



Faculty Senate

Virginia Tech

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

<https://www.facultysenate.vt.edu/>

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
November 08, 2024 @ 2:30 – 4:15 pm
Torgersen 1000 or Via Zoom

Check-In:

Present: Justin Lemkul (presiding), Sherif Motaleb Abdelaziz, Luke Achenie, Diane Agud, Rick Ashley, Paul Avey, Azziza Bankole, Manish Bansal, Kristen Benson, Jan Helge Bøhn, Bradley Bowen, Anamaria Bukvic, Virginia Buechner-Maxwell, Kevin Cheng, Sherwood Clements, Joshua Clemons, Rebecca Cockrum, Carolyn Commer, Nick Copeland, Carolyn Copenheaver, Kristy Daniels, Candace Fitch, Rodney Gaines, Scott Gartner, Yuba Gautam, Aaron Gross, Dan Hindman, Mantu Hudait, Scott Huxtable, Ran Jin, Sarah Karpanty, Bryan Katz, Bryan Katz, Alex Kinnaman, Jake Lahne, Catherine Larochelle, Renee LeClair, Gary Long, Charles Lowery, G.Q. Lu, Jason Malone, Eric Martin, Luca Massa, Shelly Maycock, Joel McGlothlin, Harold McKenzie, Joe Merola, Marc Michel, Phil Nelson, Zhange Nicole Ni, Gregory Novack, Nicole Pitterson, Nazila Roofigari-Esfahan, Karen Schnatterly, Ian Shoemaker, Richard Shryock, Nadine Sinno (for María del Carmen Caña Jiménez), Stephanie Smith (Communications), Stephanie Smith (SPIA), Sharon Swanger (alternate for Albert Pan), Jay Teets, Chelsea Thompto, Jim Tokuhisa, Byron Tsang, Kwok Tsui, Alp Tural (alternate for Bill Green), Bimal Viswanath, Jeff Walling, Terri-Ann Wattsman, Angelica Witcher, David Xie, Lizette Zietsman,

Young Cao, Jane Robertson Evia,

Guests: Mikaela David-John, Michel Pleimling, Demetria Somervell

Absent with Notice: Evan Lavender-Smith, Kim Loeffert, Rachel Miles, Erin “Nikki” Worthington, Jerald Walz

Absent: Biko Agozino, Lisa Belden, Warren Booth, Mark Coggins, Logan Dandridge, Maria del Carmen Caña-Jiménez, Matt Eick, John Entwistle, Bill Green, David Gregory, Wes Gwaltney, James Hawdon, Rebecca Hester, Leanna House, Joseph Hughes, Eli Jamison, Casey Jim, Silvio Macias, Ali Mehrizi-Sani, Albert Pan, John Richey, Nino Ripepi, Syrenthia

Robinson, Steven Rowson, Adrian Sandu, Eric Stanley, Keith Stephenson, Shane Wang, Ashley Wilkinson, Yan Xu, Diane Zahm

Call to Order by the Faculty Senate Operations Officer Justin Lemkul at 2:33

Election of Chair Pro Tempore.

- In the absence of the Faculty Senate President and Vice President, Robert's Rules of Order grant the ability to convene a meeting to the Operations Officer (secretary), but not the ability to preside over a meeting. According to Robert's Rules of Order, a Chair Pro Tempore must be elected. The floor was opened for nominations.
- Justin Lemkul was nominated for Chair pro tempore. No additional nominations were received.
- Justin Lemkul was elected Chair Pro Tempore (Voting: 52 for J. Lemkul, 0 for Others, 0 Abstain).

Approval of Agenda and Minutes (Justin Lemkul)

- Consent agenda was adopted:
 - Minutes for 10-25-2024 ([Link](#))
 - Agenda for 11-08-2024 ([Link](#))

Business Agenda

Unfinished Business

1. Updates & Announcements
 - a. Reports from Committees, Commissions, and University Council are available on the Faculty Senate SharePoint site.
 - b. Kyle Johnson, Associate Vice President for IT Governance Planning and Strategy, is convening four focus groups for IT Governance and has invited faculty members to participate in these groups. Participation is open to all faculty members. Meeting information and a participation form were provided. Senators were encouraged to share this information.
2. Justin Lemkul presented for 2nd Reading and Vote CFA 2024-25A: Resolution to Amend the Faculty Handbook Description of Clinical Faculty Ranks.
 - a. A brief overview was provided. The resolution focuses on clinical instructors and professors and has included discussion within the commission and with departments that employ clinical faculty. No changes have been made since the Faculty Senate first reading.

