

Questions for Provost/President

1. Faculty are continually asked to “do more” without any additional compensation, additional resources, or administrative support. An active research agenda is difficult to pursue, achieve, and maintain with a 4/4 teaching load. When is the administration going to be supportive of the faculty and allow manageable teaching loads? I have been teaching here for more than 20 years and I have never seen the faculty moral and burn-out as bad as it is now.
2. Salary comparisons of faculty across all ranks at VSU as compared to other USG universities and comparable institutions are much lower on average. In addition the salary compression is becoming a real issue since the last salary adjustment was primarily for the rank of professor over six years ago. Are there plans for salary increases across the ranks and more importantly, does merit count for anything in such adjustments (i.e. productive faculty members)?
3. From the recent Faculty Excellence Initiative it is apparent that VSU faculty are ready to transition from a teaching college to a real regional university where faculty have adequate time to pursue professional development. For example, many departments at Georgia Southern are on a 9 hour load. The last president Schloss promised that departments would be able to use the super section model to free up more time for their faculty professional development. Is it possible that VSU grant autonomy at the department level for faculty to work together to pursue professional development by allowing departments to set their own teaching loads so long as it meets the needs of our students?
4. Several years ago there was a strategic initiative to establish a research foundation at VSU. Is this still a strategic initiative?
5. Most of the universities provide travel funds for students to attend professional meetings from student fees managed by their associations. VSU has both an SGA and GSA, but yet there are no funding pools available for them to apply for travel awards. Is VSU committed to provide support for our students to engage in meaningful experiences with their faculty mentors through travel funds?
6. Several colleagues offer bonus grades for completed SOIs. Dr. Gravitt said this was unethical yet it is still done. Can we have a clearly stated policy university wide and can the university offer drawings for prizes if they are submitted? This needs to be clarified.
7. Many faculty, staff and students on campus would benefit from having on-campus child care facilities. Can we explore (re-)opening such a center?

8. Clearly, faculty do not enter the field of higher education to get rich quick. That said, we have bills to pay, families to support, and so forth. The university is facing financial constraints, but we are too. When can we reasonably expect a raise in our salary?
9. Why can't students get birth control pills at the Student Health Center?
10. I attended the grand opening of Ashley Hall. The President gave a nice speech about the rebuilding project, and traveled back in time to President Ronald M. Zaccari, then on to President Levy. He never mentioned President Schloss, the man who found the money, and supervised most of the rebuilding project. Why was there no mention of President Schloss?
11. Sexism is a problem on this campus. Women are excluded from higher administration positions, often times are talked over, ignored, and treated with less respect and regard than their male colleagues. Sexual harassment and bullying of female faculty, staff, and students is also an issue. Female faculty, staff, and students have been ridiculed, yelled at, been made the brunt of jokes, and have had to deal with unwanted overt sexual comments and advances. I am a junior faculty in a department where this type of behavior is ongoing (by my male colleagues and male department head). Several women in my department have elected to leave (without jobs) because of the way they have been treated by the department head (sexism rather than sexual inappropriate behaviors). This information has been reported to Maggie and the Dean but "nothing" has been done. When is the administration going to take these issues seriously and provide effective mandatory training and punitive consequences to ensure women do not have to work in such a sexist and hostile work environment?
12. Why are final grades due at 9am on Monday? Why can't final grades be submitted by noon on Monday? It would help faculty who administer essay exams and Friday night exams.
13. Given we have had no raises in 5 years, our inflation-adjusted pay has fallen 10% during that time, and our take-home checks will fall an additional 2% this year with the end of the payroll-tax holiday. Are you aware that most faculty salaries at VSU come directly from tuition and are not state-budget line-items, and thus "locally" funded? We have had at least \$2 million of surplus local funds annually in recent years, and these have been spent on purchasing expensive equipment, but not a penny for raises. As VSU faculty salaries continue to be less and less competitive, how will you go to bat for us with the BOR on this issue?
14. Which VSU administrators have received raises, and how much, in the 5-year period during which faculty have received none?
15. There is talk (and in some cases practice) of capping summer teaching at one course per faculty. If this is true, how would this square with the ongoing decades of promise that

faculty on the TRS retirement plan would be allowed to teach two or more courses in the summers leading up to their retirement to help create a decent base of pay?

