

Minutes for Vanderbilt University Faculty Senate

October 7th, 2021, Meeting

Attendees

Voting members in attendance: Brooke Ackerly, Adam Anderson, Victor Anderson, Carolyn Audet, James Booth, Brett Byram, Liz Catania, Eric Johnson, Florence Sanchez, Jami Miller, ML Sandoz, Ryan Belcher, Dietmar Bisch, Camilla Benbow, Lorenzo Candelaria, Andrea Capizzi, André Christie-Mizell, Nicole Cobb, Idit Dobbs-Weinstein, Wonder Drake, Philippe Fauchet, Lisa Fazio, Phillip Franck, Debra Friedman, Katherine Friedman, John Geer, Chris Guthrie, Graham Hemingway, Tamarya Hoyt, Tamika Hudson, Dawn Iacobucci, Ji Hye Jung, Christian Ketel, Lutz Koepnick, Susie Leming-Lee, Daniel Levin David Lewis, Christopher Lind, Mark Magnuson, Larry Marnett, Elliot McCarter, Catherine McTamane, Ingrid Meszoely, Ryan Middagh, Bruce Morrill, Colleen Niswender, Belinda Otukolo Saltiban, Jeremy Payne, Julia Phillippi, Mariann Piano, Sandra Rosenthal, Amanda Satterthwaite, Jacob Sauer, Berk Sensoy, Kevin Schey, Marcy Singer-Gabella, Rebecca Swan, Emilie Townes, Julianne Vernon, Jonathan Waters, Saralyn Williams, Eli Zimmerman.

Voting members absent: Sari Acra, Brian Bachmann, Brian Fitzpatrick, Katherine Hartmann, Pamela Jeffries, Courtney Pitts, Jan Price, Claudine Taafe, and Yesha Yadav.

Ex-officio members in attendance: Vanessa Beasley, Gordon Bernard, G.L. Black, Donald Brady, Daniel Diermeier, Steve Ertel, Tracey George, Kathy Gould, Ben Harris, Brian Heuser, Eric Kopstain, Melanie Moran, Vesna Pavlović, John Penn, David Raiford, Padma Raghavan, Cybele Raver, Cleo Rucker, Alex Sevilla, and Brett Sweet.

Ex-officio members absent: Andre Churchwell, Nathan Green, John Lutz, and Karen Ng.

Guests in attendance: Shilo Anders, Seth Bordenstein, Jordan Bowen, Jessica Brotherson, Bapsi Chakravarthy, Walter Chazin, David Cortez, Aaron Conley, Ellen Goldring, Senta Greene, Alissa Hare, Jane Hirtle, Sarah Igo, Jeff Johnston, Martha Jones, Paul Laibinis, Herbert Marbury, Stacey McCarty, Ian Morrison, Richard McGregor, Owen McGuinness, Hilda McMackin, John McLean, Lynn Ramey, Betsey Robinson, Pamela Waynick-Rogers, Ruby Shellaway, Christine Whitmore, John Wiksw, Sheree Wright, and Mary Yarbrough.

Call to Order

A meeting of Vanderbilt Faculty Senate was held on October 7th, 2021, on Zoom. It began at 4:10pm and was presided over by Chair Mark Magnuson, with Vice Chair Ryan Middagh as secretary.

Quorum as specified in the Faculty Senate Constitution (revised 4/5/2019) Article II.B.1. was met with the recorded attendance of 61 voting members of the Faculty Senate.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Magnuson motioned for approval of the minutes as circulated of the September 2nd, 2021, meeting. Chair Magnuson asked whether there were any corrections to the proposed minutes. No corrections were made to the minutes.

Secretary Middagh confirmed that the minutes were approved. (40 ayes, 0 nays, 18 abstentions).

Chair Magnuson proceeded to the next item of business.

