



FACULTY SENATE
Est. 1991

Peggy Moch
President

Mike Holt
**Vice President/
President Elect**

Sudip Chakraborty
Secretary

Sean Lennon
Parliamentarian

Michael Noll
Past President

Agenda
January 28, 2016, 3:30 pm
University Center Magnolia Room

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 Senate's Executive Committee, any actions sent to the President for possible inclusion in the Senate agenda should be accompanied by a written document with the rationale and purpose of the decision. The Executive Committee requests that these documents be submitted via email as Word.doc attachments.

For the benefit of record keeping, we ask that senators and visitors 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. If you have a senator's proxy, please place their name tag beside your name tag on the table in front of you.

1. Call to Order – Peggy Moch.
2. **Approval of the minutes of the November 19, 2015 meeting of the Faculty Senate.**
<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/faculty-senate/minutes.php> (See link here for minutes for all faculty senate meetings).
3. Reading of proxies obtained prior to the meeting; Request additional proxies for those not given from Senators in attendance – Sudip Chakraborty.

Note: Please send an email to Sudip Chakraborty (schakraborty@valdosta.edu) regarding proxies a minimum of one (1) week prior to the scheduled Faculty Senate meeting or as soon as possible if an unexpected absence needs to occur.

4. Interim VSU President, Dr. Cecil Staton: VSU Updates
5. Old & Unfinished Business
 - a. Statutory Committee Reports
 - i. **Academic Committee – Sheri Gravett; Report located at**
<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/registrar/academic-committee.php>
 - ii. Committee on Committees – Kalina Winska: Progress on assignments?
 - iii. Faculty Affairs – Alicja Rieger: Progress on assignments? See Attachment A and Retirement Policies document available separately on the FS agenda page.

- iv. Faculty Grievance Committee – John Dunn: Any report?
- v. Institutional Planning Committee – Donald Thieme: Any report?
- b. Meeting minutes from the various committees should be sent to FS Secretary (Sudip Chakraborty (schakraborty@valdosta.edu)) to be uploaded to the Faculty Senate website **AND** to the library (archives@valdosta.edu) with “Archives Faculty Senate Papers” in the subject line. Minutes from 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 meetings from the various committees should be sent so these documents can be archived properly. Please label minutes documents as shown in the following examples:
 - i. Technology_Minutes_04-29-2015
 - ii. Academic_Honors_and_Scholarship_Minutes_08-28-2015
 Thank you for your assistance in getting our records keeping up to date. ☺
- c. Work is continuing on the updating of the VSU Statutes with representation from the Provost’s Office, Faculty Senate, and the Council on Staff Affairs.

6. New Business

- a. *End of year reports are currently due by the end of April. All committee chairs, please prepare your reports in a timely fashion and send them to the Faculty Senate President. Thank you! ☺*
- b. Standing Committee Reports: No reports received
 - i. Academic Honors & Scholarships – Han Chen
 - ii. Environmental Issues – Arsalan Wares
 - iii. Faculty Scholarship – Maura Schlairet
 - iv. Library Affairs – Michael Forbes Ocasio
 - v. Internationalization and Globalization Committee – Fleming Bell
 - vi. Diversity and Equity – Karen Acosta
 - vii. Student Affairs – Kelly Davidson Devall
- c. Standing Committee Report
 - i. **Educational Policies – Jacob M. Jewusiak: SOI Redesign document with appendices A-D please download at <http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/faculty-senate/agenda.php>**
 - ii. Technology Committee – Mike Holt
 - iii. Athletic Committee – Peggy Moch: Faculty Athletic Representative Search
 - iv. Academic Scheduling & Procedures – Katharine Lamb: Results of Summer Schedule Vote
- d. Dean Wayne Plumly’s letter to the Faculty Senate: See Attachment B.
- e. **Resolution in Support of Faculty and Staff Receiving Letters of Non-Renewal at Valdosta State University: See attachment C.**

7. General Discussion

- a. We added two (2) additional senate meetings (January and August) with the reorganization of the Faculty Senate. Attendance at the May meetings is sporadic and we do not always have a quorum. Should we do away with the May 2016 meeting? End of year reports would be due the end of March or by mid-April at the latest. Is this doable?
- b. Please start thinking about whom among you will be running for VP/President-Elect. The election will be held in April (or in March if we decide to eliminate the May meeting).

8. Adjournment

Attachment A:

Dear Dr. Peggy Moch,

The Faculty Affairs Committee was remanded by the Faculty Senate to review policies concerning unused sick leave in relation to the two available faculty retirement options, Teacher's Retirement System (TRS) and Optional Retirement Plan (ORP; See TRS & ORP Comparison sheet).

