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FACULTY SENATE
Est. 1991

Peggy Moch	Mike Holt	Sudip Chakraborty	Sean Lennon	Michael Noll
President	**Vice President/ President Elect**	**Secretary**	**Parliamentarian**	**Past President**

Minutes
April 21, 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
   The meeting was called to order at 3:31 PM
   a. Stanley Jones, Registrar and Brian Gerber, Interim Provost have discussed the need for extra time for turning in grades. Grades will be due at noon on 5/9/2016 instead of the traditional 0900 in order to give faculty a little more time to complete their final grade submissions.
   b. Thank you for your support during my tenure as Faculty Senate President 2015-2016.

2. **Approval of the minutes of the March 24, 2016 meeting of the Faculty Senate.**
   http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/faculty-senate/minutes.php (See link here for minutes for all faculty senate meetings).
   A motion was made to approve the minutes and it was seconded. There was no discussion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Reading of proxies obtained prior to the meeting; Request additional proxies for those not given from Senators in attendance – Sudip Chakraborty.
   The following were the proxies: Kalina Winska for Abigail Heuss, Tommy Crane for Shannon Lowe, Mike Holt for John Crowley, Ubaraj Katawal for Rebecca Gaskins, Fleming Bell for Victoria Russell, Eric Howington for Luis Gonzalez, Andy Ostapski for Gary Futrell, and Maura Schlairet for Serina McEntire.

   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

Dr. Staton notified that three candidates for VP of Student Affairs were interviewing and the search was expected to close. He thanked Dr. Michael Savoie for chairing the search committee. Regarding enrollment, he mentioned that compared to last year, 3000 more applications had been received and 1700 more students had been admitted. He stated that significant growth in freshman enrollment since the last 5 years had been observed. Dr. Staton also iterated that the effect of 10% drop in freshman enrollment last year would affect the pipeline. Dual enrollment and transfer students could mitigate the issue, but overall enrollment could still be lower than previous values.

One senator asked Dr. Staton that what faculty senate could do to bring more transparency based on principle of shared governance to improve existing political culture at VSU. Dr. Staton reflected that faculty should keep working on aspects or situations that could cause misunderstandings. Dr. Staton also announced that VSU Attorney, Tony Thomas, would be chairing the President's Task Force for enhancing diversity.

Another senator enquired about finding University policies related to conflict of interest, especially between staff and faculty. Dr. Staton referred them to Tony Thomas' and Maggie Viverette's offices and stated these serious issues should be handled properly.

Finally, when asked about his plans for next year, Dr. Staton deferred comment as this was the Chancellor's decision.

5. Co-Chair 70/80 Task Force on Retention, Dr. Lee Grimes: VSU Update

Dr. Grimes distributed handouts and gave an update on VSU's 70/80 task force. Five sections (including course innovations and advising) were identified after a self-study and five courses where students struggle were identified (based on DFWI rates) for exploring potential changes in these courses. Dr. Grimes mentioned about receiving feedback from NACADA (National Academic Advising Association). She also acknowledged that student awareness was low about these efforts. Upon a senator's query, Dr. Grimes asserted the task force was also looking at programs where students stay for a specific time period only.

6. Old & Unfinished Business
   a. Statutory Committee Reports
      i. **Academic Committee – Sheri Gravett; Report located at http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/registrar/academic-committee.php**

Minutes were not approved as there were some changes made. The Faculty Senate President, Dr. Moch, requested an electronic vote for approval of the minutes when they became available.

      ii. Committee on Committees – Kalina Winska: Progress on assignments?

Ms. Winska updated the senate about the committee's effort in filling up the vacancies. The committee is still waiting for COSA and SGA appointment lists. She asserted that the issue of how committee positions were filled as highlighted in a letter have been addressed according to the committee's bylaws. A list of tenured faculty will be distributed to elect 3 seats to the Grievance Committee.

      iii. Faculty Affairs – Alicja Rieger: Status of Academic Freedom at VSU Statement of Findings (Attachment G)

Dr. Rieger mentioned the committee looked into what was and was not addressed at VSU in AAUP, BOR, and other places. Then she read from the report to highlight the main aspects of the committee's findings.

      iv. Faculty Grievance Committee – Patti Campbell

Dr. Rieger provided the update on behalf of Dr. Campbell. She informed us that a hearing panel had been formed for the pending grievance.

v. Institutional Planning Committee – Donald Thieme

Dr. Thieme reported the committee had reviewed SGA's proposed Saturday Health Center Hours but found these to already be in place.

Dr. Peggy Moch reminded Chairs of all committees that end of year reports would be due on April 30, 2016.

