The Academic Policies and Services Committee included the following Senators: Karen Campbell, Andy Porter, Terry Lybrand, Tracy George, Peter Rousseau, Peter Wright, and Michael McLendon. Norman Tolk was the Executive Committee Liaison.

APS has the charge to be concerned with new schools, new programs, and new degrees; to consider academic honors, leaves, grants, promotions, departmental and divisional chairmanships, programs abroad, the academic calendar, career planning and placement, Vanderbilt University Library, Information Services, the bookstore and the University Press; and to examine university strategic plans and initiatives.

APS began the year with five charges and six additional items were added to our agenda.

New Degrees

APS carefully reviewed proposals for new degrees in the following areas:

Master’s of Accountancy (proposed by Owen School)
Ph.D. in Chemical and Physical Biology (proposed by the School of Medicine and the College of Arts and Science)
Ph.D. in Law and Economics (proposed by the Law School in conjunction with the Economics Department and Owen School)

All three new degrees were recommended for approval to, and ultimately approved by, the Senate.

APS would like to re-iterate that it is imperative for any advertisement of newly proposed programs (via brochures, the website, etc.) include the statement that the program is “pending approval.” If the program is advertised in advance of approval, a statement in the proposal should explain contingency plans for students admitted prior to degree approval.

To provide input on the University Library

One of the original charges to APS, there was little activity or involvement of the committee this year. There has been correspondence between the Provost, Associate Provost Dennis Hall, and the committee chair. A Library Task Force was announced in early September, 2006. APS requested that one of our members be appointed to the Task Force.
At this point, the Task Force has not been appointed. Associate Provost Hall has outlined his plans in an e-mail shared with APS. This item will need to continue to be on the 2007-08 agenda for APS.

To examine the University’s strategic planning initiative, making the process more visible and transparent

APS worked with Associate Provost Tim McNamara to improve the availability of strategic planning information on the website of the Office of the Provost.

To reconsider potential changes in Vanderbilt’s policy of awarding honorary degrees or alternatives to non-Vanderbilt faculty members

An initial debate was held two years ago, but was not reported on last year. The 2006-07 APS committee completed the review and made the following motion to the full Senate: “Vanderbilt will continue the policy of not awarding honorary degrees. We commend the administration for soliciting nominations for the Nichols-Chancellor’s Medal from the community at large, as we believe this honor is a more appropriate recognition than an honorary degree would be.”

During extensive discussions on the issue, APS believes that awarding honorary doctorates would weaken the earned degree. After meetings with Vice Chancellor Mike Schoenfeld, we believe that the Nichols-Chancellor’s speaker provides the same sort of recognition and speech provided through honorary degrees. APS members worked with Vice Chancellor Schoenfeld for an e-mail to be sent to all members of the Vanderbilt community to seek input on the Senior Day speaker (sent from the Chancellor’s Office on November 15, 2006). We encourage this same feedback be sought in future years.

Given that this issue has been considered repeatedly and rejected repeatedly, APS recommends this policy stand until 2012 or later.

To clarify the role of SACS reaccredidation and determine the level of involvement for the Senate

Associate Provost McNamara indicated there was no role for APS in the work being done for SACS reaccredidation.

To understand better the opportunities for international study/research undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, and faculty have
Associate Provost Joel Harrington met with APS and outlined the work of Vanderbilt International Office. The committee felt his presentation and the discussion that followed was an important one for the full Senate to hear. Associate Provost Harrington presented to the Senate in March.

To review the request by SGA for making course syllabi available online for students to view before/during registration

APS recommends that University Registrar Gary Gibson work on a way to make course syllabi available for students (via a password protected link) through the Vanderbilt website outlining the schedule of class offerings. Faculty should be encouraged to provide recent syllabi for their classes, while students must understand that syllabi are fluid documents that chance immediately prior to (or even during) each semester.

To make recommendations to the Senate/Provost for additional awards for faculty excellence

APS reviewed the list of awards the University currently makes to faculty. It should be noted that we have concerns that the process of making nominations for these awards has often left too few nominees, leaving us with the concern that there may already be too many awards given.

We have considered suggesting three new awards that seem to be in areas currently unrecognized: one for service to the greater Nashville community, one for excellence in mentoring graduate students, and one for undergraduate advising. These may be excellent ideas to take to interested donors.

