

Faculty Senate meeting
September 13, 2010
3:00-4:30 P.M.
Harrison Institute Auditorium

Minutes

Gweneth West, Faculty Senate Chair, identified and thanked new and returning senators, as well as administrators and guests. She introduced President Teresa A. Sullivan.

President's Report

President Sullivan has instituted weekly meetings with the vice presidents and has attended faculty meetings in various schools; she has met with Gov. McDonnell, some Secretaries, state legislators, heads of other Virginia colleges and universities, and alumni.

One of her major priorities is to hire successors to Leonard Sandridge and Tim Garson. There has been a considerable accretion of duties to Leonard's position; there's general agreement that some placements have to change. The Athletics Director now reports directly to the president. She is forming a search committee for Leonard's job and welcomes nominations. She will set up a search committee for Tim's position soon.

The University has already done a lot of strategic planning; now it is time to implement these plans. The biggest challenge is financial, finding the financial resources needed to do our work and meet planning goals. She is forming a Faculty Budgetary Advisory Committee, and has asked the Faculty Senate to nominate two senators for this committee. She has asked the deans to appoint others with special expertise. It is a chance for faculty and administrative experts to discuss the challenges we face.

Our most important resource is human capital. We need to find ways to invest in faculty so we don't lose them – to retain faculty, and to add new faculty. We also need to have adequate support for grad students. The faculty haven't had a raise for three years. We do have a 3% bonus coming up, but that doesn't affect base salary.

President Sullivan is working to bring a new budget model to schools that will result in more transparency. This project will take a while. Deans know where resources come from, but not what the costs are. Central administration has been carrying the costs of building, financial aid, the library. We need to find a way to fund all these while making costs more transparent. This will shift the budgeting responsibility away from the chief operating officer toward the academic side, which is appropriate.

Gov. McDonnell's Commission on Higher Education Reform, Innovation and Investment is currently divided into three subdivisions, one of which is meeting on the Grounds on Friday, September 17. The Commission's deadline for final recommendations will be November 30. You'll hear a lot of ideas; don't be alarmed by them. There will be a lot of rhetoric about increasing student body size, holding down costs, and increasing efficiency. All the states are looking at this. In the last several years, according to critics, every industry has had to downsize except higher education. U.Va. is not wasting state funds – we are 25th in academic quality, 64th in resources. We have a 93 percent graduation rate. We're actually overachieving.

Some of the issues the Commission is interested in are: should we be using our physical plant more in the summer? We are not idle in summer, but semester credit hour production is low. We

hold a lot of camps – but is that the best use of space? We could become more intensive with J-Term, for instance, enrolling students from other institutions.

There is a push to offer more three-year degrees. Students often enter the University with one semester of AP credit, but they want the whole four-year experience. President Sullivan will propose an alternative idea to the Commission: The University could offer a 3+1 program, allowing students to complete their BA or BS in three years, then get a masters in their fourth year. We have to put some ideas on the table, because we might not like the ideas that others will suggest. One idea is tying appropriations to an incentive-based system.

Another idea she hears a lot is introducing on-line learning as a way to earn more money. This isn't really a Jeffersonian model, which is more relational; but some enriching programs could be done on line. In terms of adult and continuing education, the University could do lots of things. For the Governor's desire to have 100,000 more degrees here at VA, programs for adult learners who have had some college would be a good way to achieve this. We have a lot of excellence here already; we want to strive for more. The Curry School's Center for Advanced Teaching and Learning – CASTL – is impressive. Are there any more degrees we should consider offering? How can we foster the success of the professional schools?

Along with the Board of Visitors, President Sullivan is looking at alternative financial models. Completing the campaign is an important priority. We may have moderate increases in tuition and modest growth in the student body. President Sullivan wants to limit growth to a size that won't require expansion of our physical plant. We need to keep the current proportion of in-state to out-of-state students – otherwise, we would need to raise in-state tuition. In this entering class, we have students from 45 states and numerous foreign countries. This gives students an experience of geographic diversity that is valuable in forming an educated person.

President Sullivan urged the Faculty Senate and its constituents to participate in the Day of Dialogue scheduled for September 24, saying the goal is to involve the whole university in preventing violence and addressing related issues of safety.

She also spoke briefly about the University-wide Celebration of the University planned to coincide with her inauguration in April.

Provost's Report – Provost Arthur Garson, Jr.

Dr. Garson said that the University is considering the institution of “early action.” Unlike early decision, which the University terminated, early action is a nonbinding decision given to the student in January.

It was discovered that only 1 of 976 lower income students were admitted early decision. The policy was discontinued in an effort to draw more low income and underrepresented-minority students. With early action, diversity figures at other institutions have been found to be indistinguishable from regular admission.