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 and keeping our records up to date. ☺

7. New Business
   a. Standing Committee Reports: No reports received
      i. Academic Honors & Scholarships – Han Chen
      ii. Academic Scheduling & Procedures – Katharine Lamb
      iii. Athletic Committee – Peggy Moch
      iv. Environmental Issues – Arsalan Wares
      v. Faculty Scholarship – Maura Schlairet – Received Bylaws
      vi. Library Affairs – Michelle Forbes Ocasio
      vii. Internationalization and Globalization Committee – Fleming Bell
      viii. Diversity and Equity – Karen Acosta
      ix. Student Affairs – Kelly Davidson Devall
      x. Technology Committee – Mike Holt

   b. Elections for

   i. President-Elect/Vice President

   Dr. Brian Ring was nominated and there were no other nominations. Voting was unanimous and Dr. Ring was elected as Vice-President/President-Elect by acclamation.

   ii. Secretary

   Dr. Sudip Chakraborty was nominated and there were no other nominations. Voting was unanimous and Dr. Chakraborty was elected as Secretary by acclamation.

   iii. Parliamentarian

   Drs. Debbie Paine and Fleming Bell were nominated. A ballot vote was conducted and Dr. Debbie Paine was elected as Parliamentarian with 27-17 votes.

   c. Educational Policies – Jacob M. Jewusiak: Final Exam Language Proposed Revision (Attachment A)

   Questions were raised regarding the rationale of including only Deans and not Department Heads for making exceptions to the policy. A senator noted the policy did not say anything about whether all students needed to take the final exam. No conclusive answers surfaced. A motion was made to make a friendly amendment to replace "college dean" by the

phrase "department head or college dean". The motion was seconded. The document (Attachment A) with the friendly amendment was approved unanimously.

d. Dean James LaPlant: Revisions to University Tenure and Promotion Document (http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/tenure-and-promotion-procedures.php) Remand to Faculty Affairs Committee as first priority for Fall 2016 business.

A senator wondered whether the revisions would be effective next year. Dr. Moch stated the revisions were still under review and would not be put in place until the review process was complete and the senate had voted on the document. The faculty will get until September 2016 to review the document and then it will be up for a vote in October 2016.

e. Academic Probation and Suspension Updates (Attachment B): Remand to Educational Policies Committee.

f. Request to Transfer to a Non-Tenure Track Classification (Attachment C): Remand to Faculty Affairs Committee.

g. Instructional Conflict of Interest (Attachment D): Remand to Faculty Affairs Committee.

h. Override Policy (Attachment E): Remand to Educational Policies Committee.

i. Request for clarification of Committee on Committee procedures (Attachment F): Remand to Committee on Committees

8. General Discussion

A senator suggested posting the meeting dates of various committees on the senate website. Representation of faculty in CoCo and other committees was discussed. It was asserted by CoCo chair that the number of faculty assignment is proportional to college size. CoCo was recommended to reach out to the senator raising the concerns about committee assignments.

9. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:22 PM

Respectfully submitted by: Sudip Chakraborty

Attachment A:

FINAL EXAMINATIONS

In regularly scheduled undergraduate lecture or hybrid courses, a final examination shall be administered at the time specified in the official final examination schedule as distributed by the Office of the Registrar or the college dean. No final examinations may be given before the final exam week. The nature of the assessment shall be determined by the instructor of record. An announcement of policy shall be made to the class at its first meeting and included in the class syllabus. Final exams may or may not be comprehensive of the entire semester. Final exams may or may not last the entire scheduled time allotted for the final exam. Exceptions to this policy, including not giving a final exam, must be authorized by the department head or college dean.

In online courses, final exams are to be completed during the final exam time period scheduled or a “window of time” during exam week. On rare occasions, exceptions to this rule are permitted at the discretion of the department head or college dean.

Any student who is scheduled for three final examinations in one day may request to change the date of one examination of the student’s choice. The student must present a request in writing to the instructor involved at least two weeks before the final exam.

[Friendly amendment to the document.]

Attachment B:

VSU's current Academic Probation and Suspension policy is below. At the request of the Assistant and Associate Deans, Academic Affairs, in conjunction with Enrollment Management, has been exploring more consistent and comprehensive ways to handle student suspension appeals. The recommendation—to move the current student appeals process for first and second suspensions from the deans' offices to a university-wide Suspension Appeal Committee—will help create a clearer and more consistent process.

From http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/advising/academic-probation-and-suspension.php

Academic Probation and Suspension

Valdosta State University seeks to provide an environment suitable for promoting the systematic pursuit of learning. To ensure this primary goal, the University requires of its students reasonable academic progress. The retention of those students who repeatedly demonstrate a lack of ability, industry, maturity, and preparation would be inconsistent with this requirement.

Academic probation serves as the initial notice that the student's performance is not currently meeting the minimum grade point average required for graduation. Continued performance at this level will result in the student being placed on academic suspension.

Academic probation is designed to serve three purposes: (1) to make clear to all concerned the inadequacy of a student's academic performance; (2) to provide occasion for necessary counseling; and (3) to give students whose success is in doubt additional opportunity to demonstrate performance.

Academic suspension is imposed as a strong indication that the student incurring such suspension should withdraw from the University, at least for a time, to reconsider the appropriateness of a college career or to make necessary fundamental adjustments toward the academic demands of college.

I. Stages of Progress with Minimum Grade Point Averages Required

An individual's stage of progress is determined on the basis of the number of academic semester hours attempted, including those transferred from other institutions. Transfer credits are not included in computing grade-point averages.

Semester Hours attempted at VSU and hours transferred to VSU	Cumulative grade-point average required on VSU courses
1 - 29	1.60
30 -59	1.75
60 - 89	1.90
90 - graduation	2.00

II. Academic Probation

A student will be placed on academic probation if, at the end of any semester while the student is in good standing, the cumulative GPA falls below the minimum specified in the table above or the semester GPA falls below 2.00. Even though a student on probation is making some progress toward graduation, it should be clearly understood that without immediate academic improvement, suspension may result.