The request for this item to go to APS originated with Provost Zeppos. The APS chair went back to the Provost for additional clarification on his request for the study of new awards. In an April 7, 2007 e-mail, the Provost outlined further his intention: new awards would lead to the ultimate goal to have the election of many more faculty to the National Academies.

The 2007-08 APS committee should continue to work with Provost Zeppos, Associate Provosts Dennis Hall and Tim McNamara, and Associate Vice Chancellor Jeff Balser to investigate this issue and make recommendations.

To consider the time that is allocated between classes for undergraduates

APS began a review of the concerns brought forward by students and faculty that the current allotment of time (ten minutes) between classes. It is felt by some that this interval is too short to make it between classes offered on a campus the size of Vanderbilt. The following points have been considered:
• Peabody professors and students have concerns that the current schedule is antiquated (Gary Gibson confirmed it has been in place since before the Vanderbilt/Peabody merger). This problem has become greater with the opening of classroom space on the south end of Peabody side of campus (Wyatt) and the north end of the West End side (Wilson). With the seminar classrooms being open in the Freshman Commons, this will present more with a time crunch.

• Most of us can walk the route in 15 minutes. But most classes only have a 10 minute interval, causing students to leave early or arrive late. Several students were asked to time themselves as they made the walk, and they reported times of 15-18 minutes.

• The Registrar was informally asked to find out what campuses of similar size do. In a brief study, he found we have the tightest schedule by far (Duke has a 45 minute interval!). The University of Notre Dame (a much smaller campus) allots 15 minutes between classes.

• We don't think it's unreasonable to expect that students will greet each other (and faculty) as they walk, talk with other students headed their way, answer their cell phones, and even day dream a bit. In fact, we view most of these as desirable elements of the collective life of a campus.

• We would rather that students arrive a bit early for class and/or have time after class, if they wish, to chat with faculty for a moment---if only to make an appointment to meet at another time. Thus, the transition time between classes is not solely for the purpose of getting from one classroom to the next.

APS requests that the Administration (Provost's Office, University Registrar, etc.) review a recommendation that the TIME ALLOCATED BETWEEN CLASSES TAKEN BY UNDERGRADUATES BE EXTENDED TO FIFTEEN-TWENTY MINUTES. A study of this recommendation should be made during the summer of 2007, so that any changes may be fully implemented for 2008-09.

Pending a report on this review, APS and Student Life committees will submit a recommendation to the full Senate in fall, 2007.
Faculty Life Committee Annual Report 2006-2007
Kane Jennings, chair

The Faculty Life Committee was tasked with the following six charges for the 2006-2007 academic year.

1. To construct a report concerning the establishment of new interdisciplinary centers and the changes that have been made in the way faculty are hired, how they are promoted, and where they are to be tenured.

2. To explore and recommend mechanisms to expand mental health services for faculty and staff.

3. To serve as a liaison with the Administration to establish guidelines on effort reporting as related to the accountability of faculty toward their budgeted time in grants.

4. To explore the expansion of retirement plans to include Roth 403b accounts and to serve as a liaison with the Administration to assess the feasibility of phased-in retirement.

5. To explore how faculty can become rewarded or compensated for their efforts in thematic programming for the Freshman Commons.

6. To follow up with the Administration on their plans to implement a Faculty Survey for the Fall of 2006.

Below, the committee presents its response to these charges.

Charge
To construct a report concerning the establishment of new interdisciplinary centers and the changes that have been made in the way faculty are hired, how they are promoted, and where they are to be tenured.

Response
A Senate Task Force chaired by Senate Vice-Chair Norman Tolk has investigated strategies for organizing and promoting transdisciplinary cooperation in research and teaching and has recommended initiatives as topics for faculty seminars. Faculty Life members Ron Emeson, Joey Barnett, and Jose Medina have participated on this task force. The task force delayed the release of their report from December, 2006 to late
Spring, 2007, and Vice-Chair Tolk is scheduled to present their findings and recommendations at the May, 2007 Senate meeting. The report by the task force was to serve as a launching pad for a more focused Faculty Life investigation. As a result of the delay in the release of the report, the Faculty Life committee recommends that this issue remain as a charge for 2007-2008.