16. There is talk that the minimum number of students for a summer course will become a function of faculty pay (the higher your salary, the greater number of students you will need); and that salary itself may be a function of the number of students enrolled.

Would not either of these changes:

- a. create a rift among the faculty in a given department (is this the intent)?
- b. Ignore the fact that senior faculty were once junior faculty, and spent many years earning relatively little for the revenue generated for the university?

17. Who specifically is proposing these changes and when will we hear details of these plans?

18. Has anyone considered that faculty on 10 month contracts have to make year-long financial plans, and to inform us of significant changes in summer teaching this late is irresponsible?

19. This is my 4th year teaching at VSU. Each year I have LOST money by electing to stay employed here (no raises but insurance rates increase; this year a 2% social security increase). My peers from graduate school (who are scattered throughout the region) have gotten raises each year despite the economic recession in their states and at their institutions. The monies that are spent at the end of the year here at VSU on frivolous purchases when faculty continue to go without raises is unconscionable. I love teaching at VSU but I have a family to support and student loan debt to pay back. Can you tell us if this is going to change soon, if not, I have to go back on the market to find a job where I can at least NOT LOOSE income each year.

20. The reimbursement issue; it is a colossal problem; what steps have you, President McKinney, taken to ensure that our scholarship is not jeopardized by a most-vexing bureaucratic procedure? Related question: are you aware that an increasing number of faculty have a conspiracy theory about this? Namely, that the BOR is encouraging our frustration and hopes that fewer and fewer of us will apply for funds for travel. Is this not a travesty? How is the SACS going to like it when they find out that faculty travel and presentations are down? How are they going to like it when they find out the number of study abroad programs is down because of this onerous bureaucratic procedure? What is going to happen to the reputation of our school when word gets out that faculty are less scholarly and that students have fewer opportunities?

21. Whatever happened to former President Zaccari's Presidential Lecture Series? President Zaccari set up an endowment and launched a lecture series whereby 3 lecturers would come to campus every year to enlighten both the on and off campus community—those people in our area who love knowledge and who love to learn. This program was highly beneficial and promoted collective morale as professors

demonstrated and shared these events with their students...each lecture was a high point in the academic calendar. We had superb speakers and there was a collective buzz for days and days afterward. Please, can you bring these educational events back to this intellectual wasteland?

22. What, if any, budget cuts are anticipated?
23. Additional Social Security taxes paid to the federal government reduces take home pay and there hasn't been a raise in quite a while. Do you anticipate a raise for faculty anytime soon?
24. VSU has released nothing about the murder on campus. I have a night class and a couple of students were asking if it was safe to be on campus.
25. Can the "right turn only" sign/rule and also the barricade bars/sticks be removed from the intersection of Georgia Avenue and N. Oak St. intersection? Motorists do not obey it and continue to go straight or veer right from Georgia Avenue to Georgia Avenue traveling west over N. Oak Street. There seems to be no use for the "right turn only" sign nor the barricade bars/sticks
26. We had a meeting today in my department and some faculty were wondering about the status of the investigation on the student that died at the end of last year. They are concerned about how safety is managed in campus and they feel there is not appropriate/administration communication with the public. If there is anything being done on preventing and/or raising awareness to whatever it is that happened, they would like to know.
27. Since the Graduate Dean and Dean of Research position is vacant could this be split into two positions? The Dean of the Graduate School? And, the Dean of Research? These are two very important positions for VSU as we move forward.
28. What you doing about promoting "legitimate diversity" on faculty, staff, and administration levels? For instance, more than half of the student population at VSU consists of women, yet there are no female role models for them in high administrative positions. Over 30% of the student body consists of African Americans yet there are few faculty of color (and no African Americans in mid-to high administrative positions).