III. Academic Suspension and Academic Dismissal

a. A student will be suspended if at the end of any term, while on academic probation, the cumulative GPA falls below the minimum specified in the table above, and the term GPA falls below 2.00.

b. A first suspension will be for one semester. (See suspension appeal procedures below.)

c. A second suspension shall be for two academic semesters.

d. A third or subsequent suspension shall result in the student being academically dismissed from the institution for a minimum period of three (3) years.

e. Should another institution permit a student on suspension from Valdosta State University to enroll, work taken at that institution during any period of suspension shall not be counted as degree credit at Valdosta State University unless the student obtains prior approval from the dean of the student's major.

f. Only fall and/or spring semesters count as "sit out" semesters.

IV. Right of Appeal

Upon appeal by the student, the Suspension Appeal Committee has the authority to waive a suspension if unusual circumstances warrant.

V. Suspension Appeal Procedures

Students must appeal in writing to the Suspension Appeal Committee prior to registration for the semester in which they plan to return using the online form available at XXXX. A suspension waiver may be granted for unusual and compelling reasons. Students whose appeals are granted will return on probation and may have specific academic requirements imposed by the Suspension Appeal Committee. A student who has been granted an appeal but does not reenroll will remain on academic suspension. The decisions of the Suspension Appeal Committee are final.

For full information about the committee and for deadlines, visit its website at XXXXX

Information for the Suspension Appeal Committee Website:

RECOMMENDED COMPOSITION OF SUSPENSION APPEAL COMMITTEE
Chair: Stanley Jones, Registrar
1 assistant/associate dean or department head/faculty member from the College of Arts and Sciences
1 assistant/associate dean or department head/faculty member from the College of the Arts
1 assistant/associate dean or department head/faculty member from the Dewar College of Education and Human Services
1 assistant/associate dean or department head/faculty member from the Langdale College of Business Administration
1 assistant/associate dean or department head/faculty member from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Ex-Officio: one representative from Admissions; one representative from Centralized Advising

APPEALS DEADLINES:
For spring semester: the first day in January that the university is open (January 2, 2017)
For fall semester, the first Monday in August after summer semester has concluded (August 7, 2017)
Students may not appeal suspensions for summer semesters unless unusual circumstances warrant (some possible exceptions may include NCAA requirements, Study Aboard, program progression).

FINANCIAL AID

If students will need financial aid in order to continue in classes, they should also apply for Reinstatement of Aid using the Satisfactory Progress Petition (available at http://www.valdosta.edu/admissions/financial-aid/process/sap.php).

Attachment C:

VSU Policy and Process for a Request to Transfer to a Non-Tenure Track Classification

Policy

The Board of Regents Policy Manual 8.3.8 provides a mechanism for tenured or tenure-track faculty to request a transfer to a non-tenure track position. The policy stipulates that this transfer is solely on a voluntary basis (see Appendix A). The Academic Affairs Policy Manual 4.1 provides a sample document for this request (see Appendix B). This request must proceed from the faculty member and then be approved by the department head, dean, Provost/VPAA, and President.

VSU Process

At VSU, faculty wishing to request a transfer from a tenured or tenure-track to a non-tenure track must complete the form available in the USG Academic Affairs Handbook (Appendix B). In making this request, **the faculty member** should be aware of the following:

(1) The request for transfer should not be based on performance issues; the faculty member must present evidence of extenuating personal circumstances that will necessitate this transfer.
(2) The faculty member must make this request and have it approved before entering the fifth year of employment at the university or after tenure has been awarded.
(3) This transfer may necessitate a change in rank, teaching load, and/or salary.
(4) The faculty member will lose any time in rank at the current position.

If the faculty member wishes to proceed, he or she should complete the form in Appendix B and attach a rationale for this transfer and any supporting documentation. This request should then move, if approved, from department to dean to Provost. At any point, if the request is denied, the process ends at that point.

In considering this request, **department heads, deans, and the Provost** should consider the following:

(1) A departmental need exists for the changed role to be played by this faculty member.
(2) The faculty member's annual evaluations up to that point are all satisfactory and teaching is a particular strength.
(3) The extenuating circumstances the faculty member outlines should not affect teaching performance.

If the department head, dean, and Provost all approve, the form is forwarded to the President for signature.

Appendix A

8.3.8 Non-Tenure Track Personnel

The transfer of individuals from tenure-track positions to non-tenure track positions shall be effected on a voluntary basis only (BoR Minutes, 1982-83, pp. 255-256).

Appendix B

4.1 Convert an Individual in a Tenure-track Position to a Nontenure Track Position Sample Form

Request for Transfer to Nontenure Track Classification

Date: _____

To: (Name & Title of Administrator)

I am currently employed as a nontenured (Rank & Title) on tenure track at (Institution). In accordance with the Policies of the Board of Regents, I hereby request that my present position be reclassified as nontenure track effective (Date).

I am familiar with the nontenure track policy of the Board of Regents (copy attached) and I make this request for reclassification of my position freely and voluntarily, without any assurance of retention, promotion, or reward by my superiors or others at this institution.

