Senate Affairs Committee
Vanderbilt University Senate
Report for Academic Year 2013-2014
Chair: Ann H. Price, Medicine

Committee members:

Ann Price, Chair, Medicine
Lillian Nanney, Medicine [Executive Committee Liaison]
Alex Hurder, Law
Lynn Enterline, A&S
Rick Watters, Nursing
Jeffrey Blume, Medicine
Sarah Rohde, Medicine
Matthew Ramsey, A&S
Richard Willis, Owen
James Wittig, Engineering

Committee Charges:

1. Explore mechanisms whereby the Faculty Senate can disseminate to the entire VU Faculty timely news related to Senate meetings; Senate recommendations and Senate actions
2. Explore mechanisms whereby the Faculty Senate can identify concerns of the faculty
3. Initiate communication between Senate Affairs and the Chairs of the University Standing Committees to identify important issues before the committees and explore development of a routine reporting mechanism of committee actions to the Faculty Senate.
4. Maintain relationships between the Faculty Senate and University Staff Organizations, and report on issues that are of mutual concern
5. Explore the format of Senate meetings and make recommendations for enhancements.

Work accomplished:

1. Explore mechanisms whereby the Faculty Senate can disseminate to the entire VU Faculty timely news related to Senate meetings; Senate recommendations and Senate actions. Committee leaders: Jeffrey Blume, Alex Hurder, Matthew Ramsey, and Rick Watters

Work on this charge was initiated by the Senate Affairs Committee (SAC) in academic year 2012-2013, under the leadership of then Chair, Alex Hurder. Through meetings with the Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for News and Communications, and the Executive Director for Integrated Communications and Associate Director for News and Communications, a plan was developed to disseminate information related to Senate meetings, Senate recommendations, and Senate actions to all University faculty through *MyVU* and *MyVUMC* email services and websites on a monthly basis. In addition, it was agreed that the *MyVU* and *MyVUMC* news articles would include a link to the Faculty Senate website.

For AY 13/14, SAC leaders worked to ensure that the communication plan, as previously conceived, was implemented. Indeed, the first installment in *My VU* entitled "Faculty Senate to tackle full slate of topics for 2013-14" was posted on Tuesday, August 20, 2013: 1:04pm. This article included a link to the Faculty Senate's website, a list of current faculty senators, and highlighted important initiatives of the Faculty Senate. This article was also posted in *MyVUMC*. Subsequently, a *MyVU* article highlighting the work of the Faculty Senate has been featured each month, with the most recent article posted on April 2, 2014. However, posting in *MyVUMC* has been less consistent. Through recent communication between the current SAC chair, the Editor of *MyVU* and the Editor of *MyVUMC*, an agreement has been reached to forward the *MyVU* content related to the Faculty Senate to *MyVUMC* each month for posting.

Recommendation:

The SAC recommends outreach to the editors of *MyVU* and *MyVUMC* at the start of the academic year to encourage that news related to Senate meetings, Senate recommendations, and Senate actions continues to be featured on a monthly basis in both of these publications. Furthermore, the SAC recommends monthly monitoring of these publications to ensure that Faculty Senate news continues to be featured in both *MyVU* and *MyVUMC* throughout the entire AY.

2. Explore mechanisms whereby the Faculty Senate can identify concerns of the faculty.
Committee leaders: Jeffrey Blume and Sarah Rohde.

Under the leadership of Senators Blume and Rohde, the SAC considered various mechanisms for identifying faculty concerns. It was noted that the University Staff Advisory Council (USAC) utilizes a biannual email survey tool, to obtain feedback regarding concerns that should be addressed by the USAC. Given the success of this vehicle, the SAC decided to draft a similar email survey tool. With the assistance and guidance of the Vanderbilt Institutional Research Group (VIRG) staff, the drafted survey questions were edited to improve the collection of data and the ease with which it could be analyzed. A ten question survey is now in the process of final editing (see attachment #1). Distribution of the survey has been approved by the Faculty Senate's Executive Committee. It is anticipated that this 10 question survey will be distributed to all University faculty through VIRG in early May 2014. VIRG will assist with data collection and analysis.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the AY 14/15 SAC, collect the data from the survey, analyze the results and make a full report to the Faculty Senate. Depending on participation levels and the value of the information obtained, recommendations for addressing identified concerns can be entertained. In addition, if this vehicle proves to be an efficient and effective means of identifying faculty concerns, the SAC can consider future refinements of this survey process.

