

**Academic Policies and Services Committee  
Vanderbilt University Faculty Senate  
Report of Academic Year 2014-2015**

**Committee Members:**

Brian Christman, Chair, Medicine  
Jeffrey Johnston, A&S, ex officio [Executive Committee Liaison]  
Betsy Kennedy, Nursing (2016)  
David Wright, A&S (2016)  
Lynn Enterline, A&S (2015)  
James Steiger, Peabody (2016)  
Tom Talbot, Medicine (2017)  
Caglar Oskay, Eng (2017)  
Donna Webb, A&S (2017)

**Charges assigned at the beginning of the year:**

1. Review existing and planned changes in IT infrastructure and support. Make recommendations regarding on-going changes and assess mechanisms for evaluation.
2. Evaluate faculty satisfaction data from the Center for Technology Transfer and Commercialization (CTTC) survey. Make recommendations related to new revenue sharing.
3. Continue communication with MOOC task force. Make recommendations as indicated.
4. Review proposed new degree programs.
5. Review ongoing efforts to create a professional training program for new department chairs across the University. Follow-up with Tim McNamara and Dawn Turton regarding orientation for new chairs.

**Work Completed:**

1. The APS Committee reviewed proposals for two new degree granting programs:
  - a. Ph.D. in Astrophysics— after review of the proposal and three external reviews, this was felt to be a highly meritorious proposal and was unanimously recommended for approval by the APS Committee. It was subsequently also approved by the Faculty Senate.
  - b. Ph.D. in Earth and Environmental Sciences -- after review of the proposal and external reviews, this was also felt to be a highly meritorious proposal and was unanimously

recommended for approval by the APS Committee. It was subsequently also approved by the Faculty Senate.

2. APS carefully reviewed a survey report executed at its request by the Vanderbilt Institutional Research Group (VIRG) that assessed faculty knowledge and opinions about the Center for Technology Transfer and Commercialization (CTTC) and learned several things:
  - a. About 25% of respondents have interacted with the CTTC
  - b. In about half of these interactions either a patent or provisional patent was filed
  - c. 4.5% of respondents received some revenue from an intervention after 2011 (N = 25)
  - d. APS met with Alan Bentley, the director of the CTTC and reviewed the revenue sharing policies of a number of peer institutions—Duke, Emory, Harvard, MIT, Northwestern, Penn, Princeton, U. Chicago, Univ of Virginia, Washington University, Yale. After review it seemed to the committee that the current Vanderbilt policy was equivalent or superior to that of essentially all of these programs. Because of on-going faculty concerns noted in the survey, and in the interest of increased transparency, APS recommended that Alan Bentley present a summary at the Faculty Senate meeting next academic year. This was communicated to the Executive Committee by Professor Jeff Johnston, our Exec Comm Liaison.
3. The Committee communicated with Tim McNamara and Dawn Turton about the orientation process for new chairs and center directors. They referred us to several on-line sites that contained much of the information provided during this program. The committee appreciated the breadth and depth of these sites. Professor David Wright, one of our committee members, had been through this orientation and felt that it was both organized and useful. APS felt that due diligence had been exercised and that the current process was working.
4. Communication with the Task Force on MOOC was limited. Early in the academic year it became apparent that Provost Wentz and the Senate Executive Committee, in conjunction with the Task Force, were working apart on this issue and no further input from APS was required. Some information from the Task Force was presented at a Senate meeting this year.
5. In the latter part of the year, the Committee began discussion both internally and externally about opportunities for improvement in IT Infrastructure and support. It was noted that Vanderbilt IT has had new leadership in place for two years, a sufficient interval that can now allow a better assessment of the impact of new policies. Several committee members expressed great dissatisfaction about repeated failures in the systems used to support basic lecture posting and a general deterioration in the level of IT support for faculty members. The committee recommended that a VIRG survey be conducted early next year and the leadership of Vanderbilt IT meet with the Committee to discuss opportunities for improvement.

**Recommendations for next academic year and beyond:**

1. Request that Alan Bentley from CTTC make a presentation to the Senate early next year
2. APS should proceed with an in-depth analysis of IT infrastructure and support.
3. Committee should learn more about the Memoranda of Understanding that are being crafted to govern financial relationships between University Central and the Medical Center, with specific focus on how these may affect faculty research, teaching, and work environment.