

**University Council Minutes**  
**February 3, 2025**  
**3:30 p.m.**  
**2420 North End Center and Zoom**

**Present:** Tim Sands (presiding), April Myers, Cyril Clarke, Laurel Miner for Daniel Sui, Bryan Garey, Menah Pratt, Kat Nelson for Frances Keene, Kim O'Rourke, Guru Ghosh, Aimée Surprenant, Rachel Holloway, Mary Burrows for Mario Feruzzi, Daniel Givens, Tsai Lu Liu, Julia Ross, Lee Learman, Tyler Walters, Natalia Guerrero, Rachel Miles, Justin Lemkul, Evan Lavender-Smith, Janice Austin, Marlena Lester, Enriqu Noyola, LaTawnya Burleson, Amber Hagan, Henry Berger for Kiera Schneiderman, Aarav Parikh, Leslie Orellana, Alex Efrid, Ronnie Mondal, Akshay Anil for Ranald Adams, Quiyana Murphy, William Poland, Gary Long, Nicole Pitterson, Jason Malone, Rodney Gaines, Kim Loeffert, Rebecca Hester, David Xie, Renée LeClair, Holli Gardner Drewry, Serena Young, Amber Robinson, Sally Shupe, Vincent Wang, Donna Westfall-Rudd, Kelly Oaks, Larry Cox, II, and Jim Tokuhisa

**Absent with Notice:** Amy Sebring and Francisco Carvallo

**Absent:** Laura Belmonte, Kevin Pitts, Paul Winistorfer, Saonee Sarker, Paul Knox, Amanda Morris, and Kari Evans

**Guests:** Ron Fricker, Rachel Gabriele, Monique Logan, Monika Gibson, Debbie Greer, Michel Pleimling, Lori Rose, Demetria Somervell, Rick Sparks, Lauren Surface, Dee Harris, and Kyle Johnson

Dr. Sands called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

### **1. Announcement of Order of the Day**

Dr. Sands announced the order of the day for the meeting. Items to be placed on the agenda must be submitted to the secretary at least ten days prior to the meeting date. Follow the procedures in Section 2(2) – University Council Bylaws, Article IX, Section 2(2-3).

### **2. Announcement of review and approval of minutes of December 2, 2024**

Dr. Sands noted that these minutes have been voted on electronically and can be publicly accessed on the Governance Information System on the Web (<http://www.governance.vt.edu>).

### **3. Commission Chairs Reports**

1. Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs – Marlena Lester, Chair
  - a. Resolution going through governance updating grievance policy nomenclature for clarification
  - b. Continue to consider the Professional Development Leave Policy
2. Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity – Donna Westfall-Rudd, Chair
  - a. Caucus Check-Up and check-in – CEOD is hosting an all-caucus campus retreat for multiple representatives of caucus

3. Commission on Faculty Affairs – Justin Lemkul, Chair
  - a. Pursuing resolutions that pertain to updates to various procedures and sections in the Faculty Handbook
  - b. Resolution regarding statements of freedom of speech and academic freedom being included in the Faculty Handbook
  - c. Reviewing and cleaning up the Faculty Senate Constitution to update sections that are lacking or inconsistent
  - d. Resolution to rename a department will be presented to University Council later this spring
  - e. Discussions on better integration between IT governance and faculty
  - f. Annual evaluations on how to provide feedback from a faculty perspective
4. Commission on Graduate and Professional Student Affairs – Rachel Maizel, Chair
  - a. Resolution to create a designated seat on the Commission on Graduate and Professional Student Affairs to expand GPSS membership to the Roanoke and the Greater Washington DC Metro Area campuses
  - b. Working on a resolution to mirror the Commission on Faculty Affairs resolution on intimate relationships
5. Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies – Renée LeClair, Chair
  - a. Operational
    - Resolutions (SWOT), discussion, writing (strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats)
    - Consider the change in SWOT status with potential actions
    - Consider collaboration and engagement of other commissions in specific activities when needed – shared governance specifically CGPSA
  - b. Responsive
    - Clarifying free speech rights with students and defining the delineation of acceptable expressions
    - Review Task Force recommendations and evaluate how recommendations impact graduate and professional studies
    - Other actions as they come up
  - c. Proactive
    - Continue a sub-committee to streamline the process of professional master's programs
    - Review graduate certificate programs and determine enrollment and usage data

6. Commission on Outreach and International Affairs – Guru Ghosh, Advisor
  - a. Discuss proposal for “Global Learning Badge” program.
  - b. Review progress of selected outreach units
  - c. Analyze the role of two Virginia Tech international centers (India and Chile) in order to make suggestions for betterment of the representation of the University in these countries
  - d. Review the proposal of Carnegie classification of community engagement
7. Commission on Research – Nicole Pitterson, Chair
  - a. Discussion of creating a standing committee for postdocs
  - b. Continue conversations on global research collaborations in keeping with the global distinction initiatives.
8. Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs – Amber Hagan, Chair
  - a. Research and bring attention to compensation issues of non-student wage and staff and work to address discrepancies
  - b. Address the lack of bereavement leave for staff
  - c. Increase non-student wage and staff visibility and inclusion in steering committees and high-level searches
  - d. Continue to support professional development opportunities
9. Commission on Undergraduate Student Affairs – Aarav Parikh, Chair
  - a. Revise the Undergraduate Student Senate’s Governing Documents
  - b. Review and approve UCSO constitutions
  - c. Create a simple and engaging way to aid undergraduate students in understanding experiential learning
  - d. Study ways to enhance experiential learning initiatives and their awareness for the Undergraduate Student Body
  - e. Study ways to enhance SPOT survey participation and feedback quality from Undergraduate Students
10. Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies – Jim Tokuhisa, Chair
  - a. Address the foreign language requirement for undergraduate graduation, applied at admissions
  - b. Review the double counting of course credits in undergraduate programs
  - c. Revise undergraduate student status following graduation
  - d. Developing a text messaging policy for student university communications

### **3. Unfinished Business**

Commission on Faculty Affairs

UC Resolution 2024-25A

Resolution to Form a University Mission Initiative Committee to Recommend Updated Policies for Funding Doctoral Research at Virginia Tech

Justin Lemkul presented the resolution for second reading on behalf of the Commission on Faculty Affairs, the Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies, and the Commission on Research and made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded, and the motion passed.

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
CFA Resolution 2024-25A  
Resolution to Amend the Faculty Handbook Description of Clinical Faculty Ranks

Justin Lemkul presented the resolution for second reading and made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded, and the motion passed.

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
CFA Resolution 2024-25D  
Resolution to Amend the Faculty Handbook Regarding Ethics of Intimate Relationships Involving Faculty

Justin Lemkul presented the resolution for second reading and made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded, and the motion passed.

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
CFA Resolution 2024-25E  
Resolution to Amend the Faculty Handbook Regarding Procedures for Promotion and Tenure and Related Appeals

Justin Lemkul presented the resolution for second reading and made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded, and the motion passed.

Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies  
CGPSP Resolution 2024-25A  
Resolution to Form a Working Group to Formulate a University Policy to Combat Unprofessional Behaviors Towards Graduate and Professional Students

Renée LeClair presented the resolution for second reading and made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded, and the motion passed.

Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies  
CUSP Resolution 2024-25A  
Resolution to Revise Policy 6305, Satisfactory Academic Progress for Associate and Undergraduate Students

Jim Tokuhisa presented the resolution for second reading and made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded, and the motion passed.

## **5. Announcement of approval and posting of UC Cabinet, Commission, and Committee Minutes**

These minutes have been voted on electronically and will be posted on the University web (<http://www.governance.vt.edu>). Note that the purpose of voting on minutes of the University Council Cabinet, Commissions, and Committees reporting to University Council Cabinet is to

accept them for filing. University Council Bylaws require that policy items be brought forward in resolution form for University Council action.

- University Council Cabinet  
October 28, 2024  
November 21, 2024
- Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs  
October 11, 2024  
December 13, 2024
- Commission on Faculty Affairs  
October 18, 2024  
November 1, 2024
- Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies  
November 6, 2024  
December 4, 2024
- Commission on Outreach and International Affairs  
November 21, 2024  
December 5, 2024
- Commission on Research  
September 5, 2024  
October 10, 2024
- Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies  
November 11, 2024
- Athletics Committee  
November 14, 2024
- Climate Action, Sustainability, and Energy Committee  
October 28, 2024
- Transportation and Parking Committee  
January 14, 2025

## **6. Informational Item**

Before adjourning, President Sands provided a brief update regarding ongoing challenges related to recent executive orders. A working group is being established to assess the impact, focusing on research funding, academic freedom, and institutional stability. While there are no definitive answers yet, leadership is actively gathering information and monitoring agency responses.

The university is committed to staying compliant with the law as it evolves while maintaining core institutional principles. Faculty and staff are encouraged to communicate concerns with their deans and unit leaders.

For ongoing updates, the university's research website is being continuously updated regarding research funding, and efforts are underway to organize town halls and listening sessions. Additional discussions will take place at upcoming meetings, including a more detailed update in the State of the University Address on February 5.

## **6. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:02 p.m.

# University Council Votes

## February 3, 2025

First name	Last name	Do you approve UC Resolution 2024-25A?	Do you approve CFA Resolution 2024-25A?	Do you approve CFA Resolution 2024-25D?	Do you approve CFA Resolution 2024-25E?	Do you approve CGPSP Resolution 2024-25A?	Do you approve CUSP Resolution 2024-25A?
Akshay	Anil		Yes				
Janice	Austin	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Laura	Belmonte	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
LaTawnya	Burleson	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Mary	Burrows	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
LA	Cox II	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Holli	Drewry	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Alexander	Efird	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rodney	Gaines	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bryan	Garey	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guru	Ghosh	Yes	Yes	No Response	No Response	No Response	Yes
Dan	Givens	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Amber	Hagan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Hawthorne						
Henry	Berger	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Piedad	Henao Guerrero	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rebecca	Hester	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rachel	Holloway	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Evan	Lavender-Smith	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lee	Learman	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Renee	LeClair	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Justin	Lemkul	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lu	Liu	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kimberly	Loeffert	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gary	Long	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Jason	Malone	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	McGlothlin						
Marlena	Lester	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rachel	Miles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Laurel	Miner	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ronnie	Mondal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

# University Council Votes

## February 3, 2025

First name	Last name	Do you approve UC Resolution 2024-25A?	Do you approve CFA Resolution 2024-25A?	Do you approve CFA Resolution 2024-25D?	Do you approve CFA Resolution 2024-25E?	Do you approve CGPSP Resolution 2024-25A?	Do you approve CUSP Resolution 2024-25A?
Quiyana	Murphy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kat	Nelson	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Enrique	Noyola	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kelly	Oaks	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Leslie	Orellana	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Aarav	Parikh	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abstain	Yes	Yes
Nicole	Pitterson	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
William	Poland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Menah	Pratt	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Amber	Robinson	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Julia	Ross	No Response	Abstain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sally	Shupe	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Aimee	Surprenant	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tyler	Walters	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vincent	Wang	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Donna	Westfall-Rudd	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hehuang	Xie	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Serena	Young	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kim	O'Rourke	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cyril	Clarke	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes