

Vanderbilt University
Faculty Senate Meeting
April 10, 2008, 4:10 p.m.
Frist 140

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes of March 13, 2008

Report of the Executive Committee (Bruce Barry, Chair of the Faculty Senate)

Remarks by Nick Wells, President, Human Rights Campaign at Vanderbilt

Remarks by Chancellor Nicholas Zeppos

Remarks by Mark Bandas, Associate Provost and Dean of Students

Executive Committee Motion

Motion to name Senate representative to the Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA)

- Virginia Shepherd, Chair-elect of the Faculty Senate

Standing Committee Report: Academic Policies and Services Committee

Motion to approve new degree: Master of Management for Health Care Professionals

- Michael McLendon, Chair of the Academic Policies and Services Committee

Standing Committee Report: Senate Affairs Committee

Presentation on Faculty Senate Benchmarking at Peer Institutions

- D. Catherine Fuchs, Executive Committee Liaison to the Faculty Life Committee

Motion regarding President's Climate Commitment

- D. Catherine Fuchs, Executive Committee Liaison to the Faculty Life Committee

New Business

Good of the Senate

Adjourn

Voting Members present: Armour, Barry, Benbow, Blair, Bloch, Bradford, Braxton, Calico, Christie, Conway-Welch, Dowdy, Eisenberg, Emeson, Ernst, Hiebert, Kirshner, McCarty, McLendon, Medina, Moore, Neely, Norden, Oliver, Paschal, Piston, Reisenberg, Reschly, Roberts, Rousseau, Shepherd, Slovis, Stone, Trigo, Weller, and Wood.

Voting Members absent: Ahner (regrets), Bernard, Breyer, Burk (regrets), Carter, DeHart, Fogo, Gabbe (regrets), Galloway, Hudnut-Beumler, Jennings (regrets), Lindquist, Retzlaff, Rubin, Sandler (regrets), Sharpley-Whiting, Shiavi (regrets), Shields, Steinberg, Wait, Wasserstein (regrets), Wcislo, and Yarbrough (regrets).

Ex Officio Members present: Brisky, Fuchs, Outlaw, and Zeppos.

Ex Officio Members absent: Balsler, Bandas, Barge, Chalkley, Christianson, Damon, Gherman (regrets), Gotterer (regrets), Hall (regrets), Jacobson (regrets), McNamara, Sandler, Schoenfeld (regrets), Tolk, and Williams.

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The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Chair Bruce Barry.

Next Item on the Agenda – Approval of the March 2008 minutes

Minutes from the 3/13/08 meeting were reviewed and Chair Barry asked for any corrections or adjustments. Hearing none, he stated that the minutes stand approved.

Next Item on the Agenda – Report of the Executive Committee

Chair Barry reported that the Nominating Committee has selected the nominees for the chair-elect and vice chair-elect and more information will be forthcoming about them before the May meeting.

He also mentioned the issue of effort reporting and that Associate Provosts Hall and McNamara have both made presentations to many schools and colleges. He said that he doesn't think the Senate will take up this issue at this point, but it may come up again next year.

Chair Barry thanked senators for sending in nominations for the University Standing Committees. He also reminded senators about the April 17 Faculty Assembly and the May 5th Senate meeting.

He asked for questions. Hearing none, he turned the floor over to Nick Wells, president of Vanderbilt's Human Rights Campaign.

Next Item on the Agenda – Report of HRC President, Nick Wells

Nick Wells said that his group is halfway to their signature goal. He said that 33 of 36 fraternities and sororities support them, and they are supported by the student government association. He said that he feels like there is campus-wide support for this initiative to adding transgendered individuals to the nondiscrimination policy. In addition, he said that there is a compelling legal argument for this change. He said that he wanted the Senate to support this policy. Vanderbilt would be the first SEC school to adopt this policy. He then asked for any questions.

Senator Margaret Blair: Asked where she could sign the petition.

Nick said that it would be available in the back of the room.

Senator David Wood: Can it also include welcoming diverse modes of gender expression? I want the motion to affirm things and not prohibit them.

Nick Wells: The non-discrimination policy in the community creed doesn't mention sexual identity. He hopes to change that. He also defined "transgendered" as anyone who doesn't conform to gender norms.

Chair Barry thanked Nick Wells for his presentation. He then turned the floor over to Chancellor Nick Zeppos.

Next Item on the Agenda – Report from the Chancellor

Chancellor Zeppos thanked Nick Wells for bringing this issue before the Senate. He said that we need to get beyond simply professing tolerance, and moving toward acceptance. He mentioned the report on GLBTQI issues that will be released next week—this report speaks to this issue of acceptance and celebration (beyond tolerance). He said that this issue originally came up on the student side, but these policies will also affect the many faculty and staff at Vanderbilt. It is important to change the culture institution-wide. It is the right thing to do. There will be an announcement about this issue next week.

Chancellor Zeppos said that we are headed toward commencement, and he has the privilege to address the faculty at the Faculty Assembly, and he will also announce the new AVCF2 and other initiatives then.

He asked for any questions.

Senator Margaret Blair: She asked about the university's investments in hedge funds.

Chancellor Zeppos: We are invested in quality hedge funds, and we have a very active and engaged investment committee.

Chair Barry: Reminded everyone that we will have Matthew Wright speak at the May Senate meeting about this issue.

Senator Anne Moore: Asked about the search for a new dean of the Medical School?

Chancellor Zeppos: Harry Jacobson and I have been talking about appointing a search committee, and there will be broad outreach to Nursing and Medical School (students, faculty and staff). This will happen sooner rather than later.

Chair Barry thanked the Chancellor for his remarks. He then turned the floor over to Mark Bandas, Dean of Students.

Next Item on the Agenda – Remarks from the Dean of Students

Dean Bandas gave the history of the controversy over JuicyCampus.com. He said that we invented “We Are Vanderbilt”—a week of sessions about the problems that the website has caused. We already had a multicultural awareness week planned, and we worked with this existing event. He asked for any questions concerning this issue.

Senator Cynthia Paschal: Do we know that the comments are coming from the Vanderbilt community?

Dean Bandas: No, they are anonymous posts so there’s no way to know exactly.

Senator David Wood: Is this happening at other schools?

Dean Bandas: Yes. Residential campuses are especially at risk since the students all know each other.

Senator David Wood: What are other schools doing?

Chancellor Zeppos: Most are not blocking the site. They are ignoring the site, and trying to work with their students to build culture where this doesn’t happen.

Senator Ann Neely: Another issue, in light of other on-campus murders, I have noticed an increase in police presence. Is there anything else we should be doing to be more proactive?

Dean Bandas: VUPD have been doing more patrols for a long time. You are probably just noticing their presence more.

Chair Barry thanked Dean Bandas for his presentation. He then turned the floor over to Chair-Elect Ginny Shepherd.

Next Item on the Agenda – COIA Motion

Chair-Elect Shepherd said that the Executive Committee presents a motion to nominate Prof. David Weintraub as Vanderbilt’s COIA representative for a two-year term.

Chair Barry asked for any discussion. Hearing none, he asked for a show of hands, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Next Item on the Agenda – APS Committee (degree program motion)

Chair Barry then turned the floor over to Senator Michael McLendon, chair of the APS committee. Senator McLendon presented the following motion from his committee: “The Faculty Senate approves the Master of Management for Health Care Professionals degree program.” He then asked for any questions.

Senator Jeannette Norden: I’m interested in the buy-in from faculty. How do faculty members feel about this program?

Dean Jim Bradford: There is already had buy-in from faculty. The core faculty are from Owen, and they are on board. It will not be an overwhelming burden to them. We have also added more faculty members recently with healthcare experience.

Chair Barry: The school is shrinking the full-time MBA program and creating more one-year programs like this.

Hearing no other questions, Chair Barry asked for a vote on the motion. By a show of hands, the motion was approved.

Next Item on the Agenda – Senate Affairs Committee

Chair Barry recognized Past Chair Cathy Fuchs to give a report from the Senate Affairs committee.

Senate Benchmarking

Past Chair Fuchs said that committee chair Agnes Fogo conducted a survey of other universities. After looking at best practices at other universities, the committee members recommend that the Senate should look at having faculty representation on Vanderbilt's Board of Trust. They also recommend that there be faculty representation on all upper level administrative searches.

Climate Commitment

Past Chair Fuchs presented the motion from the Senate Affairs committee: "The Faculty Senate urges the Chancellor to sign the American Colleges & University Presidents' Climate Commitment." Chair Barry opened up the floor for questions and discussion.

Senator Bob Weller: I am concerned that one of the commitments we are asking the chancellor to make, he cannot make. One of the commitments is about changing the curriculum, and only the faculty can do this. Also, I'd like to hear from Judson Newbern and Lauren Brisky about this issue. And I'm concerned about the cost of some of these commitments.

Chancellor Zeppos: Is there a cost associated with this? If I sign something, I want to be able to do it. I think many of these presidents who have signed this already are not really adhering to the commitments. I think there needs to be more discussion from the faculty about this.

Senator David Wood: I appreciate what the Chancellor is saying. I suggest that we postpone a vote on this over the summer and revisit it in the fall. In the interim, we could look at ways to achieve this. Signing this would be a public declaration, and there are not many other ways to do this.

Senator Cynthia Paschal: At first, I was worried that this was an unfunded mandate, but I think that these are achievable commitments and I want to encourage our movements forward. I think that a motion to table would be a good idea, though.

Senator Ann Neely: Didn't Gordon Gee sign this?

Chair Barry: No, not this.

Chancellor Zeppos: A proposal for strategic hires in engineering, social sciences, etc. is making its way to my desk.

Senator John Braxton: Have most of our peer institutions signed this?

Chair Barry: Some have and some have not.

Chair Barry responded to Chancellor Zeppos' comment that he didn't want to sign something that he couldn't commit to 100%. Chair Barry said that by supporting the motion, the Senate is asking the administration to figure out how best to respond to this commitment.

Senator Bob Weller moved to table the motion. There was a second for this motion. The motion to table passed unanimously.

Next Item on the Agenda – New Business and Good of the Senate

Chair Barry then called for any other items under New Business or Good of the Senate. Hearing none, he called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made and was seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Emeson,
Vice Chair