3. Initiate communication between Senate Affairs and the Chairs of the University Standing Committees to identify important issues before the committees and explore development of a routine reporting mechanism of committee actions to the Faculty Senate.
Committee leaders: Ann Price and Richard Willis

Efforts to address this charge were led by Senators Price and Willis. Of note, the AY 12/13 SAC recommended that contact should be established at the beginning of the AY between the Faculty Senate and the chairs of the University's standing committees to identify issues of mutual concern. To address this recommendation, Senators Willis and/or Price met with the chairs of the following University standing committees: Athletics, Calendar, Faculty and Staff Benefits, Religious Affairs, Technology Review, and Traffic and Parking. Through these meetings, several areas of concern emerged: 1.The work of the University's standing committees and that of the Faculty Senate's committees may be interrelated and potentially duplicative; 2. Each of the referenced University standing committees had one or more current or former faculty senator members; however, the chairs of the University standing committees were unaware of this dual status; and 3. There was no established, systematic, reciprocal communication flow between the standing committees and the Faculty Senate with respect to potentially interrelated concerns, charges, or work efforts.

After discussion, the SAC drafted a motion to address these findings. The goals of this motion were to improve Senate efficiency and effectiveness and to seek synergy between Senate committees and the University's standing committees while eliminating redundant work efforts. This motion called for amending by addition (see final underlined sentence in the charge below) the SAC's charge as recorded in the Faculty Senate Constitution, Rules of Order, IV.1.4. To read:

> "To be concerned with all matters pertaining to the functioning of the Senate. To be responsible for a continuing review of the Rules of the Faculty Senate, recommending new rules when appropriate, and assisting in the interpretation of existing rules. To consider proposed revisions of the Constitution of the Faculty Assembly and Faculty Senate when this duty is assigned by the Senate. To maintain at least yearly communication with the Staff Council leadership. To maintain at least yearly communication with the following university standing committees: Athletics, Calendar, Faculty and Staff Benefits, Religious Affairs, Technology Review, and Traffic and Parking."

This motion was placed before the Faculty Senate at the 3/11/2014 meeting and was adopted. The SAC will now serve as the Senate's formal link to the University's standing committees referenced above.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that each AY as nominations are requested from the Provost's Office, the Chair of the SAC shall nominate Faculty Senate representatives for membership on each of the following University standing committees: Athletics, Calendar, Faculty and Staff Benefits, Religious Affairs, Technology Review, and Traffic and Parking. In addition, it is recommended that at least one AY meeting of the SAC include the Chairs and the Faculty Senate representatives of these University's standing committees. Throughout the AY, the SAC should

seek to identify charges, concerns, and work efforts of mutual interest between University standing committees and Faculty Senate committees or Faculty Senate task forces. It is recommended that the Chair of the SAC communicate any identified interrelated charges, concerns and work efforts to the appropriate chairs and encourage collaboration between the University's standing committees and Faculty Senate committees and taskforces.

4. Maintain relationships between the Faculty Senate and University Staff Organizations, and report on issues that are of mutual concern
Committee leaders for this charge: Ann Price and Richard Willis

SAC members Ann Price and Richard Willis met with Laura Beth Lehman, the President of the University Staff Advisory Council (USAC) on October 1, 2014. The USAC represents all non-union VU staff (Plant Operations and Building Services being the two large staff groups represented by unions and, thus, not under the auspices of the USAC). In this meeting Ms. Lehman shared that the USAC conducts biannual staff polls, open-ended in nature, in January and July. The objective is to surface issues of concern to VU staff. It was noted, that there are two primary types of issues that emerge from these surveys in which the USAC requests the collaboration of the SAC and the Faculty Senate: 1.Issues that impact both faculty and staff, and 2.Issues that primarily benefit staff but that deserves faculty awareness and support.