- b. A motion was made and seconded to approve CFA 2024-25A: Resolution to Amend the Faculty Handbook Description of Clinical Faculty Ranks.
 - c. There were no questions or further discussion.
 - d. Motion carried; CFA 2024-25A was approved. (Voting: 53 Yes, 1 No, 1 Abstain)

- 3. Justin Lemkul presented for 2nd Reading and Vote CFA 2024-25D: Resolution to Amend the Faculty Handbook Regarding Ethics of Intimate Relationships Involving Faculty.
 - a. Kay Heidbreder, University Counsel, reviewed the resolution and determined that it is legally consistent. Kay's review resulted in a request for one change, which was made: In Section 2.25, the phrase "all employees" was changed to state "all faculty" because this document pertains to faculty only.
 - b. No additional textual changes were made during 2nd Reading.
 - c. A motion was made and seconded to adopt CFA 2024-25D: Resolution to Amend the Faculty Handbook Regarding Ethics of Intimate Relationships Involving Faculty.
 - d. There were no questions or further discussion.
 - e. Motion carried; CFA 2024-25D was adopted. (Voting: 60 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain)

- 4. Justin Lemkul presented for 2nd Reading and Vote UC 2024-25A: Resolution to Form a University Mission Initiative Committee to Recommend Updated Policies for Funding Doctoral Research at Virginia Tech. This university mission initiative resolution is led by the Commission on Faculty Affairs.
 - a. This resolution is focused on doctoral education at Virginia Tech as a core component of the university's research mission. Development of the resolution has included communication with the Graduate and Professional Student Senate.
 - b. One minor change was made following the Faculty Senate first reading, which provided more adequate time for the committee to complete its work. The revision states that the University Mission Initiative Committee should submit their required information to University Council Cabinet by the conclusion of Spring semester 2025 and should submit additional policy recommendations by the conclusion of Fall semester 2025.
 - c. A motion was made and seconded to approve UC 2024-25A: Resolution to Form a University Mission Initiative Committee to Recommend Updated Policies for Funding Doctoral Research at Virginia Tech.
 - d. No further questions or discussion were introduced.
 - e. Motion carried; UC 2024-25A was approved. (Voting: 59 Yes, 0 No, 3 Abstain)

5. Renée LeClair presented for 2nd Reading and Vote CGPSP 2024-2025A: Resolution to Form a Task Force to Propose a University-wide Policy to Combat Unprofessional Behaviors Towards Graduate and Professional Students.
 - a. No substantive changes have been made to the resolution since the Faculty Senate first reading.
 - b. A motion was made and seconded to adopt CGPSP 2024-2025A.
 - c. There were no further questions or discussion.
 - d. Motion carried; CGPSP 2024-2025A was approved. (Voting: 56 Yes, 0 No, 2 Abstain)

6. Jim Tokuhisa presented for 2nd Reading and Vote CUSP 2024-25A: Resolution to Revise Policy 6305, Satisfactory Academic Progress for Associate and Undergraduate Students.
 - a. At the Commission 2nd reading, an amendment was requested, made and incorporated which added information about the University Registrar's role in the implementation timeline. No other significant changes were made.
 - b. A motion was made and seconded to adopt CUSP 2024-25A: Resolution to Revise Policy 6305, Satisfactory Academic Progress for Associate and Undergraduate Students.
 - c. Limited discussion was held around comments from the A/P Faculty Senate referring to Financial Aid's Satisfactory Academic Progress requirement and the similarity in name to this process. Students are always advised that both the academic and financial aid processes must be addressed.
 - d. Motion carried; CUSP 2024-25A was approved. (Voting: 58 Yes, 1 No, 1 Abstain)

7. Justin Lemkul presented for 2nd Reading and Vote: Updates to the Faculty Senate Bylaws. The first reading of the bylaws was held during the September 27, 2024, Faculty Senate meeting.
 - a. Small changes focused on clarification and streamlining of the language were incorporated after the Faculty Senate first reading. These changes include the following:
 - i. The term "constituency" was defined in Article II Membership, Section 1 Composition. This term was originally added to provide consistency with the University Council Constitution.
 - ii. During previous discussion, questions were asked regarding at-large research faculty representation and whether the number of faculty from any one institution should be limited. Language was added in Article II Membership, Section 3 Principles of Representation which

states that no more than two research faculty may be elected from any one constituency (for example, research institute), and that the election will be administered by the Vice President for Research or designee.