I understand that this request for reclassification may or may not be approved.

(Signature)

ACTION TAKEN:

I recommend that this request be:

(Approved/Denied)	Chairman	Date
(Approved/Denied)	Dean	Date
(Approved/Denied)	VPAA	Date
(Approved/Denied)	President	Date

Attachment D:

Instructional Conflict of Interest Procedure for Family Members of VSU Faculty

Policy

The University System of Georgia Ethics Policy provides a Code of Conduct applicable to all University System of Georgia employees. Item 11 of this code (see Appendix A) says that employees will "disclose and avoid improper conflicts of interest."

Process

At VSU, a conflict of interest may be perceived when an immediate family member is enrolled in a faculty member's course. To help avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest, faculty and students should use the following procedures.

- A student* may not enroll in a family member's course when there are other sections of the course offered in the same term.

- A student may not enroll in a family member's course if the course will be offered in a timely manner taught by a different faculty member and the delay would not impact timely progression. This determination is made by the Department Head.

If a student must enroll in a family member's course, all grading functions will be assigned to another faculty member. The instructor will not have access to, nor record, grades for the student. The Department Head may solicit names of faculty members from which to choose an evaluator. The assignment of a faculty member to grade student work will be made by the Department Head.

If there is no other qualified faculty member available to evaluate the student's work, the Department Head will appoint a panel of no less than three neutral faculty members with at least one member external to the department. The Department Head may solicit names of faculty members from which to appoint a panel. This panel will review the grading of the student's work by the family member. The Department Head shall make the judgment of whether or not there is a qualified faculty member to evaluate the work.

If the faculty member involved is the Department Head, the Dean fills the role of the Department Head in the above actions.

*For purposes of this procedure, **student** includes, but is not limited to, birth or adopted child, guardian/stepchild, grandchild, niece or nephew, spouse, domestic partner, or foster child.

APPENDIX A

8.2.20.5 Code of Conduct

We will:

I. **Uphold the highest standards of intellectual honesty and integrity in the conduct of teaching, research, service and grants administration.**
II. **Act as good stewards of the resources and information entrusted to our care.**
III. **Perform assigned duties and professional responsibilities in such a manner so as to further the USG mission.**

IV. **Treat fellow employees, students and the public with dignity and respect.**

V. **Refrain from discriminating against, harassing or threatening others.**

VI. **Comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations and professional standards.**

VII. **Respect the intellectual property rights of others.**

VIII. **Avoid improper political activities as defined in law and Board of Regents Policy.**

IX. **Protect human health and safety and the environment in all USG operations and activities.**

X. **Report wrongdoing to the proper authorities; refrain from retaliating against those who do report violations; and cooperate fully with authorized investigations.**

XI. **Disclose and avoid improper conflicts of interest.**

XII. **Refrain from accepting any gift or thing of value in those instances prohibited by law or Board of Regents policy.**

XIII. **Not use our position or authority improperly to advance the interests of a friend or relative.**

Attachment E:

PROPOSED OVERRIDE PROCESS

Department Heads Handbook

2.13.3 Overriding students into classes

Department heads, with faculty approvals, may add students to closed classes through Banner Forms, available only to the department head. Some departments have override forms which contain the necessary information for department heads to perform overrides: the class number and section, the CRN number, the student's name and VSU id number, and the instructor's signature.

Last updated November 2015.

PROPOSED OVERRIDE PROCESS

Students may seek overrides into classes for different reasons:

(1)ENROLLMENT CAP: During the registration period, the course has closed because it has reached its prescribed enrollment.

(2) APPEAL OF PRE- OR CO-REQUISITE OR REGISTRATION STATUS: The student wishes to appeal the pre-or co-requisite for the course.

The pre-requisites and enrollment caps are set to facilitate both student success and completion, ensuring that students are adequately prepared for classes and that they can complete their curriculum in a timely manner. Valdosta State University works to balance student needs with educational best practices.

Before requesting an override, students must consult with their academic advisor to determine if an override is possible and/or necessary (students may not have evidence to support appealing a pre-or co-requisite, other sections of the course may be available, or other courses may also meet their program of study).

Before completing the paperwork to request an override, advisors should consider the following questions:

- What rationale do students have to waive the established course prerequisite, co-requisite, and/or registration restrictions? If students wish to appeal these criteria, they must provide evidence of other types of learning to indicate that they will be successful in the course.
- Are students scheduled to graduate* at the conclusion of the current term and must complete the specified course in order to graduate?
- Do students, whether or not they are in their last term of study, need a specific course as a prerequisite in order not to delay graduation? Is the course needed for a student to stay on track for graduation?
- Are students engaged in sanctioned university activities (such as a student athletics or AFROTC) and cannot take the open section of the course in question because that section conflicts with required university commitments?
- Are students unable attend the open section of the course because of access issues due to a disability? This disability should be documented in the Access Office.

*In order to qualify as a graduating student, students must have applied for graduation.

If the advisor believes the student meets the appropriate criteria, the advisor should complete the online "Request for Override Form." The form should then be forwarded to the department head of the appropriate academic department.

Department heads should then use the override forms to determine the following:

- For those students appealing an enrollment cap, does the student have a documented need for the class to complete graduation requirements or to stay on progress for the degree?
- For those students appealing a pre-or co-requisite, does the evidence provided support that the student has the skills or knowledge to be academically successful in the course?

