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2015-2016 Annual Report of the Faculty Senate
By Dr. Peggy L. Moch

The 2015-2016 academic year began with Dr. Cecil Staton becoming the Interim President of VSU and ended with him taking a position at another university outside of the USG. Dr. Staton was given a directive from USG Chancellor Huckaby for the reduction of faculty at VSU due to a five year reduced enrollment trend. Thirty individuals received letters of non-renewal including staff, temporary faculty and tenure line faculty. No tenured faculty received letters. Determinations for the reduction of faculty were based on the number of credit hours generated by departments, not contact hours. Decisions for which personnel were to receive letters were made by Department Heads and their respective Deans based on the guidelines received from USG attorneys for this purpose. Letters were then dispersed from the Deans' offices. On January 28th, 2016 the faculty senate passed a resolution of support for the faculty and staff receiving letters of non-renewal which was forwarded to Dr. Staton on February 2nd, 2016. Letters of explanation for use by those receiving letters and other assistance were posted to the Faculty Senate webpage under "Faculty Support" as stated in the resolution.

On July 1, 2015, Dr. James Archibald became the Interim Vice President for Student Affairs and thereby had to resign as President of the Faculty Senate (FS). Dr. Peggy Moch the VP/PE was made President of the FS per the bylaws following Dr. Archibald's resignation. Dr. Bonni Cohen, accepted the position of Interim Assistant Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and likewise resigned as Secretary of the FS. Vacancies were announced at the August 2015 meeting of the FS and elections were held at the September 2015 meeting with Mr. Michael Holt being elected as VP/PE and Dr. Sudip Chakraborty being elected Secretary. At this time, it was discovered that elections had not been held in spring 2015 for a third of the FS and a third of the statutory committee seats, nor had a third of the standing committee seats been assigned. The Chair of the Committee on Committees (CoCo) was notified and in conjunction with the FS President, Dr. Moch, Deans were notified of the need for elections. Dr. Moch would like to commend and thank Ms. Kalina Winska, the CoCo Chair, for her diligence and dedicated service in completing the work of her committee in a timely manner throughout the academic year.

Summary of Issues Addressed:

August 2015

- Special Committee for those receiving non-renewal letters requested by FS Executive Committee (EC) and remanded to CoCo.
- Labeling of Fall Break: Remove Columbus Day: Passed; Academic Scheduling and Procedures Committee made amendments and redistributed the calendar.
- VSU Information Resources Acceptable Use Policy-Revised April 2015 was passed and was sent to the Provost on 8/29/2015 – final outcome is still unknown.

- VSU Policy on Email Web and Portal for Official Communications-Revised April 2015 was passed and was sent to the Provost on 8/29/2015 – final outcome is still unknown.
- University System of Georgia Faculty Council: Presidential Salary Resolution was presented as an information item.
- VSU Statutes are under revision by Provost's Office (Dr. Sheri Gravett), FS (Dr. Michael Noll), and COSA (Mr. Terrance Sullivan).

September 2015

- Special Committee for those receiving non-renewal letters: Committee was formed in September.
- Faculty Handbook Special Committee formed: Dr. Fred Knowles, chair. CoCo to fill seats with members from each unit. See FS Committee Rosters online.
- Elections held:
 - Michael Holt, VP/PE
 - Sudip Chakraborty, Secretary
- VSU Statute revisions complete – under review by Provost and VPs.

October 2015

- Special Committee for those receiving non-renewal letters: Committee was formed in September, but was unable to sustain a quorum of membership; Dissolution of committee resulted in resolution being given back to FS EC who then requested electronic input from full FS in order to obtain a resolution document to come before the FS for a vote.
- Final Exam Policy remanded to Educational Policies Committee.
- Campus notification and security issues addressed by VSU Police Chief Seacrist.
- Special SOI Committee changed to Educational Policies Subcommittee to provide line of authority for reporting to the FS.

November 2015

- Special Committee for those receiving non-renewal letters: Committee was formed in September, but was unable to sustain a quorum of membership; Dissolution of committee resulted in resolution being given back to FS EC who then requested electronic input from full FS in order to obtain a resolution document to come before the FS for a vote. Discussion continued and a document was sent forward for the January FS meeting agenda.
- Summer 2016 scheduling issues remanded to the Academic Scheduling and Procedures Committee; An electronic vote was taken due to the time sensitive nature of this issue so the results could be given to the Registrar in a timelier fashion.
- Student Athlete of the Semester Recognition Program remanded to Athletic Committee previously and voted on at this meeting. The senate approved the program.

January 2016

- An amended version of a resolution of support for the faculty and staff receiving letters of non-renewal was passed by the FS and sent forward to President Staton.
- Grievance Committee reports one grievance pending.
- SOI Subcommittee proposal approved so they can continue their work on SOI redesign.
- TRS and ORP Retirement Plan summaries were provided by the Faculty Affairs Committee.
- Faculty Athletic Representative internal search is being conducted by the Athletic Committee.
- Dean Plumly sent a letter to the FS: see January 2016 minutes for his remarks.

February 2016

- SGA Academic Forgiveness Bill: remanded to Educational Polices Committee
- SGA ROTC Bill: remanded to Educational Polices Committee
- SGA Student Health Center Bill: remanded to Institutional Planning – SGA reported at the meeting this was already enacted, so this became an information item only.
- Faculty Course Reassigned Time Request Policy: remanded Faculty Affairs Committee
- New Graduation Procedures: remanded Institutional Planning Committee
- Put FS Committee agendas and minutes on FS webpage: remanded FS Secretary – FS secretary in the process of designing FS page to accommodate this request. FS graduate assistant to help with this project.

March 2016

- Resolution Against Firearms passed and was shared with the USG Faculty Council and other USG universities as a model. The resolution was sent forward to the Chancellor's office by the USG Faculty Council.
- Faculty Athletic Representative selected by Athletic committee, approved by Provost: Dr. David Kuhlmeier.
- Grievance Committee: Hearing request accepted.
- Continuing work on removal of Columbus Day to make all calendars consistent throughout the university.
- FS meeting schedule amended to remove May 2016 meeting and subsequent May meetings.

April 2016

- Elections held:
 - Dr. Brian Ring, VP/PE;
 - Dr. Sudip Chakraborty, Secretary;
 - Dr. Debbie Paine, Parliamentarian
- University Tenure and Promotion Document revisions: remanded Faculty Affairs Committee
- Academic Probation and Suspension Updates: remanded Educational Policies Committee
- Request to Transfer to a Non-Tenure Track Classification: remanded Faculty Affairs Committee
- Instructional Conflict of Interest: remanded Faculty Affairs Committee
- Override Policy: remanded Educational Policies Committee
- Request for clarification of Committee on Committee procedures: remanded Committee on Committees

May 2016

- May meeting was removed from the calendar. A compilation of all of the end of year committee reports can be found listed as the minutes for the May 2016 meeting.

Issues Carried Forward for the 2016-2017 Academic Year

Items still pending review by the Provost's office:

- VSU Statutes are still pending review and have not been made available for faculty reference or review.
- VSU Information Resources Acceptable Use Policy-Revised April 2015 was passed and was sent to the Provost on 8/29/2015 – final outcome is still unknown.
- VSU Policy on Email Web and Portal for Official Communications-Revised April 2015 was passed and was sent to the Provost on 8/29/2015 – final outcome is still unknown.
- Final Exam Policy revision sent to the Provost 8/1/2016, disposition pending.

Items completed by committees pending Faculty Senate review:

- Credit for SOI Compliance: Completed by the Academic Affairs Committee and submitted for the August 2016 FS meeting for review.
- Faculty Course Reassigned Time Request Policy: Completed by the Academic Affairs Committee and submitted for the August 2016 FS meeting for review.

Items remanded to committees still pending committee review:

- SGA Academic Forgiveness Bill: remanded to Educational Polices Committee
- SGA ROTC Bill: remanded to Educational Polices Committee
- New Graduation Procedures: remanded Institutional Planning Committee
- University Tenure and Promotion Document revisions: remanded Faculty Affairs Committee
- Academic Probation and Suspension Updates: remanded Educational Policies Committee
- Request to Transfer to a Non-Tenure Track Classification: remanded Faculty Affairs Committee
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Other items pending review:

- Planning and Budget Council representation from the FS needs to be codified in the FS bylaws.
- FS bylaws in need of multiple revisions