The Faculty Affairs Committee acknowledges that important differences exist between the two available retirement options:

The TRS was established by the General Assembly in 1945 and is available to all teachers in Georgia (See O.C.G.A. 47-3-92). The TRS offers an attendance incentive program which allows for employees the option of vacation leave payout and sick leave credited toward retirement (www.trsga.com). However, only elementary and secondary school teachers and not post-secondary teachers, have the option of a sick leave payout (See O.C.G.A. 20-2-853).

Effective September 1, 1990, the Board of Regents adopted the ORP (See O.C.G.A. 47-21-3 and ORP Handbook). While the ORP does not require an employee be vested after 10 years as with the TRS, employees do not accrue vacation leave with ORP and it does not allow for sick leave credit toward retirement/payout.

More detailed information regarding the two retirement options may be found in the above referenced documents (pdf attached) and/or the VSU Human Resource and Employee Development webpages available at <http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/human-resources/>

https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/human-resources/forms/ORPUSGRetirement_Election_Form.pdf

New faculty are encouraged to carefully consider the two available retirement options, within the 60 day review period from the date of hire. Consultation with a Human Resource Representative may be beneficial in identifying important considerations including faculty mobility, vested time required, credited sick leave toward retirement, and other investment options. Careful consideration is warranted as the retirement plan choice is irrevocable during University System of Georgia employment.

Respectfully submitted,

Faculty Affairs Committee
Valdosta State University

Attachment B:

Dear Faculty Senators,

The purpose of this letter is threefold: 1) to correct any misperceptions dealing with the Langdale College's representation on the Resolution of Support Committee, 2) to inform the Senate of Langdale College's support of all colleges of VSU, and 3) to reiterate an offer of collaboration with other colleges.

Neither I nor my Executive Committee have ever "banned" any faculty member from serving on any committee. I was chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee when President Bailey asked me to create a faculty senate at VSU. We worked on the document for two years and we succeeded in creating the first ever faculty senate at VSU. I am a strong believer in faculty governance and have always taken senate committees seriously. The Resolution of Support Committee appeared not to have a clear charge and materials coming out of that committee seemed to inflame rather than to assist. After the LCOBA representative resigned from the committee, no other LCOBA faculty member volunteered. Apparently, the LCOBA representative was not the only one who resigned from the committee. To reiterate, neither I nor my Executive Committee have ever banned anyone from serving on this or any committee.

The faculty of the Langdale College have been fully supportive of other faculties around campus. The LCOBA financed the Core Matters Conferences (2010- \$2,500, 2011-\$2,000, and 2012- \$2,000). We assisted in financing the orientation speaker this past fall (\$10,000). LCOBA financed the Harvey Brightman Master Teaching Seminars. We raised \$10,000 for VECA. We have sponsored several Peach State Summer Theatre plays (each for \$5,000) and a Symphony Orchestra performance (\$5,000). We sponsor Athletics ranging from \$3,500- \$5,000 depending on sufficient resources. We supported the Inclusion Celebration (\$2,000) and Black History Month Celebration (\$1,000). There are many other examples of financial support. LCOBA faculty also actively participate in many campus activities. The Langdale College knows that we are one academy.

Over the past several years LCO BA has added new majors and seven new minors. We have purposely opened our doors to other majors wanting our classes. We have done so without any new resources. Our average undergraduate class size now approaches 43 students per section. We have constructed these majors and minors to serve our student body including non-business majors better. We feel that collaboration should be a campus priority. A prime example is the theatre management track in Fine Arts.

We care deeply about all of our colleagues and will actively work to prevent future layoffs. We value our colleagues all across our campus and are willing to work together to increase enrollment and provide high quality programs.

Thank you for your considerations,

L. Wayne Plumly, Jr.
Dean, Langdale College of Business

Attachment C:

Resolution in Support of Faculty and Staff Receiving Letters of Non-Renewal at Valdosta State University

WHEREAS, failings or insufficiencies of the faculty, support staff or students, are not responsible for enrollment decreases since 2011, and

WHEREAS articulation agreements with less expensive community and technical colleges and ineffective marketing of Valdosta State University represent administrative decisions that more likely contributed to enrollment declines, and

WHEREAS, the Chancellor of the University System of Georgia (USG) and the Board of Regents (BOR) determined the need for a significant budget cut to VSU that resulted in upper level administrators determining where cuts had to be made based on credit hour production, and

WHEREAS, the Deans of the various units were provided the budget reduction information to pass to Department Heads impacted by the reduction in credit hour production. Following instructions from USG BOR attorneys, Department Heads made the decisions on how to reach the targeted budget cut by reducing operating budgets or numbers of non-tenured faculty, instructors and staff based on length of time employed at VSU. These decisions resulted in reduction of departmental operating budgets and 33 faculty and staff (26 from the College of Arts and Sciences, seven of them tenure-track faculty) who were notified on or before August 7, 2015 for the 2016-2017 academic year, and