If department heads receive multiple requests for override to a class that has already met its enrollment cap, they should consider the following:

- Do enough requests exist to document the need for an additional section? If yes, prepare a request for the dean with the supporting documentation.
- If new sections of a course will not be available, the department head will need to decide if extra seats should be added to existing courses. These decisions should take several factors into consideration:
  - The space available in the existing classroom, laboratory, or studio. Does the need justify moving the course to a different location, if one is available?
  - The pedagogical goals of the class. Will additional student compromise instruction, or can instructors successfully accommodate more students?
  - The needs of students. Will students' plans for graduation/transfer be compromised if seats are not available or are other appropriate alternative available?

While department heads have the authority to determine teaching schedules and assignments (VSU Statutes, Chapter 5, Section 3.d), they should work with instructors to develop a strategy for student completion and/or success.

OVERRIDE REQUEST FORM

STUDENT AND VSU ID NUMBER:

STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION (VSU EMAIL ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER)

OVERRIDE REQUEST:

COURSE	CRN	TERM/YEAR	TYPE OF OVERRIDE: CAP OR PRE-REQ?

IF THIS OVERRIDE IS TO ALLOW THE STUDENT TO ENTER A CLOSED SECTION (OVER THE **ENROLLMENT CAP**), WHAT IS THE RATIONALE?

STUDENT IS GRADUATING THIS TERM AND THE COURSE IS NEEDED FOR GRADUATION Y/N
STUDENT COMPLETED HOURS _____
ANNOUNCED GRADUATION DATE _____
COMPLETED APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION _____
COURSE IS NEEDED FOR STUDENT TO STAY ON SCHEDULE FOR GRADUATION Y/N
OTHER:

IF THIS OVERRIDE IS TO REQUEST **AN EXCEPTION TO A PRE OR CO-REQUISITE**, PLEASE PROVIDE EVIDENCE DETAILING HOW STUDENT IS PREPARED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS COURSE.

SIGNATURE OF ADVISOR/DATE:

FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT HEAD, WHO WILL COMMUNICATE THE DEPARTMENTAL DECISION TO THE STUDENT.

OVERRIDE APPROVED Y/N REASON:

DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE:

Attachment F:

I would like to inquire about the process by which CoCo assigns faculty to the standing committees. This academic year, and the previous one, CoCo has assigned only two faculty members that are not faculty senators for each division/college to every standing committee. They were unwilling to add more from a single college. However, I have not found anything that indicates that only two faculty members, who are not on the faculty senate, can be appointed. I believe that the existing language does not limit it to two, but rather leaves the possibility to assign more than two:

From the CoCo bylaws:

Article II.f.: “will arrange the membership of each committee so that, wherever possible, each College, the Odum Library, and the Division of Social Work are properly represented.”

From the faculty senate bylaws:

Article II, Section 3.A.: “The Committee on Committees will arrange the membership of each committee so that, wherever possible, each school of the University and the Odum Library is properly represented.”

While “properly represented” can be interpreted differently, I would think that it would be proportional to the number of faculty within each division given that the faculty senate uses that criteria. Even if that is not “proper representation,” there is no wording that prohibits more than two faculty members (that are not faculty senators) to be appointed to a standing committee from a single division.

Furthermore, before the last academic year, membership of standing committees was not limited to two faculty members (that are not faculty senators) from a single division. In fact, there were years that 4-5 faculty from A&S were on a single standing committee (beyond any faculty senators).

I do not understand where the new rule came from to only assign two individuals. This limits those that are interested in serving on a standing committee, but do not get assigned to it because of a set number that does not appear to be stated in the bylaws. I understand that CoCo does have to populate all the standing committees, so compromises must be made to ensure that divisions get represented on each standing committee. But, it do not understand why no more than two can be assigned to a single standing committee from the same division. Doing so excludes interested people from serving on standing committees. It limits the ability to have a range of faculty, from the more experienced to those passionate about joining, to serve on standing committees.

The fact that this practice has only been adopted in the past two years further confuses me.

I would like the faculty senate to find out why the Committee on Committees has decided that only two faculty members (beyond faculty senators) are allowed to serve on the a standing committee if they are from the same college/division. What justification do they have for rigidly doing so? In the absence of a reason of which I am not aware, I ask that the faculty senate consider clarifying how individuals are assigned to standing committees so that the practice reflects what have been done for most of the previous decade (i.e., more than two from a division can be appointed).

Thank you,

Jason

Dr. Jason Allard
Associate Professor
Department of Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences
Valdosta State University
1500 North Patterson Street
Valdosta, GA 31698

Attachment G:

Status of Academic Freedom at VSU: Statement of Findings

The Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) was remanded by the Faculty Senate to review the status of academic freedom at VSU. The FAC conducted a review of the status of academic freedom at VSU in comparison with AAUP statements and policies, BOR policies, and other institutions of higher education policies as they relate to academic freedom. The main question guiding the review was *what is and what is not addressed within the organizational policies related to academic freedom at VSU as compared to AAUP and BOR and Others?* Additionally, the review was guided by five academic domains that may include language that assists in safeguarding and protecting academic freedom. The five domains included:

- Definition/Language of Academic Freedom
- Tenure and Promotion
- Academic Code of Professional Ethics
- Shared Governance
- Non-discriminatory and Equal Opportunity Practices

A summary of this review is provided below. A detailed table of findings is also available from the FAC.