**Charge**
To explore and recommend mechanisms to expand mental health services for faculty and staff.

**Response**
In October of 2006, the Faculty Life committee met with Rhonda Venable from the Vanderbilt University Psychological and Counseling Center (PCC) and Jim Kendall from Work/Life Connections-Employee Assistance Program (EAP). From this meeting, the Committee gleaned the following information. The PCC and EAP are two effective mental health resources that exist on campus for faculty and staff. These two resources are different, as summarized in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PCC</th>
<th>EAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Span for Care</strong></td>
<td>Unlimited</td>
<td>Short Term (then referral)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who is Eligible?</strong></td>
<td>Students, Faculty/Staff, Immediate Family</td>
<td>Faculty/Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost</strong></td>
<td>Sliding Scale</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Records on Star Panel?</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes (but blinded)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specifically, the PCC provides services on a sliding scale for an unlimited time frame to students, faculty/staff, and their immediate families. At present, faculty comprise only ~1% of the clients at the PCC. The EAP provides free, short-term treatment for only faculty and staff. Under the umbrella of the EAP, the Physician and Faculty Wellness Program has shown a nearly linear increase in patients over the past eight years (see figure on the next page). Considering the availability of the PCC and EAP on campus and that neither is overloaded with faculty/staff clients at present, the committee has revised its charge to read, “Expand the awareness of faculty and staff toward the mental health resources that are available on campus.”

To meet this revised charge, the FL committee recommends that the Administration provide the requisite support to enable a more effective marketing of the PCC and EAP. We specifically recommend these steps:
1) An Emergency web page that is accessed directly from the Vanderbilt home page should be created. In fact, the Student Life Committee, in their 2006 report entitled, “Behavioral Health and Vanderbilt Students: Needs and Resources,” recommended that such a web page be developed. We hereby support the original recommendation from the Student Life Committee. In addition to posting contact information for police, fire, and medical authorities, this web page should clearly list the Crisis Hotline (244-7444) for suicide prevention and other issues related to mental health. Web pages for the PCC and EAP should be linked to this Emergency web page.

2) Vanderbilt’s Go for the Gold program should offer educational information on Mental Health, especially notifying employees of the PCC and the EAP.

3) Faculty and staff orientation programs should advertise the PCC and EAP.

4) Department chairs and faculty/staff who are designated to be trained on issues related to student mental health, should also be made aware of mental health resources for faculty and staff.

5) Refrigerator magnets and brochures should be available at large campus-wide events such as Tailgate 2007 and Employee Celebration Month.

6) Annual e-mails that advertise the PCC and EAP should be sent to all faculty and staff.

**Charge**

To serve as a liaison with the Administration to establish guidelines on effort reporting as related to the accountability of faculty toward their budgeted time in grants.

**Response**
In the wake of the effort-reporting audit at Vanderbilt by the National Science Foundation during the Spring of 2007 and future potential audits by other agencies, a clear statement of policy regarding effort reporting is required to educate faculty and staff. These statements have been provided by the Administration and are available at: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/ocga/vupolicies/vupolicies.htm

In addition, Gordon Bernard (VUMC) addressed the Faculty Senate on the topic of effort reporting at the April, 2007 meeting.

**Charge**

To explore the expansion of retirement plans to include Roth 403(b) accounts and to serve as a liaison with the Administration to assess the feasibility of phased-in retirement.

**Response**

Since no one on the committee expressed a strong interest in phased-in retirement, we focused on the Roth 403(b) portion of the charge. In a typical pre-tax 403(b) plan, employees do not pay income taxes on their contributions, but they do pay taxes on the distributions received during retirement. Effective January 1, 2006, Roth contributions could be made toward a 403(b) account if the employer provides such an option. Under the Roth option, if an employee designates their 403(b) contributions as Roth, then they would pay income taxes on them but not on the distributions received during retirement. The Roth option could be advantageous for those who expect to be in a higher tax bracket during retirement and those who think the tax rates could increase above current levels.

Kevin Myatt has stated that Vanderbilt will not allow Roth contributions until sufficient resources are in place and other priorities have been handled, including education around the pro’s and con’s of Roth contributions, amended plan documents, modified payroll and record systems, and coordinated information exchange with the four major investment companies. While the committee understands that enabling Roth contributions will require a significant amount of work, faculty at Vanderbilt are overwhelmingly in support of having the Roth option. Of a sample of 31 faculty polled by the committee, over 90% (28) expressed that they would welcome the option. In addition, out of a sample of 27 universities, one third (9) are currently allowing Roth contributions. These universities include Baylor, Boston U., Carnegie Mellon, Emory, Florida, Kentucky, Minnesota, Wake Forest, and Washington U. Given that these other universities, including peer institutions (Wash. U.) and Southeastern Conference brethren (Kentucky and Florida), are allowing Roth contributions toward 403(b) plans, the committee feels that this process is certainly not too complex for Vanderbilt to
handle. Therefore, we have prepared a motion for the May 7 Faculty Senate Meeting that states the following:

**Motion:** The Faculty Senate requests that the Administration provide a report during the Fall semester of 2007, presenting a plan to enable faculty and staff to designate Roth contributions toward their 403(b) retirement plans. Broadening our benefits options will help the University remain competitive with peer institutions and should help attract and retain faculty.

**Charge**
To explore how faculty can become rewarded or compensated for their efforts in thematic programming for the Freshman Commons.

**Response**
E-mails sent to University Central faculty by Provost Zeppos (August 30, 2005) and Dean Wcislo (October 6, 2006) have announced grants to support programming efforts that would impact first-year students at the Freshman Commons. We commend the Administration for taking these steps. We also encourage the Administration to consider mechanisms to promote informal faculty-student interactions, such as providing periodic meals at the Commons for faculty who will agree to lead lunch- or dinner-time discussions related to their research, teaching, or service. While some faculty are too busy with departmental teaching, research, and service to spend a significant amount of time in programming for the Commons, we believe that many faculty would be willing to schedule an occasional lunch or dinner date at the Commons in order to interact with the students in this less formal setting.

**Charge**
To follow up with the Administration on their plans to implement a Faculty Survey for the Fall of 2006.

**Response**
The Faculty Life committee has worked with the Administration for the past two years in developing a Faculty Survey. We applaud the Administration for unveiling the survey in Fall, 2006. In fact, this committee served as the beta test group for the survey, and we were generally pleased with the quality of the survey and the types of questions asked. Since the survey was completed by faculty over five months ago, the committee feels that the time has come to make the results available. The Faculty Life committee recommends that the results from the survey (raw data, appropriately blinded) pertaining to the Faculty Senate be delivered to the Faculty Senate Office by July 1, 2007.
1. T+P Orientation: Make recommendations regarding the orientation of new faculty to Vanderbilt’s tenure and promotion policies. PEAF has collected materials on T+P orientation from all schools of the university, and the next step is to propose a model to be used as a university-wide guideline.
   a. In discussing the formal guidelines (most, but not all, the colleges post these guidelines) as well as anecdotal information gathered from faculty in all the colleges as well as from faculty who have served on the Tenure and Promotion Committee, PEAF concluded that the next step is to encourage the Deans of those schools that do not have detailed guidelines to develop them. Thus, PEAF recommends, through the Executive Committee to the Administration that:
      1. That the Deans appoint either a senior faculty member or an administrator to serve as the source of information for faculty who need information or guidance on matters of Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion.
      2. That the Deans develop, disseminate to all faculty, and post on College web pages (where appropriate) guidelines for the Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion of faculty hired jointly in two Departments or in a Department and a Program or Center.
      3. That the Deans develop, disseminate to all faculty, and post on college web pages (where appropriate) guidelines for Reappointment and Promotion for faculty off the tenure track.
      4. That the Deans include within guidelines for Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure their policies regarding service obligations and expectations for untenured faculty.

   b. Given the specific concerns and requirements of each College, PEAF is not the proper committee for developing these guidelines. However, PEAF would welcome consultation with the Deans and Department Chairs about these concerns.

2. Grievance Procedures: Some miscellaneous issues around grievance procedures that PEAF will keep an eye on in 2006-07:
   a. PEAF, together with the Senate Chair and Vice Chancellor Zeppos, developed wording for the Faculty Manual to prevent mixed claims from being filed under both Part A (grievances related to Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion) and Part B (all other grievances). In the case of a mixed claim, the filing will be under Part A and therefore will be assessed by the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee system.
   b. PEAF, the Senate Chair, and the Administration have agreed to the changes to the
Faculty Manual, developed in 2005-6 and continuing into 2006-7.

3. Grievances Handling: Continue to serve as the panel that hears faculty grievances that are unrelated to promotion or tenure.
   a. The Committee completed one grievance case to which the Chancellor has responded.
   b. A second grievance was in process when the Grievant requested that PEAF drop the case.
   c. Several potential grievances were preempted by consultation with the Chair of PEAF.
Final Report of the Committee on Senate Affairs
Academic Year 2006-2007

Committee members:

Raymond Burk, Chair, Medicine (2008)
John McCarthy, Arts and Sciences (ex officio) [executive committee liason]
Cathleen Pettepher, Medicine (2007)
John Ahner, Arts and Sciences (2008)
Martin Sandler, Medicine (2008)
Bruce Cooil, Owen (2007)
Paul DeHart, Divinity (2009)
Anne Moore, Nursing (2009)

The Senate Affairs Committee was given four charges at the beginning of academic year 2006-2007: (1) To finalize the Code of the Senate, (2) To ensure liaison between the Senate and the Staff Councils of the University, (3) To determine the methods used by the Schools for selecting senators and add them to the Code, and (4) To continue discussion of how to increase the effectiveness of the Senate.

After the year had begun, the Executive Committee of the Senate charged the Committee (5) to consider University sustainability issues as presented by SPEAR (Students Promoting Environmental Awareness and Recycling) and to recommend a course of action for the Senate on those issues.

(1) Finalize the Code of the Senate. The Senate Affairs Committee of 2004-2005 compiled all references that were made to the Faculty Senate in four official documents—the ‘Code of Bylaws of the Vanderbilt University’, the ‘Constitution of the Faculty Assembly’, the ‘Rules of Order’ of the Faculty Senate, and the ‘Faculty Manual’. The intent was for the Committee to review the primary documents annually and add relevant changes in them to the ‘Code’. No such review has been carried out since the document was created.

The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate discussed the ‘Code’ at its April 4, 2007 meeting. It concluded that Concordance would be a better designation than Code because, in reality, it is a compilation of relevant statements in the four official documents on specific topics related to the Faculty Senate. This compilation reveals that the documents reinforce one another in most cases but conflict with one another in a few; this ‘Concordance’ should be useful to Senate officers in the carrying out of their duties. It will be posted on the website of the Faculty Senate after it has been finalized. Annual updating of the Concordance will be a duty of the Committee on Senate Affairs and will be accomplished with the aid of the Program Coordinator of the Faculty Senate.

(2) Ensure liaison between the Senate and the Staff Councils. The Senate Affairs committee is the formal contact liaison between the Faculty Senate and the two Staff Councils of the University. This year the Chair of the Faculty Senate attended meetings of the Staff Councils to maintain contact between the Senate and the Councils. It is anticipated that the Chair of the Faculty Senate will do this each year.
(3) **Determine the methods used by the Schools for selecting senators.** This year the Committee obtained from their Deans descriptions of how each School selects senators. These descriptions have been compiled and will be inserted into the Concordance (also, see the end of this report for attachment).

(4) **Discussion of increasing Senate effectiveness.** An ongoing charge to the Committee has been to recommend actions that would increase participation and effectiveness of individual senators. Past recommendations, including direct communication with senators who did not attend meetings, were reviewed and discarded. New suggestions from committee members are: encouraging reporting on the Senate by campus publications and provision to senators of ‘talking points’ that they could present in departmental faculty meetings. Both of these suggestions would raise awareness of the activities of the Senate.

(5) **Consider sustainability issues and recommend a course of action for the Senate.** The student group SPEAR requested that the Senate support their call for more effective recycling on the campus. The Executive Committee charged the Senate Affairs Committee with considering this.

The leader of SPEAR, Jenny Magill, and several of her fellow students met with the Committee on October 18, 2006. They presented data showing that recycling efforts on campus were not well organized and therefore had little effect. Additionally, their presentation compared Vanderbilt’s efforts in other aspects of sustainability with those of comparable universities. Those comparisons indicated that Vanderbilt lagged in this area. Efforts at Vanderbilt on environmental affairs have been focused mostly on compliance.

After discussion, Committee members voted to make a motion to the Senate requesting that the University Administration develop an environmental mission statement that would promote sustainability in all decisions and activities of the University. The motion was drafted and approved by the Senate at its December 2006 meeting after a presentation by Jenny Magill of SPEAR and by the Committee.

This year the University has taken several steps to improve sustainability practices. The Committee should monitor these efforts and provide constructive suggestions.
Selection of Senators

College of Arts and Science
   All voting members of the Faculty may vote in elections for Faculty Senate, but only tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to serve as senators representing the College of Arts and Science.
   Faculty members from each Division nominate up to six members for consideration. Once nominees have been selected, senators are chosen by written ballot.

Blair School of Music
   The Faculty Advisory Committee, which is elected by the Blair faculty, nominates two people for each vacancy after determining that they would serve if elected. A written ballot with the two names is then distributed to the full faculty, along with the section of the Faculty Senate Constitution describing the duties and eligibility of candidates. The election then occurs through secret written ballot by the entire faculty.

Divinity School
   The faculty elects a senator at the final regular faculty meeting. A list of tenure track and tenured faculty is presented and faculty members vote by written ballot until a member is elected.

School of Engineering
   Each year in the early spring, the Senior Associate Dean of Engineering commissions a nominating committee comprising outgoing senators and members of the Graduate Faculty Council. The chair of that committee works with colleagues to identify a slate of two willing candidates if one senator is to be chosen and three if two are to be chosen. The names are distributed to the Faculty and written ballots are submitted.

Law School
   The two senators from the School nominate a willing candidate to replace the outgoing senator. That candidate has always been elected.

School of Medicine
   The office of the Dean carries out the election. A request for nominations is sent to faculty members. From those nominated, willingness to serve is determined. Ballots are sent listing those nominated and willing. Additional ballots are sent until the requisite number of candidates receives a majority of the votes.

School of Nursing
   The faculty of the School elects senators at the same time they elect chairpersons of School committees.

Owen Graduate School of Management
   Elections of senators are held during faculty meetings. The Dean nominates candidates and they are usually elected by consensus.
Peabody College

Faculty members are sent a ballot with the eligible names on it. They each vote for the number of candidates for whom positions are available. Those receiving the most votes are elected.

R. Burk
4/28/07
Final Report of the Student Life Committee of the Faculty Senate
2006-2007

May 2, 2007

Members: Clint Carter, Larry Dowdy (Chair), Agnes Fogo, Cathy Fuchs (EC Member), Craig Anne Heflinger (EC Member), John Lachs, Cathy Reisenberg, Jonathan Retzlaff, Ginny Shepherd, Sharon Shields, John Tarpley, David Wasserstein


1. To form coalitions and forums for dialogue between the key Student Life constituents.
2. To continue the Mental Health Committee initiative.
3. To act as the liaison with the intercollegiate athletic program and to continue examining the relationship between student-athlete academic performance, faculty goals, and institutional priorities.
4. To review the status of graduate education reform.
5. To monitor the progress of improving campus security and safety.

Primary Activities: An abbreviated summary of the Committee’s activities are listed below.

- (charges 1-5) Regular, typically monthly, meetings were held, which were well attended, and were characterized by lively, informative, and productive, discussions.
- (charge 2) As a follow up to last year’s Mental Health Subcommittee, a student mental health meeting was coordinated by Professor Heflinger in August that brought together a wide range of interested faculty and staff. Meetings with Provost Zeppos and Vice Chancellor Jacobson were also held.
- (charge 2) A set of pamphlets (i.e., Vanderbilt University Psychological and Counseling Center, MAPS – Mental Health Awareness and Prevention of Suicide, Students in Distress: A Guide for Faculty and Staff) and an informational letter were distributed by Provost Zeppos and Dean Bandas in early February to all the Vanderbilt Faculty and Staff.
- (charge 2) Dr. Paul Barreira, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School and Director, Department of Behavioral Health and Academic Counseling, visited Vanderbilt in late February, met with several key Vanderbilt people, and made a presentation to the Faculty Senate in which he described various mental health ideas and initiatives at Harvard.
- (charge 4) Dennis Hall, Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Education, made a presentation in April to the Faculty Senate and provided an update regarding the current status of graduate education at Vanderbilt.

- (charge 3) Andy Porter, Chair of the University’s Intercollegiate Athletic Committee (IAC), met with the Student Life Committee in March. He provided information and insight into the role and inner workings of the IAC.
- (charge 3) Three recommendations from the Student Life Committee have been made with respect to Vanderbilt’s intercollegiate athletic program:

  Recommendation #1: The appointment of the Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) shall be made by the Chancellor after consultation with the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate. The appointment shall be made for a specified term, and a review of the performance of the FAR that includes participation by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall take place prior to any reappointment. The FAR should have experience in faculty leadership and be a respected member of the faculty in order to enhance the visibility and effectiveness of the position. The FAR must avoid the reality or appearance of any conflict of interest, and have no role in the administrative functions of either Student Life or Athletics during the term of appointment as FAR.

  Recommendation #2: The administrator in charge of athletics, the Faculty Athletics Representative, and the Chair of the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee should report at least once a year to the Faculty Senate. Such reports should include a focus on academic benchmarks including the academic progress rate (APR), graduation success rate (GSR), and the percentage of student athlete special admits.

  Recommendation #3: The voting membership of the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee (IAC) of Vanderbilt University consists of eight tenured faculty members, plus additional staff, student, and community members as determined by the IAC chair, Chancellor, FAR, and the administrator in charge of athletics. The Student Life Committee of the Faculty Senate recommends that four of the eight faculty members be nominated by the Student Life Committee of the Faculty Senate, and submitted to the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate. The Executive Committee will then submit a final slate of four candidates to the Chancellor for his approval. The remaining four faculty members shall be selected by the Chancellor in consultation with the Vice Chancellor for Student Life.

- (charge 1) Frank Wcislo, Dean of the Commons, met with the Student Life Committee in February. He provided an update on Vanderbilt Visions and the Commons. The Student Life Committee recommends that a yearly report be given by the Dean of the Commons to the full Faculty Senate. Dean Wcislo is making a presentation to the full Senate in May.
• (charge 1) The Student Life Committee reviewed and endorsed the final report from the Task Force on the Student Commons, chaired by David Wasserstein, that was submitted in February. Included recommendations are to: 1) explore ways to continually engage individual students and student government (i.e., VSG) into assessment and planning issues surrounding The Commons, 2) establish a mini-seminar series between faculty and first-year students to expose and engage students into faculty research passions, and 3) investigate the establishment of formal Great Books courses or informal book clubs as a way of helping to unite first-year students.

• (charge 5) Due to the attention, efforts, and progress that Vanderbilt focused on campus security and safety last year, the Student Life Committee chose not to actively address this issue during this current academic year. The final report from last year’s Task Force on Security and Safety can be found at: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/safety/TaskForceReportIIFinal.pdf

Possible Charges for the 2007-2008 Student Life Committee: The following issues may be appropriate to be included in the topics addressed by next year’s Student Life Committee.

• Continue the Mental Health Committee initiative.
  a) Follow up and monitor progress by the administration towards the recommendations made by the Faculty Senate report submitted in September, 2006. http://www.vanderbilt.edu/facultysenate/files/BehavioralHealth.pdf
  b) Participate in university committees focusing on mental health and substance abuse needs and provide a liaison to the Faculty Senate on these efforts (e.g., the Alcohol Education, Policy and Prevention Committee chaired by Dr. John Greene).
  c) Continue an examination of mental health and substance use issues and resources for graduate/professional and international students.

• Review the status of graduate education reform as it is one of the top priorities in the Vanderbilt University strategic planning process.
  a) Review the focus on the enhancement of graduate education.
     A related resource is Dennis Hall’s report to the Faculty Senate (April 2007).
  c) Consider: progress assessment metrics, responsiveness to inquiries by potential applicants, direct and indirect costs of graduate education, post doctoral programs, community spirit and institutional commitment among graduate students, length of tenure of graduate students, levels of compensation and responsibilities, post graduation positions, and the quality of faculty mentoring.
• Follow up on the three 2006-2007 recommendations regarding Vanderbilt’s intercollegiate athletic program.
  a) Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) appointment.
  b) Yearly report to the Faculty Senate by the administrator in charge of athletics, the FAR, and the Chair of the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee (IAC).
  c) Faculty Senate role in recommending members to the IAC.
• Continue to closely monitor and assess the first year undergraduate student experience.
  a) Evaluate the success of Vanderbilt Visions, including the monitoring of the demographics and turnover of the co-facilitators of Vanderbilt Visions.
  b) Develop relationships with the Faculty Head of Houses.
  c) Help form a coalition between Greek Life and The Commons to address the potential conflicts, the potential synergy, and the future relationships between Greek Life and The Commons.
• In conjunction with the Faculty Life Committee, the Student Life Committee, the Vanderbilt Student Government and the Registrar’s Office, assess the current practice of allowing only 10 minutes between classes, with the possibility of increasing this to 20 minutes.