

Resolution on Sustaining Academic Integrity and Quality at VSU

Whereas, continuing federal and state budget cuts in higher education pose enormous challenges to the academic integrity and quality of institutions like *Valdosta State University*, **and**

Whereas, the increasing reliance on tuition money for our university's budget translates to rising costs of higher education and makes it more difficult for students from low-income families to earn college degrees, **and**

Whereas, cuts to merit-based scholarships like *HOPE* and changes in eligibility for *Pell Grants* further exacerbate the challenges for high school students to enter college, **and**

Whereas, adjustments considered at *VSU* in regard to budget exercises or actual budget cuts must take into consideration already existing elevated costs of higher education, the long-term viability of academic programs, the importance of diverse course offerings at a comprehensive and regional university to provide a well-rounded education to our students, and the need for stability in our work force; **now, therefore be it**

Resolved, that the *Faculty Senate*

- 1) supports concerted efforts at *VSU* to maintain quality instruction, to ensure timely graduation, to aid student retention and enrollment, and to uphold the quality of our academic programs; and
- 2) supports concerted efforts to avoid lay-offs, strategically use vacant positions and retirements, consider offering early retirements, and avoid an increase in adjunct positions; and
- 3) supports the practice that decisions made as a result of budget exercises or actual budget cuts are based on empirical data and not advocacy, and that all of our institution's branches must be sincere and transparent in their evaluation of possible adjustments; and
- 4) demands that colleges, departments, and academic units potentially affected by budget cuts be integrally involved in working with the administration to ensure that aforementioned empirical data are complete, unbiased, and used appropriately.