I. Definition/Language of Academic Freedom

Valdosta State University (VSU) Statutes [http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/policies/documents/2000.1StatutesofVSU.pdf, Chapter 3, Article VI, p. 31] contain specific provisions about academic freedom. The three-point policy statement indicates that teachers are "entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution." Additionally, teachers are "entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject." Finally, teachers are "citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution." The academic freedom policy statement found in the VSU statutes mirrors the three-point policy statement found in the *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP)* [http://www.aaup.org/file/1940%20Statement.pdf, p. 14].

By comparison, the academic freedom policy statement found in the *VSU Statutes* is similar to the provisions cited on the website of the Office of the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost at *The University of Georgia (UGA)* [http://provost.uga.edu/index.php/policies/statutes/article-x-faculty-members, para 5] in that faculty members are "entitled to full freedom of expression in research, teaching, and publishing" and as citizens of the community should be "free from institutional censorship or discipline". However, the VSU policy statement does not include provisions regarding the "confidentiality and security of university faculty files in offices throughout the campus." Similar to provisions made by UGA, VSU may wish to specifically address in its policy statement that faculty files "shall be preserved and protected at all times, insofar as is consistent with state and federal law.

A faculty member shall have the right to examine his/her official records as provided under state and federal law." USG procedures for safeguarding and protecting academic freedom are also available at https://sacs.uga.edu/compliance/p3.7.4.html.

Finally, the *Board of Regents (BOR) policy manual* **[**http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section3/C337/] does not provide a specific statement/definition regarding academic freedom, but maintains a University System of Georgia Faculty Council (USGFC) to provide a faculty voice on academic freedom. "The USGFC shall be mindful and respectful of matters that are more appropriately handled at the institutional level but may make recommendations that have University System level impact or implications" (Board of Regents Policy Manual 3.2.4.1).

II. Safeguarding & Protecting Academic Freedom by Tenure and Promotion

Tenure constitutes permanent professional standing that one is awarded upon satisfying certain professional criteria and that has legal implications. Tenure safeguards and protects academic freedom. According to *Faculty Evaluation Model at Valdosta State University* [http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/documents/FEMfinal.pdf],"Tenure protects academic freedom; it is granted only after a rigorous review of an individual's teaching and instruction, professional growth and productivity, and college and community service"(p. 8).

Valdosta State University emphasizes the protections that apply to academic freedom by an adherence to the procedures and policies for appointment to tenure and promotion, *Valdosta State University Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures* [https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/documents/vsu-tenure-and-promotion-policies-and-procedures.pdf]. These procedures and policies address academic freedom in establishing fair and consistent criteria for the faculty evaluation. As indicated in *Valdosta State University Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures*, "evaluation of faculty performance, including the awarding of tenure and promotion, should be conducted according to a set of policies and procedures that are adequate, appropriate and administered fairly across all units" (p. 2).

Due process is at the heart of tenure safeguard and protection of academic freedom. *Valdosta State University Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures* further address academic freedom by building into their procedures for tenure and promotion the review of "all tenure and promotion dossiers for procedural and substantive due-process errors" (pp, 4-5) to ensure error-free review process and non-discrimination. According to these procedures "an illegal or constitutionally impermissible consideration, such as that which has unlawfully taken into consideration a candidate's gender, race, age, nationality, handicap, sexual orientation, or which has violated the candidate's exercise of his or her protected First Amendment rights (p. 5), or "A recommendation significantly based on any consideration which violates academic freedom or which involves discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, age, physical handicap, marital status or sexual orientation" **(**p. 5) would be examples of a substantive due-process error. Additionally, according to these procedures, the faculty is ensured a right to an appeal at any stage of the review for tenure and promotion. "Candidates have the opportunity to appeal at specific stages of the review process. See Appendix C. Candidates should follow the appeal process as outlined in their unit's promotion and tenure document" **(**p. 4).

Valdosta State University emphasizes the same protections that apply to academic freedom during the post-tenure review as indicated in the *Faculty Evaluation Model at Valdosta State University* [http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/documents/FEMfinal.pdf], "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" (p. 8).

Valdosta State University Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures align with the *1940 statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure [*http://www.aaup.org/file/1940%20Statement.pdf] which purpose is to "promote public understanding and support of academic freedom and tenure and agreement upon procedures to ensure them in colleges and universities" (p. 14). They also align with the University of Georgia Principle 3.7.4 *Academic Freedom* compliance statement [https://sacs.uga.edu/compliance/p3.7.4.html] which indicates that "Academic freedom at the University is further protected by the Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion and Tenure. These guidelines state that their purpose is "to protect the rights of the faculty," ensuring "fair, rigorous and discipline-appropriate" processes. [6] Similarly, the Policy for Review of Tenured Faculty explicitly addresses academic freedom and non-discrimination in establishing fundamental criteria for review" (para. 3).