For AY 13/14, the USAC specifically asked the SAC to assist with their work to improve workplace civility, an issue that impacts both faculty and staff. To address this issue, the USAC formed an ad hoc, workplace civility committee, now known as the C.A.R.E. Committee (**C**ivility, **A**ppreciation, and **R**espectful **E**nvironments Committee). The USAC requested SAC participation in this committee. In support of the USAC's efforts, Senators Willis and Price met with the C.A.R.E. Committee's steering team on three occasions and assisted in the planning of the group's inaugural event. The C.A.R.E. Committee asked for Faculty Senate co-sponsorship of this event. A motion to endorse co-sponsorship of this event with the USAC, the Medical Center Staff Advisory Council (MCSAC) and Human Resources was brought to the floor of the Faculty Senate on 3/13/2014. The motion was adopted. The inaugural event was held in 208 LH on March 25, 2014. Presenters included Provost Richard McCarty and Margie Gale. A number of University faculty attended this event.

The President of the USAC was encouraged to inform the Chair of the SAC of additional issues for which the USAC seeks the collaboration and support of the Faculty Senate.

Recommendation:
The SAC recommends early and sustained communication with the leadership of the USAC and the MSAC to identify issues of mutual concern. Ongoing participation as advisors to the C.A.R.E. committee should be considered.

5. Explore the format of Senate meetings and make recommendations for enhancements.
Committee leaders: Lillian Nanney and James Wittig

Under the leadership of Senators Nanney and Witting, the SAC examined practices (common and uncommon) that are in use by faculty senates or comparable faculty leadership bodies. This was accomplished by searching websites from peer institutions (ex. Stanford, Cornell, Columbia, Princeton, Duke, etc.). The SAC discovered that approximately half of all faculty senates or their equivalent bodies are currently placing their agendas and meeting minutes behind a secure faculty log-in. Faculty senate websites that were publically viewable revealed a variety of best practices. These included reports of task forces, informational PowerPoint presentations from speakers, informal synopses of the discussion from meetings, actual transcripts, and fifteen minute free periods to raise questions with strict rules to limit discussion and allow for different points of view and blogs or wikis that allow senators to continue conversations beyond the strict time set aside for meetings. After review of these practices, three motions were drafted. The goals of these motions were: 1.To increase internal transparency within the Vanderbilt faculty community regarding topics discussed and actions taken during the meetings of the Faculty Senate and 2. To provide a rich historical record of the Faculty Senate's meetings with regard to discussions, reports, presentations, and actions.

The SAC presented the following three motions on the floor of the Faculty Senate at the 4/10/2014, meeting:

1. That, beginning with the 2014-2015 academic year, the format of the official Faculty Senate meeting minutes provide a brief summary of each meeting's discussions (without attribution to the speaker), presentations, reports, and actions.
2. That, in order to increase internal transparency within the Vanderbilt faculty community regarding topics and details discussed during the meetings of the Faculty Senate, Faculty Senate agendas, minutes, and electronic presentations (contingent on permission of the presenter) be posted behind a secure site for faculty, requiring VUnetID and password login, and
3. That an information only draft of Faculty Senate meeting minutes be placed on the Faculty Senate's secured login website within five business days following a Senate meeting.

These motions were adopted by a unanimous vote of the Faculty Senate.

In addition, Senator Ramsey encouraged the SAC to bring a motion forward that would clarify the reference to Robert's Rules of Order in the Senate's Rules of Order. This recommendation was forwarded to the Executive Committee and Chair Donald Brady introduced the following motion at the Senate's 4/11/ 2014 meeting:

The Executive Committee moves that Senate Rule of Order "I. Authority" be amended to read:

I. AUTHORITY
These rules are promulgated pursuant to the authority granted to the Faculty Senate in Article II, Section 2e of the Constitution of the Faculty Assembly and Faculty Senate of Vanderbilt University. Except as otherwise provided in these rules, the transaction of Senate business shall proceed according to **the current edition of** 'Robert's Rules of Order **Newly Revised**.'

This motion is now before the Senate and will be voted upon at the 5/1/2014 meeting.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Faculty Senate's Program Coordinator work with the appropriate website support staff to develop a secure password faculty login link on the Faculty Senate's webpage. This link should be available for posting by the start of AY 14/15. This link will become the repository of agendas, electronic Faculty Senate presentations (contingent on the permission of the presenter), information only meeting minutes (posted within five business days following a Senate meeting, and the final meeting minutes (posted after Senate approval).

Furthermore, the SAC recommends the adoption of the Executive Committee's motion to amend the Senate's Rules of Order to clarify that the current edition of 'Robert's Rule's of Order Newly Revised, will be utilized for the transaction of Senate business except as otherwise provided for in the Senate's Rules of Order.

In addition, the SAC recommends the circulation to all Senate representatives at the start of each AY, a primer related to basic rules of order to include the hierarchy of motions and basic rules governing these motions (see attachment #2).

Draft SAC Faculty Survey for distribution May 2014

Survey preamble:

Dear Professor,

The Vanderbilt University Faculty Senate is the representative and deliberative body of the Vanderbilt University Faculties. Centrally involved in the governance of the university, it is comprised of 60 elected members, deans of the colleges and schools, and ex officio members, including the Chancellor.

The Senate is interested in hearing feedback regarding the university, career satisfaction as it pertains to the university, and suggestions for improving university life. To that end, we ask that you take the time to fill out this short survey.

Proposed Survey:

1. Demographics (encouraged but optional)
   a. School {list of schools}
   b. Position {Do we care about tracks?}
   c. Rank {Full, Associate, Assistant}
   d. Years on Vanderbilt faculty{pull down; integer 1-40}
   e. Have you served on the faculty Senate? {Y/N}
2. Are you familiar with the Faculty Senate and how it represents faculty interests at Vanderbilt? {Y/N}
3. Have you attended a Faculty Senate meeting? {Y/N}
4. Do you receive written or oral updates from a Faculty Senate representative? {Y/N}
5. How often do you visit the Faculty Senate website? {Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Annually, Visited by accident, On rare occasions, Never visited}
6. Have you ever voiced (in person, via phone, email, or mail) a concern to a Vanderbilt Faculty Senator? {Y/N}
   a. If yes, was the concern investigated by the Faculty Senator or the Faculty Senate? {Y/N}
   b. If yes, were you satisfied with the feedback regarding your concern? {Satisfaction scale: 5 categories}
7. A concern that I would like to bring to the attention of the Faculty Senate is: {Free Text}

8. I would prefer to provide feedback to the Faculty Senate via {choose best option}:

   a. A survey

   b. Direct communication with a Faculty Senator

   c. The Faculty Senate website

   d. Other, please explain {Free Text}

9. Please suggest ways in which the Faculty Senate can better communicate with you and update you on faculty affairs.

10. Please provide the Faculty Senate with any additional comments {Less than 300 characters free text}.

Thank you for your participation. All Vanderbilt faculty members are invited to attend the regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meetings. Please consult the website for a schedule of upcoming meetings: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/facultysenate/

The work of the Faculty Senate for AY 13/14 is divided among standing committees and task forces: Academic Policies and Services, Faculty Life, Grievances, Senate Affairs, Strategic Planning and Academic Freedom Task Force Student Life, Greek Life Task Force, and the Online Education Task Force. To see the charges and members of these committees please visit: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/facultysenate/

Example of Suggested Primer for Senate Representatives

Robert's Rules of Order Motions Chart Based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (10th Edition)*

	Part 1, Main Motions. These motions are listed in order of precedence. A motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion. § indicates the section from Robert's Rules.						
§	*PURPOSE:*	*YOU SAY:*	*INTERRUPT?*	*2ND?*	*DEBATE?*	*AMEND?*	*VOTE?*
§21	Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§20	Take break	I move to recess for ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§19	Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
§18	Make follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
§17	Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§16	Close debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§15	Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3

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§		YOU SAY:					
§14	Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§13	Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§12	Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§11	Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
§10	Bring business before assembly (a main motion)	I move that [or "to"] ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Part 2, Incidental Motions. No order of precedence. These motions arise incidentally and are decided immediately.							
§	*PURPOSE:*	*YOU SAY:*	*INTERRUPT?*	*2ND?*	*DEBATE?*	*AMEND?*	*VOTE?*
§23	Enforce rules	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	None
§24	Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
§25	Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3

§			INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§26	Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
§27	Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§29	Demand a rising vote	I move for a rising vote	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Request for information	Point of information	Yes	No	No	No	None

Part 3, Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly.
No order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else is pending.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§34	Take matter from table	I move to take from the table ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§35	Cancel previous action	I move to rescind ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or Majority with notice
§37	Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider ...	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority