



## FACULTY SENATE

Est. 1991

**Chairperson**  
Ronald M. Zaccari

**Vice Chairperson**  
Louis Levy

**Executive Secretary**  
Mike Meacham

**Parliamentarian**  
John Samaras

### Agenda

September 15, 2005

The Faculty Senate will meet Thursday, September 15, 2005 in the **ODUM LIBRARY AUDITORIUM** at 3:30 p.m.

Items in **bold print** are items that require action by the Faculty Senate. Other items are for information only.

**Special Request:** At the request of the University President and Chairperson of the Senate, any actions from the Senate sent to the Chairperson for approval after the Senate votes should be accompanied by a written document with the rationale and purpose of the decision.

1. Call to Order

For the benefit of record keeping, senators and visitors will please identify themselves when speaking to an issue during the meeting. Please use the microphones to assist with accurate recording. All senators must sign the roster in order to be counted present.

2. **Approval of the minutes of the May 19, 2005, meeting of the Faculty**

**Senate. These may be found at: <http://www.valdosta.edu/vsu/facsen/Minutes/050519min.pdf>**

3. New business

- a. Report from Dr. Zaccari, University President
- b. Report from the Academic Committee – Louis Levy
- c. Report from the Committee on Committees – Elaine Yontz
- d. Report from the Institutional Planning Committee – Richard Schmertzing
- e. Report from the Faculty Affairs Committee – John Hummel
- f. Report from the Faculty Grievance Committee – Stephen Lahr

g. Report from the Senate Executive Secretary – Mike Meacham

- (1) Goals for this school year
- (2) Reminder

4. New Business

- (1) Suggestion for improving course withdrawal process (Bruce Castor) – [Attachment 1](#)
- (2) Request to review and amend post tenure review (John Samaras) – [Attachment 2](#)

5. Old Business

- (1) Faculty Development and Research Statement (Stephen Lahr) – [Attachment 3](#)

6. Discussion

7. Adjournment

## **Attachment 1**

Mike,

I have a suggestion that I'd like the faculty senate to consider. I'd appreciate it if you'd assign this to an appropriate committee and ask them to develop a proposal. Thanks!

Dr. A. Bruce Caster  
Professor of Accounting and Finance  
Langdale College of Business Administration  
Valdosta State University

### **Suggestion for improving the course withdrawal process**

Change the current process for course withdrawals (student-initiated that occur prior to midterm) so that the withdrawal process can be performed online through BANNER. (Note: This suggestion would ONLY apply to student-initiated course withdrawals that occur prior to midterm; it would NOT change the current drop/add procedures, NOR would it change the current process for withdrawing after midterm.) In developing this new system it would be important to involve ALL affected parties (e.g., financial aid, veteran's affairs, etc., in addition to the student and the professor) in order to make sure that new course withdrawal system includes all of the necessary notifications and permissions to satisfy all of their various requirements.

### **Discussion**

Chuck Hudson tells me that the capability for online course withdrawal already exists within BANNER, and several USG schools already handle course withdrawals in this fashion. Thus, developing and implementing this system would not be technologically challenging or extremely time-consuming. He also has indicated to me that he is a strong proponent of this change.

There are at least two good arguments that I can present in favor of this change. First, this change would eliminate a number of unnecessary steps that exist in the current process. Second, this change would provide several enhancements not available in the current system.

The unnecessary steps that could be eliminated revolve around the current requirement that the student obtain the professor's signature – and that the professor enter a grade for the student – on the course withdrawal form. That requirement demands time and effort both from the student and also from the professor, and it serves absolutely no purpose. The student does not need the professor's permission to withdraw, so the professor's signature does not confer approval. Additionally, there is no need for the professor to enter a grade on the form: By university policy, the grade assigned to a student who withdraws prior to midterm MUST be a W. Forcing the professor to take the time to mark a "W" on the form is a meaningless exercise. Online withdrawal would completely eliminate these meaningless steps.

Online withdrawal provides at least two enhancements over the current system. One is the ability to provide the professor with an affirmative notification that the student has withdrawn.

Currently, when a professor signs a withdrawal form, that professor has no way of knowing whether or not the student actually turned in the form and completed the withdrawal process. Nothing is ever sent back to the professor to confirm that the student did withdraw. However, BANNER might be programmed (Chuck Hudson indicates that he suspects it might be possible) to send an email to the professor (and also to the student?) confirming that the student has withdrawn from a course. A second enhancement is automatic enforcement of the course withdrawal deadline. Currently, students are forever coming by a day or two after the deadline, complaining that "I couldn't find you last week," and asking me to backdate a withdrawal form. If withdrawals were done online, BANNER could be set to process withdrawals from a certain date/time until a certain date/time (in the same way that registration is currently done). And if someone missed the deadline, there'd be no human to wheedle or cajole. BANNER is singularly unresponsive to that sort of thing...

## **Attachment 2**

### **Post-tenure Review**

(to be inserted in VSU Faculty Handbook at the end of the section on tenure)

#### **PREAMBLE**

Tenure protects academic freedom; it is granted only after a rigorous review of an individual's teaching, scholarship, and university service. The tenured faculty member becomes a leader of the university community by providing direction, expertise, and stability to the university's academic programs. Tenured faculty members must maintain a level of professional competence that serves as a model for all faculty members and for members of the professional community. According to Board of Regents' policy, this competence must be evaluated periodically throughout each faculty member's career.

#### **GOALS**

Routine evaluation of tenured faculty is a system of recognition, reward, and enhancement of faculty performance. In every aspect of post-tenure review, the principles of academic freedom and due process must be protected.

#### **Goal 1: Expand and strengthen established evaluation procedures**

Valdosta State University (VSU) already evaluates the performance of all faculty members through an established annual review process. This process is designed to guide faculty in maintaining a high level of professional competence and to recognize and reward faculty for outstanding achievement. The annual evaluations will serve as the guide for the post-tenure review, and each annual evaluation should end with a statement that clearly specifies if the previous year's performance was outstanding, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory.

The post-tenure review process should not place an onerous burden on faculty to document their continuing competence, which is why the primary documentation submitted by faculty are the five most recent annual evaluations and a current curriculum vitae. Generally, faculty with three or more outstanding annual evaluations with at least two of these within the three years prior to the review will be considered as candidates for reward and recognition by the department/unit's Promotion and Tenure Committee. Faculty who have two or more unsatisfactory annual evaluations with at least one of these within the three years prior to the review will be considered as candidates for remediation. Faculty whose annual evaluations are between these extremes will be provided with information concerning their areas of strength as well as those areas which they should consider for continued development.

The post-tenure review will be conducted by each department/unit's Promotion and Tenure Committee. The deadline for submission of material will be consistent with those established for VSU promotion and tenure. This review should begin five years after the most recent promotion or personnel action (tenure) and continue at five year intervals unless interrupted by a promotion,

impending candidacy for promotion within a year, or approved leave of absence. A statement will be added to each annual contract stating the anticipated year for post-tenure review. Tenured faculty who hold administrative positions above department head will be reviewed five years after returning to a full-time teaching appointment. The review process for department heads will be the same as for faculty except the report from the review committee will be submitted to the dean of that college.

The post-tenure review should address accomplishments in teaching, in advising and serving students, in research/scholarly/creative activity, and in service. While a candidate should not be expected to prepare additional materials solely for the purpose of the post-tenure review, faculty should provide performance documentation as follows:

- (1) a current curriculum vitae and copies of annual evaluations for the years under consideration;
- (2) measures of teaching effectiveness including, but not limited to, written student ratings and/or peer evaluations;
- (3) a self-assessment; and
- (4) other documentation faculty may choose to present.

### **Goal 2: Recognize and reward outstanding professional accomplishments**

Post-tenure review should help tenured faculty members improve their performance. One important means of achieving this objective is formally to recognize and adequately reward outstanding faculty accomplishments. The University will develop a reward structure that recognizes faculty excellence, supports distinguished faculty work, attracts and retains outstanding faculty, and enhances the academic reputation of VSU. Such a reward program should include, among other measures, the following:

- (1) increased visibility for faculty achievements in teaching, scholarship, and service;
- (2) substantial merit-pay increases that are in addition to those awarded through the annual evaluation process; and
- (3) continuation, expansion, and support of course reassignment policy and an enhancement of the leave of absence program for the development of faculty scholarship, other creative professional activities, and teaching.

### **Goal 3: Detect and remediate sub-standard professional performance**

If, as a result of the review process, the need for faculty development is recommended, the Promotion and Tenure Committee will provide a written summary of its findings and any recommendations to the department/unit head. Department/unit heads should add their own comments, confer with the faculty member, and present the findings. Both the department/unit head and the faculty member must sign the report indicating the results had been presented and discussed. If a development plan is proposed, recommendations from the Promotion and Tenure Committee will be forwarded to the department/unit head for additional suggestions.

This development plan must: (a) define specific goals or outcomes; (b) outline activities to be undertaken to achieve these goals or outcomes; (c) contain a schedule; and (d) define the criteria

by which the faculty member's progress will be monitored. The department/unit head will be responsible for forwarding the faculty member's development plan resulting from post-tenure review to the appropriate administrator at least one level above the faculty member's unit and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The department/unit head and administrative officer are responsible for arranging appropriate support for the approved plan, if required. This process will be integrated into the timetable for personnel decisions and merit pay decisions established by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The development plan will be signed by the members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee, the department/unit head, and the faculty member. A copy of this signed plan will be provided to the faculty member, committee members, the department/unit head, and the appropriate dean. As part of the annual evaluation, the department/unit head will meet with the faculty member engaged in enhancement work to review progress according to the plan. The outcome of this review will be included in the annual evaluation. If, in a period of time not to exceed three years, the department/unit head and Promotion and Tenure Committee agree the faculty member has been successful, they will report this to the department/unit head, dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. A faculty member who successfully completes the development plan will be reviewed 5 years from the date of the original review.

For a faculty member who fails to achieve the improvements identified in the development plan within the agreed-upon timetable as evidenced by the department/unit head's evaluation, both the faculty member and head will be asked to submit a written explanation to the Promotion and Tenure Committee. The faculty member's account should explain why the faculty member has been unable to meet the terms of the development plan. The Promotion and Tenure committee may respond to these written explanations in one of three ways. The Promotion and Tenure Committee:

- (1) may agree with the faculty member's evaluation that performance has improved;
- (2) may agree with the faculty member's explanation for why the performance goal(s) have not been met; in this case, the committee will work with the faculty member to revise the development plan; or
- (3) disagree with the faculty member's explanation; in this case it will prepare a report of the entire post-tenure review process specific to the case, and forward it to the faculty member, the department/unit head, and the dean with the recommendation that appropriate sanctions be implemented.

Regardless of the committee's recommendation, the faculty member can follow the appeals process established by the Board of Regents.

If the administration decides to initiate sanctions or dismissal procedures because of incompetent performance on the part of the faculty member, it will adhere to the University and Board of Regents guidelines for dismissal for cause.

## **ESTABLISHING STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE**

Each department/unit will periodically review and maintain its statement of expectations for

satisfactory performance applicable to all faculty members (tenured and non-tenured). Departmental/unit statements will address expectations for the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. These must be as specific as possible, without arbitrarily precluding the diverse contributions that individual faculty members might make to the university community. Individual differences in teaching, scholarship, and service are valued. After approval by the members of the department/unit, the statement will be submitted to the dean for review.

The dean of each unit will certify in writing that department/unit expectations are in keeping with the established mission of the college, that they meet minimum standards, and that expectations are equitable throughout the college. These expectations will be provided to all new faculty. Questions concerning these policies and procedures will be answered at annual meetings open to all faculty of the college.

## **CONCLUSION**

This post-tenure review provides an opportunity to assess faculty development goals and achievements and provides assistance to faculty in ensuring continuous intellectual and professional growth. The post-tenure review is distinguished from the annual review in that it requires faculty and administrators to assess achievements and goals over a longer term. It also merges the faculty and administration into a unit dedicated to expanding and strengthening the overall quality of education at VSU by encouraging highly motivated and professionally active tenured faculty.

### **Attachment 3**

(FROM FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH)

#### STATEMENT

The Committee for Faculty Development and Instructional Improvement provides funding for the professional activities of full-time VSU faculty members only. The committee does not provide funds for honoraria nor stipends to support outside workshop presenters or performers. There are committees and sources of funding on campus that are charged with that responsibility.