Vanderbilt University  
Faculty Senate Meeting  
April 12, 2012, 4:10 p.m.  
140 Frist Hall

Call to order

Approval of the minutes of March 1, 2012 meeting

Report of the Executive Committee

Remarks by Chancellor Nick Zeppos

Brief presentation by Professor Abigail Stewart, Professor of Psychology and Women’s Studies and Director of University of Michigan’s ADVANCE Program at the Institute for Research on Women and Gender

New business

Report and motion from the Student Alcohol and Prescription Drug Task Force—Senator Mary Yarbrough, chair

Report and motion from the Academic Programs and Services Committee—Senator Eric Skaar, chair

Good of the Senate

Adjournment

Voting Members present: Aschner, Atack, Balser, Bond, Barz, Beasley, Beauchamp, Brady, Calico, Cannon, Carbone, Carlton, Dawant, Dever, Does, Fogo, Hurder, Hyman, March Miller, Morrill, Mulvaney, Ramanujam, Ramey, Rogers, Schwartz, Skaar, Tellinghuisen, Tsinakis, Van Kaer, Wikswo, Winder, Wollaeger, Yarbrough, and Zamora.

Voting Members absent: Andrews, Aurbach, Bachorowski, Barth (regrets), Benbow, Braxton (regrets), Clark, Conway-Welch (regrets), Donaldson (regrets), Galloway
(regrets), Gigante, Gokhale (regrets), Guthrie (regrets), Hall (regrets), Halpern (regrets), Hudnut-Beumler (regrets), Hughes (regrets), Johnston (regrets), Kirshner, Moore (regrets), Nanney, Niswender, Powers (regrets), Tansey, Turner, Wait (regrets), Wayman, Weintraub (regrets), and Yoder.

Ex Officio Members present: Bandas, Bodenheimer, Fife, McCarty, McNamara, Raiford, Stalcup, Wcislo, and Zeppos.

Ex Officio Members absent: Bernard (regrets), Christman (regrets), Fortune, Kovalcheck (regrets), Miller, Sweet, Wente (regrets), Williams, and Wright.

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Vice Chair Greg Barz.

Next Item on the Agenda – Approval of the minutes of March 1, 2012 meeting

Vice Chair Barz asked for these minutes to be approved. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Next Item on the Agenda – Report of the Executive Committee

Vice Chair Barz gave the report of the Executive Committee, which was that the committee is meeting monthly with senior administrators, and also working on a variety of ongoing issues.

Next Item on the Agenda – Remarks by Chancellor Nick Zeppos and presentation by Vice Chancellor Jeff Balser

Vice Chair Barz then turned the floor over to Chancellor Zeppos. Chancellor Zeppos said that commencement is just around the corner. He added that while we may disagree about issues, he encourages open and productive dialogue. He mentioned the Leadership Academy for faculty members. He said that we have invested a fair amount in talent development. Our university will stand or fall on the quality of our leaders. He said that there will be a very low tuition increase this year. He then asked for any questions.

Question: Outside pressures on faculty
Chancellor Zeppos: We always get outside pressure, but I think we’re doing fine. I think there is an effort by small groups of people to pressure universities in general. We treasure our independence as a private university.

Vice Chancellor Balser then gave a presentation on tuition benefits for dependents of Vanderbilt faculty and staff. He talked about the history of the issue. The option to do nothing wasn’t an option—we had to think about what would be the best way to handle this without hurting ourselves and keeping our ability to recruit and retain the best.
He said that this change is only for the faculty and staff that we will hire after 9/1/12. He said that we feel that we still have one of the strongest tuition benefit plans in the country.

Comment: Need to clarify this information with staff, especially in Medical Center
Vice Chancellor Balser: We will continue to work on communication on this issue.
Human Resources Chief Traci Nordberg: There has been a change for nursing staff tuition, but not for the dependent tuition benefit.

Question: Proportion of the operating budget?
Vice Chancellor Balser: It will take a larger percentage of the budget as we go along, and it will be nonsustainable.
Chancellor Zeppos: Also, we can’t put this in our indirect costs or fringe rate.
Human Resources Chief Nordberg: We won’t see a reduction of costs for about 10-15 years since we are allowing everyone who currently works here to stay at the same level.

Next Item on the Agenda – Brief presentation by Professor Abigail Stewart, Professor of Psychology and Women’s Studies and Director of University of Michigan’s ADVANCE Program at the Institute for Research on Women and Gender

Vice Chair Barz introduced Professor Stewart. She gave an overview of her speech on Friday, April 13. She spoke about the ADVANCE program and its impact on universities with regards to diversity issues. She gave examples of what her program has accomplished over the past few years.

Next Item on the Agenda – New business: Report and motion from the Student Alcohol and Prescription Drug Task Force, Senator Mary Yarbrough, chair

Vice Chair Barz then introduced Senator Mary Yarbrough who gave an overview of the report from her task force.

Vice Chair Barz explained that the motion to accept the report from the task force will be voted on at the May meeting.

Question: Assessment question—it’s a big problem, but how do we assess this?
Senator Yarbrough: We tried to find out what the best practices are. We won’t solve the problem overnight, but we have to start somewhere.

Question about the disciplinary actions regarding drinking alcohol.
Senator Yarbrough: We have a process in place to deal with these issues. But these are the small tip of the iceberg.
Chancellor Zeppos: We are trying to change culture and norms. I think this is one of the most important issues that we will ever address—students’ health and wellness, especially mental health.
Question: The Commons—has that had an effect on drinking?
Senator Yarbrough: I’m not sure—it should. I don’t think there has been a study. The reason that students say that they drink is because they need the social lubrication for their anxiety.

Comment: The issue of normal drinking being illegal (21 drinking age)
Senator Yarbrough: We’re not approaching this by saying what should be legal, we approached this as “what can we do within the legal limits that we have?”

Dean Mark Bandas: Conduct incidents have gone down since the opening of The Commons. Extreme drinking has not declined. I think we have had more students in the ED this year than ever before.
Vice Chair Barz thanked Senator Yarbrough for her task force’s very thorough report.

Next Item on the Agenda – New business: Report and motion from the Academic Programs and Services Committee, Senator Eric Skaar, chair

Vice Chair Barz tabled this report and motion until the next meeting due to lack of time for presentation and discussion.

Next Item on the Agenda – Good of the Senate

Vice Chair Barz asked for any news under good of the Senate. Hearing none, he called for an adjournment.

Next Item on the Agenda – Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:20pm.