on the future structure of the Commencement Ceremonies, and that the Committee on Committees should name Faculty Senate representatives for these ceremonies based on their service, their accountability, and their clean Senate attendance records (within the stated numbers of acceptable absences and proxies.)

(Rationale for this recommendation: Up until the present, the Executive Secretary has been Ann Lacey's main consultant on the Commencement Committee, and has been expected to personally invite a variety of faculty representatives to stand at the Commencement ceremonies. This is a very difficult task, especially when we have combined ceremonies involving more than one college, like Arts and Business; when we have only one faculty seat in the platform party; and when we have a variety of faculty who expect that they deserve the privilege of being recognized at the ceremony. Having one individual do these invitations provides too much opportunity for ill will and offense to be taken by some faculty members. A committee, not one individual faculty member, should extend these invitations after due diligence, and after considering all the Faculty Senators' service in terms of years served, accountability, and attendance. The committee that is best suited and best informed in these areas is the Committee on Committees.)