

University Council Minutes
February 16, 2026
3:30 p.m.
2420 North End Center and Zoom

Present: Tim Sands (presiding), April Myers, Julie Ross, Amy Sebring, Laurel Miner for Daniel Sui, Bryan Garey, Menah Pratt, Kim O'Rourke, Guru Ghosh, Aimée Suprenant, Jill Sible, Mike Gutter for Mario Ferruzzi, Laura Belmonte, Tsai Lu Liu, Kevin Pitts, Saskia van de Gevel, Saonee Sarker, Rebecca Bott-Knutson, Amanda Morris, Jennifer Johnson, Justin Lemkul, Rachel Miles, James Hawdon, Marlena Lester, Jennifer Jones, Amber Hagan, Gabe Petry, Jasmine Boyd, Emma Roshioru, Thomas Feely, Lindsay Ricci, Pooja Bhagawat, Gyang Chung, Taylor Peele, Katie Drinkwater Gregg, Marc Michel, Nicole Pitterson, Kim Loeffert, Rebecca Hester, Renée LeClair, Terri Pecora, Amber Robinson, Jennifer Clevenger, Jim Tokuhisa, and Jan Helge Bøhn

Absent: Frances Keene, Daniel Givens, David Knight, Lee Learman, Tyler Walters, Nicole Connors, Aarav Parikh, Eric Martin, Ron Meyers, David Xie, Serena Young, Clay Crumpler, and Ronnie Mondal

Guests: Larry Cox, II, Janice Austin, Holli Gardner Drewry, Ron Fricker, Rachel Gabriele, Monique Logan, Kat Nelson, Lori Rose, Sally Shupe, Demetria Somervell, Rick Sparks, and Lauren Surface

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

1. Announcement of Order of the Day

President 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 February 2, 2026

President 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. Unfinished Business

Commission on Faculty Affairs

CFA Resolution 2025-26B

Resolution to Revise Faculty Handbook to Defer Tenure Cases with Legal Entanglements

Jim Hawdon 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 2025-26E

Resolution to Revise the Faculty Handbook Section on Instructor Ranks

Jim Hawdon 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 2025-26B

Resolution to Explore Alternative Curricular Avenues for Graduate Education Requirements

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

4. New Business

Commission on Faculty Affairs
CFA Resolution 2025-26F

Resolution to Revise Appeals Procedure in Faculty Handbook

Jim Hawdon presented the resolution for first reading. This resolution proposes revisions to the Faculty Handbook to clarify the appeals procedure for negative promotion and tenure (P&T) decisions.

The current language was identified as lacking clarity, particularly regarding how candidates are notified and how appeals are processed. Proposed revisions to Section 3.4.6 clarify who is responsible for notifying candidates of decisions, establish clearer timelines for notification, and require that any negative decision include the substantive reasons for the outcome.

Revisions to Section 3.5.2 focus on clarifying the appeals process following a negative college-level decision. Under the proposed changes, the provost reviews the appeal to determine whether it meets the established grounds for appeal. If it does, the candidate may request to appear before the Promotion and Tenure Committee. If the committee accepts the appeal and the provost agrees, the case is then reviewed by a subcommittee of the University P&T Committee and proceeds accordingly.

Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies
CUSP Resolution 2025-26C

Resolution to Revise Policy 6815 Undergraduate Education

Jim Tokuhisa presented the resolution for first reading. This resolution proposes comprehensive updates to Policy 6815 governing undergraduate graduation requirements. The revisions are intended to promote timely degree completion, establish clearer and more consistent graduation standards across academic units, and modernize a policy that has not been substantially updated in nearly 25 years.

The proposed changes address several key areas, including clarification of credit hours required for graduation and identification of hours that may not be applied toward a degree, as well as specification of the minimum number of Virginia Tech credits required. Updates are also proposed to the Analysis of Graduation Status form, including timelines for certification of degree requirements. Additional revisions clarify policies related to double majors, second degrees, and combination degree programs that integrate three years of undergraduate study with one year of professional coursework. The resolution also addresses graduation

ceremonies and degree conferral dates, and outlines procedures for how and by whom changes to degree requirements may be made.

Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies
CUSP Resolution 2025-26D
Midterm Assessment of Undergraduate Students

Jim Tokuhisa presented the resolution for first reading. This resolution proposes a change to midterm assessments for first-time, first-year undergraduate students. The resolution would replace the current broad satisfactory/unsatisfactory midterm evaluation with a more detailed A–F letter grade assessment.

The proposal received unanimous support from the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies. During discussion in the Faculty Senate, conversation focused largely on best practices for communicating instructor assessments and how midterm evaluations align with academic advising. While some concerns were raised in that context, the core intent of the resolution is to provide students with more specific and informative feedback by moving to a traditional A–F grading scale at midterm.

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.

- Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs
December 12, 2025
January 9, 2026
- Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies
January 7, 2026

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 3:46 p.m.

University Council Voting – February 16, 2026

First name	Last name	Do you approve CFA Resolution 2025-26B?	Do you approve CFA Resolution 2025-26E?	Do you approve CGPSP Resolution 2025-26B?
Laura	Belmonte	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pooja	Bhagawat	Yes	No Response	Yes
Becky	Bott	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jasmine	Boyd	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gyang	Chung	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jennifer	Clevenger	Yes	Yes	Yes
Katherine	Drinkwater Gregg	Yes	Yes	Yes
Thomas	Feely	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bryan	Garey	Yes	Yes	Abstain
Guru	Ghosh	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mike	Gutter	No Response	Yes	Yes
Amber	Hagan	Yes	Yes	Yes
James	Hawdon	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rebecca	Hester	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jennifer	Jones	Yes	Yes	Yes
Renee	LeClair	Yes	Yes	Yes
Justin	Lemkul	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kimberly	Loeffert	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marlena	McGlothlin Lester	Yes	Yes	Yes
Marc	Michel	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rachel	Miles	Yes	Yes	Yes
Laurel	Miner	Yes	Yes	Yes
Amanda	Morris	No Response	Yes	Yes
Kim	O'Rourke	No Response	Yes	Yes
Terri	Pecora	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gabe	Petry	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nicole	Pitterson	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kevin	Pitts	No	Yes	Abstain
Menah	Pratt	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lindsay	Ricci	Yes	Yes	Yes
Amber	Robinson	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emma	Roshioru	Yes	Yes	Yes
Saonee	Sarker	Yes	Yes	Yes
Amy	Sebring	No Response	Yes	Yes
Jill	Sible	Yes	Yes	Yes
Aimee	Surprenant	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jennifer	Johnson	Yes	Yes	Yes