Early action makes us more competitive: some students wouldn't apply to U.Va. because they want to know before April; 55-65% of students will apply early action. Criteria for acceptance will be the same as for regular admission, so there is no advantage from that standpoint.

If approved, this would start next year, not this year.

President Sullivan – Question & Answer Session

Q: The schools are strapped, facing a loss of faculty and an increase in students. I believe it's the administration's duty to meet core teaching needs. We are being told that research dollars should be used for that.

Sullivan: Deans now are feeling strapped because of the current budget model, which is difficult to predict.

Q: As documented in the report of the Washington Advisory Group solicited by the Provost's office in 2007, U.Va. has 25% fewer faculty than in 2001, even though we've added many majors. We need guidance from the top regarding support in math, chemistry, basic sciences.

Sullivan: I believe that the Commission on the Future of the University (COFU) made science and technology a major priority of the University. If we go to the kind of financial model I'm thinking about, tuition would follow students. If Arts & Sciences got more students, it would get more money. We have two new lab buildings that will soon come on line. I have started speaking to legislators and to the governor about how useful it would be to have one-time money to bring in science faculty and build start-up programs. This may be one way in the short-run that we can do more hiring. We need to hire more faculty; the faculty-student ratio needs improvement. We're relatively small compared to other research institutions. They have much larger student bodies. I think there are countervailing benefits to our smaller student body, such as greater student satisfaction.

Q: Engineering education and nursing education are expensive to provide; engineering because of the need for expensive equipment, and nursing because of a necessarily lower student/faculty ratio what about differential tuition?

Sullivan: I am not averse to that, but would have to consult the Board of Visitors. We don't yet have the policy authorization to do that.

Q: We have to also consider, in thinking about differential tuition, how much debt students will have when they graduate; engineers have a much better chance to make a lot of money when they graduate compared to nursing students.

Q: Question regarding national rankings.

Sullivan: *US News* places great value on resources per student. Frugality isn't taken into consideration. *US News* also considers the opinions of high school counselors. That doesn't seem like a good indicator. For the School of Law, opinions of judges etc. are considered. I do want us to be excellent in academic reputation; I care a lot about that. But it is even more important that our output is terrific – that students are really great when they come out of here.

Q: I am interested in the Day of Dialogue. The most powerful icon of the University is the Lawn, with its image of faculty and students living and dining all on same site. I think the icon is false. I'd love to see a discussion of: "What will it take to get to 50-60% of students housed at the University?" Students are better off living in communities like residential colleges, even fraternities and sororities, than in apartments off Grounds. In discussing the expansion of the undergraduate population, what if we said that we won't house upper class students on the Grounds until more first and second year students are on Grounds?

Sullivan: This would be contrary to the national trend. One of the interesting things about the Academical Village is that upper class leaders are brought back to the center of the Grounds, unlike at most institutions. But there is a tendency for fourth years to live off Grounds.

Q: Might the proposed transparency in budgeting, and moving funding back to schools, have the unintended consequence of discouraging interdisciplinary programs?

Sullivan: That is an important issue. We might have a set-aside pool, holding deans accountable for putting some of their money into that pool. We might have a matching program for deans and administrators. I have considerable experience of this myself.

Q: Gowher Rizvi is going to be serving as advisor to Prime Minister of Bangladesh. Will this affect his work at the University?

Garson: He will be back and forth; he will be here all fall. He will be half time; he has taken a pay cut and has assigned people to cover his duties. He's very high up in the Bangladeshi government, and he talks constantly about U.Va. When he comes here interacting with faculty and students, his experience brings a real sense of what is happening in that country.

Announcements – Gweneth West

Day of Dialogue: Tomorrow an email will go out from President Sullivan with a link to a website for registration. Bob Kemp will disseminate a phone tree. You might need to send colleagues a personal email, or call them. Invite across your own constituency. Talk to staff, to students in class, to housekeeping. The intention is to create an open space so people can bring forth whatever is at the forefront of their concerns about how to create a safe, companionable community.

By-laws revision: The Executive Council is in the process of revising the Faculty Senate by-laws so that they reflect how the Senate currently conducts business, as well as the intent of those who went before. You will have a copy to review at least two weeks before the next working meeting. Please read the by-laws to see if they are clear, and if they reflect the reality of the Senate's functioning.

Ratification of the Faculty Senate's Position Statement on the Mann Investigation

Ann Hamric explained that when the Attorney General issued a Civil Investigative Demand concerning former professor Michael Mann, the Executive Council created a statement opposing this action. It was decided not to reconvene the Senate because classes were over. The statement has been widely viewed. According to the bylaws, anything that led to immediate action by the Council must be brought for full ratification by the Senate as soon as possible. The matter was brought before the Senate and received unanimous approval. Therefore, we add that this statement was further ratified by the Faculty Senate September 13, 2010.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Submitted by Brie Gertler, Secretary of the Faculty Senate