Report of the Executive Committee

Chair Magnuson remarked:

- Chair Magnuson reiterated the goals for this year, as well as the theme of symbiosis and synergies. He then discussed the survey about COVID sent out to senators, meetings with the Chancellor and Provost, pre-discussions with guest speakers before faculty senate meetings, training sessions for new senators, and participation in discussions at faculty senate meetings.

Chair Magnuson proceeded to the next item of business.

Chancellor Remarks

Chair Magnuson turned the floor over to Chancellor Diermeier.

Chancellor Diermeier remarked:

- Diermeier exclaimed his joy for how many individuals attended the meeting today. He then explained how things regarding COVID-19 have nicely stabilized (.12% positivity rate). He said he wants to make sure that Vanderbilt University (VU) is the safest place in Tennessee. He explained steps that have gotten us here:
 - Random asymptomatic testing
 - The development of Pam Jones' program
- Chancellor Diermeier then noted how he has spent time speaking with students and parents about this semester and received a tremendous amount of gratitude towards faculty and the university's handling of COVID-19 last year. He said efforts are recognized and appreciated greatly by students and families.
- Chancellor Diermeier then noted the faculty's dedication and research this past year. He stated his amazement of faculty's dedication to students, even those that have moved on from Vanderbilt. Diermeier then explained how we were able to open labs quicker than most of our fellow universities, and we will now see the payoff of working around the clock. He noted that he knows how difficult this was and will continue to be, and that nobody should forget that this was very difficult at both personal and professional levels. Diermeier then stated the need for Vanderbilt to attract the best faculty and put them into an environment where they can succeed, as well as the need to try to identify the barriers preventing faculty success.

Chancellor Diermeier turned the floor over to Provost Raver.

Provost Raver remarked:

- Provost Raver stated her excitement in being the new Provost and mentioned key qualities that drew her to Vanderbilt. She expressed joy about working alongside Chancellor Diermeier, how the university is known as a powerhouse of research and creative/artistic expression and mentioned how lucky she is to be a part of it. Provost Raver said she is impressed by faculty's dedication for our city of Nashville, as well as the entire world, and she hopes that Vanderbilt is poised to solve society's challenges moving forward.
- Provost Raver recommended a next step of carrying out listening sessions, where leadership can learn about the differing dimensions of research that need more support (including small, informal faculty groups). Raver also expressed her deep dedication in working towards these goals as faculty.

Chair Magnuson proceeded to the next item of business.

Standing Committee Reports

Chair Magnuson called for reports from the standing committees.

No reports were made.

Chair Magnuson proceeded to the next item of business.

Ad Hoc Committee Reports

No ad hoc committee reports were made.

Chair Magnuson proceeded to the next item of business.

Old Business

There was no old business.

Chair Magnuson proceeded to the next item of business.

New Business

There was no new business.

Chair Magnuson proceeded to the next item of business.

Scheduled Remarks

Chair Magnuson turned the floor over to guest speakers.

Dean Marnett and Dean Fauchet remarked:

- Dean Marnett described how great Vanderbilt faculty is and how schools have invested to create unique research facilities that enable faculty members to work at the front of their fields. He said the faculty need systems to support their research. He then stated how staff have worked very hard to support faculty, but systems and processes have not been optimized for the end-users.
- Dean Marnett said how applying the concept of One Vanderbilt can create partnerships between schools and business units to help focus on the needs of the end-user. These partnerships should be involved in designing, purchasing, and implementing support systems. He made the recommendation of only rolling out systems/processes when they have been tested by end users (as, for example, as was done with the rollout of the VERA system), the organization of end-user groups to advise even after implementation, and prioritizing systems that allow Vanderbilt University and Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) to collaborate.

- Dean Fauchet stated how there is a need for computational infrastructure. He recommended an increase in the support for research enterprise (not only for IT staff and teaching), streamline of equipment ordering to avoid long delays in receiving equipment, and ability to invest proactively in data generated by researchers to
- Dean Fauchet discussed VU-VUMC collaborations and recommended working harder to help the data exchange between VU and VUMC become more seamless. He also mentioned the need to decrease any obstacles that exist in the possibility of VU students to be in operating rooms.