However, *Valdosta State University Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures* may wish to provide a more specific language to reiterate that the criteria and the review process for awarding tenure and promotion adhere to the principles of academic freedom in both research and teaching. Such language can be adapted from the University of Georgia Principle 3.7.4 *Academic Freedom* compliance statement [https://sacs.uga.edu/compliance/p3.7.4.html] which directly in the *Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion and Tenure* states that "According to the policy, the promotion/tenure unit "shall ensure that the criteria governing faculty review do not infringe on the accepted standards of academic freedom of faculty, including the freedom to pursue novel, unpopular, or unfashionable lines of inquiry" (para 2). As indicated the *1940 statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure [*http://www.aaup.org/file/1940%20Statement.pdf]*, "*Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. 2 The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition. Academic freedom is essential to these purposes and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning. It carries with it duties correlative with rights. 3Tenure is a means to certain ends; specifically: (1) freedom of teaching and research and of extramural activities" (p. 14).

III. Safeguarding & Protecting Academic Freedom by Academic Code of Professional Ethics

The *VSU Code of Ethics* [http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/faculty-senate/handbook/rights-and-responsibilities/code-of-ethics.php], which details the responsibilities of faculty to subjects, students, colleagues, institution, community as well as the role of administration in sustaining an environment conducive to fulfilling the terms of an Academic Code of Professional Ethics balances academic freedom with obligations imposed by the institution. That is, although faculty members may enjoy academic freedom in their classroom while pursuing "the truth as they see it and as it relates to their subject" (The Statement, para 1), encouraging "the free pursuit of learning in their students…" and thus protecting "their academic freedom"(The Statement, para 2), as well as speaking freely in matters related to how the university is operated, "…provided the regulations do not contravene academic freedom, they [professors] maintain their right to criticize and seek revision"(The Statement, para 4). At the same time, faculty members, when speaking or acting as private citizens should "avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for their college or university." (The Statement, para 5).

As such, the *VSU Code of Ethics* policy is consistent with the *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* [http://www.aaup.org/file/1940%20Statement.pdf] which indicates

that, “When they [professors] speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution” (p. 14).

The *VSU Code of Ethics* policy is also consistent with the *University System of Georgia* policy, which cautions that “Although professors and other teaching personnel have an expectation of academic freedom, this is not an absolute right. The institution has the right to establish reasonable time, place, and manner regulations. ..” (p. 132). “Additionally, the institution has the right to make academic judgments as to how best to allocate scarce resources” or “to determine for itself on academic grounds who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught, and who may be admitted to study” p. 132). Consequently, “The First Amendment will not protect all classroom activities even if speech related… However, employee discipline based on teaching or researching activities will be evaluated by First Amendment standards and should be reviewed by Legal Affairs prior to action being taken.”(p. 132).

IV. Safeguarding & Protecting Academic Freedom by Shared Governance

VSU:

VSU Academic Code of Professional Ethics states on Page 5 (section 5): “4. Faculty accept responsibility for discharging their appointed share of committee assignments, student advising, and other governance tasks assigned to the faculty.” In addition, the Statutes of VSU state in Article 1, Section 1 that “..the Faculty Senate serves as the mechanism for shared governance at the University and is the body to which the statutory, standing, and special committees of the Senate report.” Thereby, VSU acknowledges that faculty should accept responsibility for governance and that, specifically, the Faculty Senate is the mechanism for discharging the shared governance.

AAUP:

The AAUP addresses shared governance in two documents. First, the AAUP document “Academic Freedom & Electronic Communication” section X considers the role of faculty and shared governance. This document states that "faculty members must participate, preferably through representative institutions of shared governance, in the formulation and implementation of policies governing electronic communications technologies. However, . . . those faculty members who participate in such work need to become more informed about both the technical issues involved and the broader academic-freedom implications of their decisions."

Second, AAUP’s “Academic Due Process” document on Financial Exigency addresses financial exigency in the situation where "termination of an appointment with continuous tenure, or of a probationary or special appointment before the end of the specified term, may occur under extraordinary circumstances because of a demonstrably bona fide financial exigency, i.e., a severe financial crisis that fundamentally compromises the academic integrity of the institution as a whole and that cannot be alleviated by less drastic means." In this situation, this document then notes the following:

- "Each institution in adopting regulations on financial exigency will need to decide how to share and allocate the hard judgments and decisions that are necessary in such a crisis."

- "There should be an elected faculty governance body, or a body designated by a collective bargaining agreement, that participates in the decision that a condition of financial exigency exists or is imminent."
- " Judgments determining where within the overall academic program termination of appointments may occur should therefore be the primary responsibility of the faculty or of an appropriate faculty body."
- "The faculty or an appropriate faculty body should also exercise primary responsibility in determining the criteria for identifying the individuals whose appointments are to be terminated."

BOR and Others:

The **BOR Policy Manual**, section 3.2.4 "Faculty Rules and Regulations" states that "the faculty, or the council, senate, assembly, or such other comparable body at an institution shall, subject to the approval of the president of the institution, make statutes, rules, and regulations for its governance and for that of the students." In addition, it says that "a copy of an institution's statutes, rules and regulations made by the faculty shall be filed with the Chancellor."

Looking at another USG university, the **Georgia Southern** Faculty Handbook states that "academic freedom exists within the institutional framework of shared governance in which collegial forms of deliberations are valued, responsibilities are shared, and constructive joint thought and action are fostered among the components of the academic institution."

