

VSU Council of Department Heads

Minutes

September 29, 2010

Members Present: Bob Bauer (Psychology and Counseling), Jim Baxter (Chemistry), Fred Downing (Philosophy and Religion), Mike Savoie for Carl Cates (Communication Arts), Robert Gannon (Biology), Don Leech (Curriculum, Leadership and Technology), Ashok Kumar (Mathematics and Computer Science), Reynaldo Martinez, Jr. (Adult and Career Education), Lynn Minor (Early Childhood and Special Education), A. Blake Pearce (Art), Jim Peterson (Political Science), Paul Riggs (History), Carl Hand for Darrell Ross (SOCANTHCJMFT), James Schrader (Music), Mark Smith (English), Viki Soady (MCL), Barbara Stanley (Middle, Secondary, Reading and Deaf Education), Len Weld (Accounting and Finance).

Guests: Dr. Patrick Schloss, Dr. Phil Gunter, Dr. Cindy Tandy (Social Work), Dr. Marty Giddings (Social Work), Jon Sizemore, Joe Newton

1. Council Chair Martinez called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and welcomed the guests listed above. Introductions were made around the table for the benefit of new council members and visitors.

2. The minutes of the meeting of August 25 were approved with revisions.

3. President Schloss addressed the group:

- The policy on Leave with Pay Policy is near completion. Responsibility for awarding and funding Leave with Pay will be placed primarily at the Chair's level with provision for additional monetary accommodation where necessary. Some Leaves with Pay could be considered for as early as Spring Semester, 2011, with compelling justification.
- Recent improvements in re-assigned time, travel funds and equipment all are facilitating faculty research.
- An issue has arisen at Senate concerning the campus-wide publication of the annual Administrative Evaluations submitted by faculty. Main concerns include: open access to such information to the press, and to the internet and beyond. Good candidates would be reluctant to take leadership positions at VSU under such circumstances. Complaints expressed by a few could become magnified in proportion and consume more of an administrator's time than warranted to the detriment of other duties.
- The President is addressing the issue from several directions with the implementation of a Civility Task Force to advise on how hateful, personal, and superfluous comments can be removed from consideration on SOI's and other forms of evaluation. This Task force will work alongside the multiple sub-committees that will be undertaking the new Strategic Plan. As part of this plan all entities within the university will be asked to prepare clear goals statements

that will clarify such things as departmental directions. These plans will engage both faculty and staff at a more hands-on level, increasing understanding of future decisions as they are made.

- Heads and other interested parties were urged to attend Senate when the above issues are up for discussion.
- Bob Gannon, Biology, volunteered to represent the Department Heads Council on the Civility Task Force.

Interim Provost Phil Gunter then reported:

- Re: Buildings. The Psychology & Counseling unit is moving apace and the Bailey Science extension is on the agenda for October approval by the Board of Regents.
- Architects' drawings for the Health Sciences/Business Administration building will be ready for a planning meeting in mid-October.
- Jennett Hall should be completed by March 2011.
- The Budget Committee is currently planning for the 10% reduction model for 2011. There is some optimism that it may be less.

4. Strategic Planning Process

Interim Provost Gunter then presented a handout with the actual structure of the new Strategic Planning Committee and how it will address the targeted themes under the headings of Academic, Finance, Diversity of Membership and Opportunity, and Community. In total, over 100 campus individuals will be directly involved in the process with representation from the Student Government Association and the Valdosta Community.

5. Information Technology Update:

- Mr. Joe Newton reflected upon the many changes that were undertaken by IT this summer. These included the implementation of Windows Live and Active Directory while also re-wiring some sites on campus.
- Classrooms were not ready for opening week because of these many initiatives and because of networking issues with Active Directory that continue to occur, but with much less frequency.
- The Council and Mr. Newton acknowledged mutually that his area has been hit by cutbacks that have seriously reduced technical assistance for technology in the classrooms.
- Mr. Newton agreed and announced that he has received clearance to hire three specialists for classroom and desktop support with, hopefully, more positions to come in the near future.
- Mr. Newton presented a flowchart that helped to clarify the four separate services areas within the VSU IT unit.

At this point, Chair Martinez acknowledged that the meeting was running long and requested that all standing committee reports be deferred or handled by e-mail.

6. "Second Life" Presentation

Via a Power Point presentation, Dr. Cindy Tandy presented information on VSU's sites and participation in the Second Life internet project. She reported that 28 of her students are currently involved in this 3-D immersive experience. VSU designers have created our own island and pods among the approximately 30,000 islands in the project. Interested faculty members are urged to get in touch with Jon Sizemore or Dr. Tandy to explore the possibilities of Second Life for course enhancement and online use.

Chair Martinez recanted his request for committee reports to be deferred and ask each Council Representative to make a short report.

7. Core Curriculum Committee Report - Dr. Bob Bauer had no updates for the Council

8. E-learning Advisory Board Report - Dr. Viki Soady had no updates for the Council

9. Planning and Budget Committee Report - Dr. Paul Riggs mentioned to the Council that the "VSU Master Plan" should be disseminated soon. The plan does have implications for the future use of funding. He advised Department Heads to be on the lookout for the document.

10. Dean of Graduate School & Assistant VP for Research Search Committee Report - Dr. Don Leech announced that the applicant pool had been reduced to a "short list". The Search Committee is in the process of conducting telephone interviews with these individuals. He projected that the finalists would be invited for campus interviews during the first week of November.

11. By-Laws Committee Report – Dr. Riggs and Dr. Leech both agreed to table to report until the October meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Viki Soady and Rey Martinez