- b. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the updates to the Faculty Senate Bylaws.
- c. Limited discussion regarding departmental representation for smaller departments. Smaller departments are entitled to join another department of their choosing. No current senators will lose their senate seats, but smaller departments will join with others during their next election.
- d. Motion carried; changes to the Faculty Senate Bylaws were adopted (Voting: 57 Yes, 1 No, 2 Abstain).

New Business

- 8. Justin Lemkul presented for First Reading CFA 2024-25E: Resolution to Amend the Faculty Handbook Regarding Procedures for Promotion and Tenure and Related Appeals.
 - a. This resolution focuses on updating information to reflect current practice and streamlining language for increased clarity. Specific changes include the following:
 - i. In section 3.4.3, faculty members may appeal department/school decisions to their dean if they meet specific expectations. If the dean sustains a negative decision, faculty may request a review by the properly constituted college committee on promotion and tenure. Additionally, language was added indicating that voting members for promotion and/or tenure for tenure track faculty must themselves be tenured. This information was included in the handbook in the past and is current practice.
 - ii. In section 3.5.2, language was updated to provide clarity to the appeals process.
 - b. Senators are asked to provide these proposed updates to their constituents. Please email Justin Lemkul with comments or questions.
- 9. Justin Lemkul welcomed Bryan Garey, Vice President for Human Resources, and Kim Thomason, Program Manager for Early Childhood Education Initiatives, for an open discussion on Virginia Tech's early care and education initiatives.
 - a. Bryan Garey thanked the Faculty Senate for the invitation, affirmed Virginia Tech's commitment to being a destination for talent, and noted that the need for high quality, accessible, affordable, and flexible childcare supports this

commitment. Virginia Tech has made progress in this area but recognizes that the need is great.

- b. Accomplishments realized in 2023-2024 were briefly described and included the following: establishing four new partnerships that provided new enrollment; initiating a collaborative partnership with Cultural Care Au Pair which provides parental choice, flexibility and affordability especially for families with 2 or more children; collecting and disseminating summer camp/program information for Virginia Tech, the New River Valley, and Roanoke; continuing premium access to Care.com; addressing workforce development needs through the creation of a new internship program for Virginia Tech students with local child care programs, co-sponsoring an early care and career education career day, co-sponsoring the NRV Child Care Summit; and continuing Lunch and Learn sessions and parent-meet ups.
- c. The 2024-25 strategic goals were presented and include expanding access to quality early childhood education programs; implementing caregiving, educational and outreach programs; and strengthening regional/state partnerships and engagement.
- d. A summary of internal priorities was provided. These include (1) strategies to increase infant and toddler care, which is an area of greatest need; (2) evaluating flexible care opportunities; (3) revisiting the back-up care reimbursement program; (4) exploring partnerships with school-aged care, focusing on after school care; (5) continuing exploration of partnerships in Roanoke; and (6) evaluating possible expansion of the dependent travel program.
- e. Questions and discussion focused on the following:
 - i. The Dependent Travel Program was piloted in the College of Science and the College of Liberal Arts and Human Services. Additional options and next steps are being explored. The Provost's Office will be included in the roll-out for other departments. There is not yet a timeline for expansion, but Faculty Affairs will be consulted, and the senate will be informed of any additional information.
 - ii. The Roanoke campus regularly provides evening seminars; are there strategies to provide support for parents during evening seminars? The current strategy to address this is Care.com because it provides individualized quality care.
 - iii. There has been an increased budget for early childhood education initiatives, including significant increases from foundation funds.
 - iv. A suggestion was made to develop an out-of-school day resource that would be helpful for locating out-of-school care on days like teacher workdays. This type of resource is published and promoted when

found, and work is done to confirm that these resources are provided with regularity. The suggestion was noted.

Open Floor Discussion

10. No topics were presented for Open Floor Discussion.

Motion to adjourn and seconded at 3:39 p.m.