Summary
In summary, these documents all indicate that faculty are to take an active part in governing themselves, including addressing issues of academic freedom.

V. Safeguarding & Protecting Academic Freedom by Non-discriminatory and Equal Opportunity Practices

The *VSU Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and Multicultural Affairs Non-discrimination Policy* [http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/policies/documents/3002.1Non-DiscriminationPolicy.pdf] does not include specific language related to safeguarding and protecting academic freedom. However, other VSU documents note academic free in conjunction with non-discrimination. For example, the *VSU Academic Code of Professional Ethics* [http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/faculty-senate/handbook/rights-and-responsibilities/code-of-ethics.php, The Statement, para 2] indicates that professors "avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students. They acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from them. They protect their academic freedom." Likewise, the VSU *Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures* [https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/academic-affairs/documents/vsu-tenure-and-promotion-policies-and-procedures.pdf, p. 5] indicates that substantive due-process errors include a "recommendation significantly based on any consideration which violates academic freedom or which involves discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, age, physical handicap, marital status or sexual orientation." Both academic free and non-discrimination are addressed in the VSU Code of Ethics and Tenure/Promotion policies, but the relationship between the two is not clearly established beyond that students and faculty are entitled to both.

By comparison, the *American Association of University Professors (AAUP)* provides guidelines

regarding academic freedom and protection against discrimination in their *Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure* [http://www.aaup.org/file/RIR%202014.pdf, Section 9, p. 85]. The AAUP document specifically states that "all members of the faculty, whether tenured or not, are entitled to academic
freedom as set forth in the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure" and are entitled to "protection against illegal or unconstitutional discrimination... not limited to race, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation". The document also provides guidelines for handling complaints of violation of academic freedom or of Discrimination in non-reappointment. Both academic free and non-discrimination are addressed in the AAUP document, but the relationship between the two is not clearly delineated beyond that faculty are entitled to both.

The University of Georgia Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy
[https://eoo.uga.edu/policies/non-discrimination-anti-harassment-policy, Section
II. Rights and Responsibilities, Letter G. Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression] explicitly expresses the university's commitment to protecting, maintaining and encouraging both freedom of expression and full academic freedom of inquiry, teaching, service, and research. The policy statement indicates that "Academic freedom and freedom of expression shall be strongly considered in investigating complaints and reports of discrimination or harassment, but academic freedom and freedom of expression will not excuse behavior that constitutes a violation of the law or this Policy." This policy is unique in that it states that academic freedom will be considered in investigation of discrimination or harassment. USG's commitment to upholding procedures for safeguarding and protecting academic freedom regarding non-discriminatory and anti-harrassment policy may also be found in the USG academic freedom compliance statement [https://sacs.uga.edu/compliance/p3.7.4.html].

Finally, the *Board of Regents policy manual* **[**http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section3/C337/] establishes a system faculty counsel to "…provide faculty a voice on academic and educational matters and the BOR policies… including, but not limited to…academic freedom" (Board of Regents Policy Manual 3.2.4.1).

In light of this review, specific language related to safeguarding and protecting academic freedom was not found in VSU's non-discrimination policy statement. VSU may wish to add to the existing policy statement by adding that academic freedom will be considered in any investigation of discrimination or harassment, but academic freedom does not excuse behavior that constitutes a violation of the law or policy.

Sources

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Date: 04/21/2016

Faculty Senate Attendance: Please **initial** to the **right** of **your name**. If you are a proxy for someone, write **proxy** to the **right** of **their name**.

College of the Arts	Initials
Abigail Heuss	Proxy
Karl Wildman	X
Karl Paoletti	
Sarah Arnett	X
Kalina Winska	X
Shannon Lowe	Proxy
Tommy Crane	X
Linda Jurczak	

College of Arts and Sciences	
Ligia Focsan	X
Marty Williams	X
Fred Knowles	X
Krishnendu Roy	X
Dereth Drake	X
John Crowley	Proxy
Ubaraj Katawal	X
Brian Ring	X
Rebecca Gaskins	Proxy
Michael Noll	X
Peggy Moch	X
Michael Meacham	
Fleming Bell	X
Kelly Davidson Devall	
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Executive Committee	
Sean Lennon	X

College of Education & Human Services	Initials
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Shaunita Strozier	X
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Nancy Sartin	X
David Bruno	
Debbie Paine	X
Han Chen	X
Patti Campbell	X
Katherine Lamb	X
Alicja Rieger	X
Lucia Lu	
Katharine Adams	X
Rudo Tsemunhu	X
Diane Wright	X

College of Nursing & Health Sciences	
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Maura Schlairet	X

Odum Library	
Catherine Bowers	X
Mike Holt	X
Colette Drouillard	

Retirees Association Representative	
Fred Ware	X

Council on Staff Affairs (non-voting):	
Keith Warburg, COSA Chair	X

Student Senators (non-voting)	
David L. Burdette, SGA President	

Visitors:	
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Tim Frederick	X
Stephanie Pocsi	X
Samantha Paul	X
Steve Downey	X
Kathleen Lowney	X
Jackie Kelly	X
James Archibald	X
Dylan Volpintesta	X
Tyrone Johnson	X