Dean Geer and Dean of Strategic Initiatives (for the College of Arts and Science) Sarah Igo remarked:

- Dean Geer discussed how to foster excellence in the social sciences and humanities, by starting with the need to support research and teaching.
- Dr. Igo discussed key challenges and how they can be resolved through the culture creation of grant-getting in fields where this is rare. She recommended making discoveries more visible by holding public writing workshops that can amplify research, and by supporting and promoting long-serving associate professors, through establishing mentoring guidelines for tenured associates.
- Dr. Igo listed ambitions that will help implement the strategy of the social sciences moving forward including the new faculty program, which would include year-long events and linkage of events to one another, making the VU culture more welcoming. Next, she mentioned a society of fellows in the humanities, where a predoctoral/postdoctoral program could work as a bridge to bring new energy and collaborators to campus. Lastly, Dr. Igo touched on undergraduate teaching reimagined, which would build on immersion, emphasize evolving questions, rigorous research trainings, and standardized platforms for inquiry.

Q: Senator asked if there is any COACH data that's helped to inform this discourse. Also asked about plans for addressing the challenges – and if these should be presented to committees. The senator then asked if there is large enough data on these COACH surveys.

A: Faculty Life committee meeting yesterday, this topic of exploring results of COACH surveys came up and of how to address this. This is hoped to be brought forth as a question for the faculty senate (FS).

Q: Thinking forward about our next administering of a COACH survey, should we use our optional questions with COACH to gather more data to add more power in enabling this discourse?

A: Multiple voting senators expressed that this was a great idea.

Vice Provost Padma Raghavan remarked:

- Vice Provost Raghavan mentioned that the VERA soft launch going on now and research development investments that provide support for faculty. She said how VERA is a software service that will help us develop the most competitive proposals with the least administrative burden. Raghavan described the VERA soft launch as a continuously phased methodical launch to make it as smooth as possible.
- Vice Provost Raghavan then extended thanks to many branches of administration, councils, faculty, staff, etc., as this has been a huge collaborative effort. She emphasized the importance of upcoming

research development, as a major expansion of federal and foundation funding is anticipated and said how research development can be used as a resource to support faculty success.

Executive Vice President for Research (VUMC) Dr. Gordon Bernard remarked:

- Dr. Bernard brought up the Vanderbilt Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (VICTR), and how the goal of this is to speed translation of lab discoveries into treatment for patients, to engage communities in health-related research efforts, and to train a new generation of clinical and translational researchers. He also mentioned that individuals can learn more about VICTR by going to StarBRITE, an internal front door for all VICTR resources.
- Dr. Bernard then mentioned biostatistics and the clinics that help with study design, CRC reviews that review funding requests, and vouchers that can give up to 50 hours of biostatistics support in the design of studies. He mentioned how the VICTR studio program has been a great success, consisting of sessions that bring together relevant experts in a certain methodology.

Chair Magnuson proceeded to the next item of business.

Good of the Senate

Chair Magnuson opened the floor to comments.

- Q: VUMC is migrating data storage and analyses to the Microsoft cloud system, is VU doing this as well or doing anything different?
 - A: Any coordination of this is more directed at VUIT, but the strengthening of systems in place at VU and VUMC is going to occur soon. However, there is not a current knowledge of coupling between the two.
- Comment: Expressed interest in VICTR and thinks it would be worthwhile for different campuses to look at it in development of discussion in faculty work.
- Comment: Mentioned the exchange of contracts and funds between VU and VUMC and expressed interest in working with this.
 - There was additional help offered with looking into this. It was mentioned that the faculty need to start by identifying where these problems lie.

Chair Magnuson proceeded to the next item of business.

Adjournment

It was moved that the meeting should be adjourned. There was a second and the meeting adjourned at 5:33pm.



Ryan Middagh, Secretary
Faculty Senate Vice Chair

November 4, 2021

Date of Approval