

**Minutes**  
**Commission on Faculty Affairs**  
**March 17, 2023**  
**10:30 am – 12:00 pm**  
**Burruss 330E and Zoom**

**Commission Members Present:** R. Queen (presiding), E. Plummer (ex officio for R. Fricker), D. Agud (Faculty Senate), V. Kraak (Faculty Senate), J. Lemkul (Faculty Senate), T. Pingel (Faculty Senate), N. Connors (A/P Faculty Senate), A. Lee (Undergrad Senate Rep), J. Merola (Faculty Senate), E. Lavender-Smith (Faculty Senate), R. Blieszner (Dean).

**Absent with Notice:** L. Learman (Dean), L-A. Krometis (Faculty Senate), R. Fricker (Faculty Affairs), R. Miles (Faculty Senate), E. Kaufman (Faculty Senate).

**Absent:** Grad/Prof Senate Rep., Staff Senate Rep.

**Guests:** A. Myers, (Office of the VP for Governance and Policy), E. Kim (Faculty Affairs).

**Quorum:** R. Queen called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m. A quorum was present (50%+1 of current membership = 8).

**1. Adoption of Agenda.** Members of the commission voted unanimously to adopt the agenda.

**2. Approval of February 17, 2023, Commission on Faculty Affairs (CFA) Minutes.** A motion was made, seconded, and minutes were approved.

**3. Reports from Senates.** No reports: A/P Faculty Senate, Undergraduate Senate. Faculty Senate Report: Faculty Senate Cabinet requested that CFA review the Faculty Senate comment on CGPSA 2022-23 (located in CFA documents folder) and provide the cabinet with feedback. Faculty Senate is discussing revisions to the Faculty Senate Constitution regarding representation and eligibility for membership in the Faculty Senate.

**4. Old Business.**

**A. Update:** R. Queen informed the CFA that Resolution 2022-23A (Emeritus/a) was approved.

**B. Discussion of CGPSA 2022-23A Resolution to Expand & Secure Access to Reproductive Care at Virginia Tech.** As requested by the Faculty Senate Cabinet, commission members reviewed and discussed the comment provided by the senate on the resolution. Feedback and questions from commission members include: supporting the suggestion that the resolution not include the mention of specific medications or procedures; a question as to whether the scope of the resolution includes undergraduate students; the need for an analysis of the resolution's financial impact; and that the Faculty Senate Cabinet discuss the implications of including language regarding health services and possible need for approvals for services by state and federal agencies. The CFA recommends that the CGSPA consider co-sponsoring this resolution with the Commission on Undergraduate Affairs.

## **5. New Business.**

**A. First Reading of CUSA 22-23A Resolution to Approve Revisions and Updates to the Virginia Tech Code of Conduct (revised version of the resolution is pending).** The Faculty Senate waived their right to comment on this resolution. Commission members inquired about the severity of consequences for students who are accused of violating rules associated with the use of tobacco. The Division of Student Affairs evaluates and responds to conduct violation referrals. The Student Code of Conduct must include language required by the Code of Virginia.

**B. Discussion of Cyber Security.** Faculty members are raising concerns regarding the university's implementation of Microsoft Defender software. Dr. Midkiff explained to the Faculty Senate as well as the President's Council that the software only captures patterns of usage to ensure there are no security breaches on the system; this software does not have the ability to collect private data. This issue comes to the CFA because there is a formal request to write a resolution. There are multiple things to consider and vote on: (1) Does this resolution fall under the purview or scope of the CFA based on its charge? (2) If yes, does the CFA have the desire to write a resolution on this topic? The Faculty Senate does not have an interest in writing a resolution. For reference, please see this statement on Cybersecurity at VT on implementing endpoint protection and the response to prevent data loss. The CFA agrees that it is within its scope to review IT as appropriate as it pertains to faculty working conditions and morale. In lieu of a resolution, however, the CFA recommends writing a comment to the President/Provost/Chief Operating Officer and IT requesting a Q&A document that is easy to understand. Additionally, it should be made clear that the CFA (and faculty at large) would appreciate being consulted (or made aware) of any major IT decisions prior to their implementation. There is currently a lack of communication - more frequent and visible statements are recommended. The CFA agrees that this decision is more of a consensus rather than a vote; there was no dissent.

**C. Update and Discussion of Faculty Senate Composition.** A working group has been created to consider a modification to the Faculty Senate Constitution as it relates to the makeup of the Faculty Senate (i.e., representational or membership being 100 senators). A version of the Faculty Senate Constitution with suggested edits has been posted to the SharePoint site. Three concerns were discussed:

1. *Representation and eligibility to serve.* Questions for discussion included: Are there constituency groups that the Faculty Senate represents that aren't eligible for membership in the Senate? Is everyone that the Faculty Senate represents able to be elected to the Senate? For example, post-docs are not specifically represented anywhere within shared governance. Should post-docs be represented by the Faculty Senate, Graduate and Professional Student Senate, or somewhere else? How do faculty on restricted appointments compare to faculty with regular appointments? Should research faculty have their own organization in governance?

2. *Number of Senators.* Questions for discussion included: Should the Faculty Senate limit the number of senators to 100? For example, should the rules be changed such that one senator is elected to represent 30 faculty members or, should there be one senator for each department? What are the implications for membership in the senate that need to be explored? For example, a faculty supervisor should not represent a post doc and vice versa.

3. *Lack of Faculty Census Data.* HR, University Data Commons, and other bodies are unable to provide data that provides the senate with a faculty census. Further discussion of this topic will be continued.

**6. Open Discussion.** No items were considered in Open Discussion.

**7. Adjournment.** There being no further business, a motion was made, seconded, and members of the commission unanimously voted to adjourn at 12:05 pm.

**Next meeting:** ~~March 31, 2023 10:30 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.~~ (canceled). Next meeting April 14, 2023.