Vanderbilt University
Faculty Senate Meeting
December 3, 2009, 4:10 p.m.
Frist 140

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes of November 5, 2009

Report of the Executive Committee
  Cynthia Paschal, Chair of the Faculty Senate

Delegation Reports
  School of Engineering—Benoit Dawant; Law School—Margaret Blair

Remarks by Chancellor Nick Zeppos

Presentation by Mrs. Martha R. Ingram
  Chairman of the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust

Presentation by Brett Sweet
  Vice Chancellor for Finance and CFO

New business
  Motion from Faculty Life committee—Lillian Nanney

Good of the Senate

Adjournment


Voting Members absent:  Armour (regrets), Barz (regrets), Benbow, Blackett, Bloch (regrets), Bradford, Braxton (regrets), Collins, Conway-Welch (regrets), Graham,
Guthrie, Hiebert, Hudnut-Beumler (regrets), Shields (regrets), Smrekar (regrets), and Walker (regrets).

Ex Officio Members present: Bandas, Fife, Fortune, Kovalcheck, McCarty, McNamara, Sweet, and Zeppos.

Ex Officio Members absent: Bernard (regrets), Christiansen, Dowell, Miller, Raiford, Retzlaff (regrets), Shepherd (regrets), Stalcup, Wcislo (regrets), Wente (regrets), Williams, and Wright.

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Chair Cynthia Paschal.

Next Item on the Agenda – Approval of Minutes of November 5, 2009

Chair Paschal asked for any changes to the minutes (they were corrected before the meeting). She then asked for approval of the minutes. They were approved unanimously.

Next Item on the Agenda – Report of the Executive Committee

Cynthia Paschal, Chair of the Faculty Senate

Chair Paschal reminded senators to be prepared for town hall meetings on graduate education and encourage colleagues to attend. She said that the Senate Consultative Committee has been working on faculty nominations to the university standing committees. She asked senators to send agenda items and topics to the Executive Committee for the February elected senators only meeting. And she added that the March Senate meeting will focus on motions coming from the committees.

Next Item on the Agenda – Delegation Reports

School of Engineering—Benoit Dawant; Law School—Margaret Blair

Senator Benoit Dawant went over the history of the Engineering School. The school has 1271 undergraduate students, and 406 graduate students. The average number of women on the faculty is 30%, which is better than national average of 17%. There are 84 tenure-track faculty, 15 professors of the practice, 21 research faculty, and 25 research associates. The Engineering School has had 18 NSF CAREER award winners since 2000. They have also been very successful in attracting external funding. Their ranking in US News & World Report has improved as well. Their challenges include: research space, recruitment of additional faculty, reducing student-faculty ratio, improving the quality of graduate education and philanthropic support.

Chair Paschal asked for questions. Hearing none, she thanked Senator Dawant for his presentation.
Senator Margaret Blair said that the Law School is in great shape. They are a well-known and well-established school both nationally and internationally. The school is ranked 17th in US News and World Report. She gave the basic stats for the JD students—entering class is about 200 students. JD Program is 3 years long, so at any time they have 600 JD students. They receive 5000 applications for each of the 200 entering slots each year, and this number is growing. The median GPA is 3.7 and the median LSAT score is in the 96th percentile. The LL.M. program is a one-year program, and students come from all other the world to enroll. This program attracts lawyers from other countries, and they accept about 30 students each year. They also have a Ph.D. in Law and Economics. This program is in its third year, and 8 students are currently working on their course requirements. Students in this program will receive a JD along with their Ph.D., and will take 6 years to finish. There is no other school in the country that offers this degree.

The Law School has least favorable faculty/student ratio on campus, so they are eager to build our faculty. They have lost some stellar faculty members to other universities, and they are currently actively interviewing for faculty positions.

Chair Paschal asked for questions. Hearing none, she thanked Senator Blair for her presentation.

Next Item on the Agenda – Remarks by Chancellor Nick Zeppos

(Waived due to time restraints)

Next Item on the Agenda – Presentation by Mrs. Martha R. Ingram
Chairman of the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust

Chair Paschal introduced Chancellor Zeppos. Chancellor Zeppos said that he has the pleasure of introducing Mrs. Ingram to the Senate. He mentioned the many contributions of Mrs. Ingram and her family to Vanderbilt University. He said that there are 45 chairs that have been endowed by the Ingram family.

Mrs. Ingram thanked Chancellor Zeppos for his introduction. She also thanked Chair Paschal for her invitation to speak. She said that it seems obvious to us on the Vanderbilt Board of Trust what we do, but we know that it seems veiled in mystery to others.

Mission Statement—she went over the mission statement of the board of trust (BOT). She said that it was very important to note that the BOT works through the Chancellor. She said that she would like to stress the division between BOT and management. The BOT is on the macro level and management is on the micro level. BOT works on policy and management implements policy.

General Structure of the Board—she said that we have voting and non-voting members (non-voting members are emeriti—trustees who have served at least two terms and are 70 ½ years or prefer to be less active). 62% of trustees are from outside of Tennessee.
Mrs. Ingram said that the full board meets three times annually: Fall, Winter, and Spring—and these meetings are listed on the university calendar. She said that there are ten standing committees and various ad hoc committees—these meet throughout the year as needed. She said that 100% of current voting trustees donate to the university.

Mrs. Ingram said that she wanted to give an overview of the BOT, and she would be glad to take questions at this time.

Senator Bobby Bodenheimer: I am proud to be a member of the faculty, and I am amazed at the quality of the faculty here at Vanderbilt. Yet, I think one of our challenges is that when I go outside the university, I get many questions about where is Vanderbilt, etc. How is the board addressing the name recognition issue?

Mrs. Ingram: I can remember not that long ago that Vanderbilt was more of a southeastern, regional school. I think that the reputation has changed so much in the last ten years. Also, as Nashville grows, it helps Vanderbilt, too.

Chancellor Zeppos: Going to term limits, we are trying to bring more newer board members on the BOT. We are trying to get a wider circle of trustees. We are looking for opinion leaders in the nation.

Senator David Piston: You mentioned the no loan program. Has there been discussion about financial aid vs. tuition?

Mrs. Ingram: We bless what the administration has recommended. We also try and look at what our peer institutions are doing.

Chancellor Zeppos: Also, we subsidize all students (45% of the real costs of tuition). Even for those who pay the “full price.” We are also fundraising with that in mind.

Senator Mike Stone: What can we do to increase our interactions between our faculty and BOT?

Mrs. Ingram: Since Chancellor Zeppos has been in his position, there has been more interaction between the faculty and the BOT. There is a lot of that going on that is very useful to us. As the BOT, what we are about is the faculty and the students, and we are trying to make it all better. We spend a lot of our time dealing with money, but we can do that even better with faculty involvement. Our intent is to make sure that the board is aware of what goes on in academia.

Chancellor Zeppos: We have strategic themes for each BOT meeting, and we have faculty members present on these topics. That’s how we try and do substantive discussion between faculty members and BOT members.
Chair Paschal said that the Senate is always available as a resource for the Board of Trust. She thanked Mrs. Ingram for her presentation and visit to the Faculty Senate.

Next Item on the Agenda – Presentation by Brett Sweet
Vice Chancellor for Finance and CFO

Chair Paschal turned the floor over to Vice Chancellor for Finance Brett Sweet. He said that the bad news is that never have so many pressures hit at one time as they have right now. But, he went on to say that Vanderbilt is doing well considering the current economic climate.

Five Strategic Imperatives that Support the Broader Vanderbilt Mission:
1. Improve the quality of the student experience
2. Unify research themes across the university
3. Continue to enhance our physical environment
4. Continue to enhance the quality of the faculty
5. Enhance graduate education programs

Vice Chancellor Sweet said that Vanderbilt has never budgeted quarterly, but you will see us move to this over the next few years. He said that, generally, we are ahead of budget this year. He added that a 16% loss in the endowment is incredible when you look at other universities in the nation.

Vice Chancellor Sweet explained how “smoothing” works, and how the three-year trailing average works. He also explained how different areas have different concerns—VUMC is more concerned about medical expenditures and government funding, while the Provost area is 20% endowment-dependent. He said that we are less endowment dependent than other universities, but endowment size and growth are still critical. We are in a very good place relative to our peers, and we hope that will help us in recruiting.

He then opened the floor to questions.

Chair Paschal: Concerning graduate education—do we have the money for improving it?

Vice Chancellor Sweet: If we have a great program, we will find the money. We may need to make some trade-offs to make it happen.

Senator Bobby Bodenheimer: How do you deal with the volatility of all these different variables?
Vice Chancellor Sweet: We plan contingencies. We try to prepare ahead.

Senator Stacey Floyd-Thomas: What about graduate housing? What efforts are we making to secure housing for our graduate students? It is a deciding factor for many potential graduate students.
Vice Chancellor Sweet: It varies greatly across our peer universities—there are many different solutions to this problem. Based on this task force report, we will make decisions based on what they recommend.

Chancellor Zeppos: I think it is a national crisis, due to many great universities in metropolitan areas. I would like to build a graduate building on the campus, but I have to think about how we do this—what are our priorities? We have to decide those first.

Chair Paschal thanked Vice Chancellor Sweet for his presentation.

**Next Item on the Agenda – New business**

Motion from Faculty Life committee—Lillian Nanney

Senator Lillian Nanney presented the motion to support the Parents in a Pinch program.

Chair Paschal then opened the floor for questions. Hearing no discussion, Chair Paschal asked for the vote. The motion carried unanimously.

**Next Item on the Agenda – Good of the Senate**

Chair Paschal asked for any good of the senate information.

Provost McCarty said that he wanted to commend Brett Sweet as the CFO for Vanderbilt and the great job that he has done in just a short time here.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack Roberts,
Vice Chair