MINUTES

Faculty Senate
August 28, 2026
2:30 – 4:15 p.m.
Torgersen 1000 and via Zoom

Present – Justin Lemkul (presiding), Luke Achenie, Joe Adams, Kereshmeh Afsari (alternate for Nazila Roofigari-Esfahan), Diane Agud, Coy Allen, Aaron Ansell, Rick Ashley, Diana Bairaktarova, Jeb Barrett, Joseph Bedford, Kristen Benson, Nathaniel Bishop, Myra Blanco, Warren Booth, Curtis Bower, Urs Buehlmann, Silas Cassinelli, Sherwood Clements, Nick Copeland, Carolyn Copenheaver, Maria del Carmen Caña-Jiménez, Naomi Dunn, Matthew Eatherton (alternate for Sherif Motaleb Abdelaziz), Jeannine Eddleton (alternate for Caroline Saouma), Bob Edmison, Matt Eick, Candace Fitch, Nicholas Goedert, Ann Gregus (alternate for Sarah Clinton), Aymen Halouani, Samantha Harden, James Hawdon, Jia-Qiang He, Rebecca Hester, Adrienne Holz, Yili Hong, Laura Iancu (alternate for Logan Dandridge), Daniel Karolyi, Lara Khansa, Alex Kinnaman, Bettibel Kreye, Jake Lahne, Renee LeClair, Mark Limes, Wei Liu, Kimberly Loeffert, G.Q. Lu, Jason Malone, Ron Meyers, Joel McGlothlin, Harold McKenzie, Marc Michel, Rachel Miles, Phil Nelson, Gregory Novack, Monica Ponder, Amy Pruden-Bagchi, Mark Psiaki, Isis Quinlan, Michelle Rhoads, Nino Ripepi, Micah Roos, Steven Rowson, Ian Shoemaker, Byron Tsang, Jerald Walz, AK Ward, Jeff Warfford, Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, Boya Xu

Absent with Notice: Bradley Bowen, Barrett Gutter, Sarah Karpanty

Absent: Aaron Gross, Bettina Koch, Azziza Bankole, David Bieri, Jan Helge Bøhn, Ryan Calder, Jonathan Carmouche, Kevin Cheng, Sarah Clinton, Logan Dandridge, Anna Duraj-Thatte, Cassandra Efkeman, Mark Freeman, David Gregory, William Headley, Catherine Larochelle, Stephen Martin, Eric Martin, David Moore, Sherif Motaleb Abdelaziz, John Richey, Nazila Roofigari-Esfahan, Caroline Saouma, Yi Shi, Terri-Ann Wattsman

Guests: Natasha Bell, Raul Bernal, Cozette Comer, Kirsten Dean, Nancy Dye, Arthur Ekirch, Greg Esposito, Julie Filizetti, Kiri Goldbeck DeBose, Monamie Hanes, Eric Kaufman, Monique Logan, Joseph Mukuni, Alan Munshower, April Myers, Corinne Noirot, Kim O'Rourke, Jon Petters, Adam Phillips, Paul Quigley, Ana Rangel, Jade Snelling, Demetria Somervell, Steve Tatum, Ashley Taylor, Chelsea Thompto, Jim Tokuhisa, Bimal Viswanath, Anita Walz, Ihudiya Finda Williams, Philip Yaure, Anna Zeide

Justin Lemkul called the meeting to order at 2:32. A quorum was present.

1. Adoption of Consent Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the consent agenda which consisted of the items below. Motion carried.

- Approval of minutes from May 01, 2026
- Approval of agenda for August 28, 2026

2. **Presidential Search Listening Session with Board of Visitors Vice Rector Dr. Nancy Dye and Isaacson, Miller, Inc.**

   Dr. Nancy Dye, Virginia Tech Board of Visitors Vice Rector and Chair of the Presidential Search Committee, and representatives from Isaacson, Miller, Inc. (Raul Bernal, Julie Filizetti, Greg Esposito). Dr. Dye provided brief updates on the search process. Attendees were asked to share their input on important considerations for the next Virginia Tech president. Insight and comments provided by faculty will help guide the work of the search committee and a summary will be provided for informational purposes to the next president. Themes regarding the type of candidate faculty support include: desire to interact with faculty and students during the search process; willingness to be integrated with the campus and interactive with the students; supportive of staff; supportive and investigative in barriers to research; commitment to valuing and protecting academic freedom; ability to work well with the Board of Visitors; and ability to manage campus-wide mandates, such as the recent Title II compliance.

3. **Updates and Announcements**

   Faculty Seante Logistics and Expectations of Senators
   Justin Lemkul provided logistical information and expectations for Faculty Senators, including an overview of the Faculty Senate SharePoint site. The SharePoint site offers meeting resources, communication information, a survey for reporting faculty concerns to the Faculty Senate President, and a new Expectations of Faculty Senators section. Information regarding the resolutions process was shared, and senators were encouraged to communicate resolution information to and from their constituency.

   Report from the June and August Board of Visitors (BOV) Meetings
   Justin Lemkul reported on items of interest from the June 2026 and August 2026 Virginia Tech Board of Visitors meetings.

   During the June 2026 meeting, the BOV approved all candidates for promotion and tenure; passed all resolutions that were previously approved by the Faculty Senate; ratified the Faculty Handbook; and approved two new residence halls that will be located near the Inn at Virginia Tech.

   During the August meeting, the BOV approved the Living-Learning Program assessment plan; passed a resolution affirming support for a professional military education program; approved a decrease in the VT Carilion School of Medicine tuition rate for Virginia resident students; and granted construction authorization for the renovation and expansion of the College of Veterinary Medicine Teaching Hospital.

   Academic Freedom Forum: October 21, 2026
   The Faculty Senate, Office of Faculty Affairs, and Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention are sponsoring a forum on academic freedom at the Inn at VT, with a livestream option available. Provost Julie Ross and former Provost Cyril Clarke are panelists at this forum.

   Faculty Senate President Office Hours
   Faculty Senate President Justin Lemkul will hold monthly office hours in the Office of Faculty Affairs, Burruss 328B. Specific dates for the 2026-2027 academic year and additional information are available on the Faculty Senate website. Additional virtual office hours will be implemented later this year.

4. **Unfinished Business**

Commission and Committee Vacancies
A list of faculty vacancies on shared governance commissions and committees and meeting information was provided. The floor was opened for nominations for these vacancies, and a motion was made and seconded to vote on the nominees.

Commission on Faculty Affairs (CFA), three vacancies: One vacancy with a three-year term, one vacancy with a two-year term, and one vacancy with a one-year term. Representatives must be a Faculty Senator. The following were nominated and elected: Ron Meyers (one-year term), AK Ward (two-year term), and Monica Ponder (three-year term).

Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies (CGPSP), one vacancy. This representative must be a Faculty Senator. Micah Roos was nominated and elected to serve on CGPSP.

Commission on Undergraduate Student Affairs (CUSA), one vacancy with a three-year term. This representative must be a Faculty Senator. Jeannine Eddleton was nominated and elected to serve on CUSA.

Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies, one vacancy with a three-year term. This representative mut be a Faculty Senator. No nominations were received. This vacancy will be revisited at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

Faculty Honorifics Committee, one vacancy with a three-year term. This representative must be a recipient of the Alumni Award for Research Excellence. No nominations were received. This vacancy will be announced again at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

5. **New Business**

Appointments to the Faculty Senate Cabinet
One Senator from each of the academic colleges and University Libraries is needed to serve on the Faculty Senate Cabinet. A list of ex officio members and meeting information was provided. Senators from individual colleges and University Libraries participated in breakout sessions with their colleagues to select a representative. The following senators were chosen to serve on the Faculty Senate Cabinet.

Agriculture and Life Sciences – Michelle Rhoads

Engineering – Luke Achenie

Liberal Arts and Human Sciences – Kristen Benson

CNRE - Ron Meyers

Pamplin College of Business – AK Ward

Science – Jeb Barrett

Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine – Renee LeClair

The College of Architecture, Arts, and Design and the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine will select their representative at a later date.

University Libraries – Alex Kinnaman, Faculty Senate Operations Officer, and Rachel Miles, Faculty Senate Past President, represent University Libraries in the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate Cabinet.

Appointments to the Policy and Procedures Committee
The Policy and Procedures Committee is an internal standing committee of the Faculty Senate. This committee reviews the Faculty Senate constitution and bylaws and suggests changes, and reviews resolutions from other senates to recommend whether the senate should make a comment. The committee needs at least two additional members. The floor was opened for nominations, and Micah Roos and Jake Lahne were nominated to serve. If anyone else is interested in serving on this committee, please reach out to Justin Lemkul. Confirmation of these appointments will be held at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

Appointment of Parliamentarian
Jerald Walz served as Parliamentarian during 2025/2026 last academic year and is willing to continue to serve in this role. The floor was opened for additional nominations, but no additional nominations were received. If anyone else is interested in this role, please contact Justin Lemkul. Nominees will be presented for confirmation at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

Appointment of Chair of Faculty Ethics Committee
A chair is needed for the Faculty Ethics Committee. The chair does not have to be currently serving as a Faculty Senator but must be confirmed by the Senate. If anyone is interested in serving, please let Justin Lemkul know.

6. Open Floor

Survey of faculty whose research has been disrupted by federal funding
Senators were thanked for their participation in the survey that was distributed last semester. A report and additional information will be provided soon.

Follow-up comments from listening session
Senators were thanked for their comments and participation.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:26.