WHEREAS, these faculty increased the diversity and breadth of undergraduate and graduate courses because of their areas of expertise, and

WHEREAS, these tenure-track faculty had active research and professional development programs that led to publications, external funding and opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students that cannot, and will not, be duplicated by other faculty currently employed at VSU, and

WHEREAS, these faculty received non-renewal letters based primarily on credit hour decline within individual units and the length of time each person was employed at VSU with little regard to other factors to determine the value-added to the education of the students (e.g. expertise of, productivity of, courses taught by and external funding received by the faculty as well as opportunities provided to students such as research jobs and directed-study opportunities), and

WHEREAS, low student-to-faculty ratios not only attract new students, but also lead to increased student retention and success due to greater interactions between faculty and student and mentoring of students by faculty, and

WHEREAS, VSU is now using resources aimed at improving recruitment, enrollment and retention that include the 70/80 Committee, Project Innovate, VSYou Marketing Campaign, and in-state tuition for students from border states with the expectation of increased enrollment Fall 2016.

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, the VSU Faculty Senate

- 1) Regards with concern and questions the necessity and does not approve of the non-renewal of these faculty and staff,
- 2) Recognizes the sanctity of the tenure-track at a comprehensive university,
- 3) Recognizes and appreciates the dedication and contributions of these faculty to help VSU reach the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan and support the values of the Blazer Creed,

- 4) Recognizes that the loss of these faculty and staff negatively impacts both current and future students because of the loss of value-added opportunities for students in terms of the areas of expertise, research opportunities and diversity of course offerings provided by these faculty,
- 5) Is concerned that the loss of these faculty and staff has hurt VSU's reputation and negatively impact its ability to recruit and retain future and current students,
- 6) Is concerned that the loss of these faculty and staff has hurt VSU's reputation and its ability to attract qualified applicants to fill open faculty and staff positions in the future, and
- 7) Is concerned that when enrollment and retention increase, a shortage of faculty and instructors will result in student frustration when spaces are unavailable in classes.

FURTHER the VSU Faculty Senate will support Non-Renewed Faculty and Staff and work to prevent future reductions in faculty and staff by

- 1) Encouraging all members of the VSU community to notify affected faculty and staff through list serves or other means of open positions at other USG institutions or at other institutions and places of business that match their expertise,
- 2) Continuing to monitor the use of funds set aside to assist the 33 faculty and staff members affected to support their travel to additional venues for the purpose of securing alternate employment,
- 3) Being good colleagues to those impacted by this reduction in force by providing references upon request that include an explanation of situation at VSU that led to them leaving their current position, editing resumes and CVs, editing manuscripts and drafts for publication and offering moral support.
- 4) Posting a letter on the Faculty Senate website to which individuals could provide link in their cover letter explaining the situation that anyone who was affected by reductions in force can use when applying for other positions,
- 5) Working with the Administration in the spirit of transparency and shared governance to develop a plan to rescind non-renewal letter(s) based on accreditation, attrition and enrollment and retention increases,
- 6) Working with the Administration to determine the feasibility of placing the faculty and staff who received non-renewal letters on furlough for the next academic year so that, if enrollment increases, these qualified, highly trained and productive faculty may resume their positions in the faculty workforce, thus avoiding the costs required for new searches,
- 7) Working with the Administration to investigate the potential for increasing opportunities for high school students through dual enrollment at VSU,
- 8) Working with the Administration to investigate the potential for developing opportunities for students to earn associate degrees in fields (e.g. business and education) where many students complete the core courses within first two years and then focus on courses directly pertaining to their major. However, at the same time VSU must recognize that this plan of completing the core during the first two years is not appropriate in many disciplines (e.g. STEM) where it is wise to spread the core courses out throughout one's undergraduate education,
- 9) Being the voice for faculty at VSU, a comprehensive university where faculty are both educators and scholars who are recognized nationally and internationally in their respective fields in the same arenas in which faculty from the state's "flagship" universities compete,
- 10) Continuing to generate enthusiasm and to work with the Administration to market the strengths of our faculty and our students at VSU, where we can boast of low student-to-faculty ratios in classrooms, more research opportunities per student and open doors to faculty offices that provide a level of access to VSU students available only to the most assertive students at large research universities,

- 11) Requesting that the Administration continues to look for innovative alternative approaches to reduce or eliminate the need to permanently terminate these members of the VSU community, and
- 12) Requesting that faculty continue to innovate in the classroom and research settings and be leaders in their respective fields to further increase enrollment.