Dean Carolyn Dever called the meeting to order at 3:14 p.m. in Wilson Hall 103. Approximately 70 faculty members were in attendance.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Faculty Meeting of April 26, 2011.

There were no comments or questions, and the Minutes were approved.

2. Approval of the Candidates for Degrees at the end of the spring semester, May 13, 2011.

Associate Dean Fräncille Bergquist presented two corrections to the preliminary list of degree candidates that were distributed with the agenda material for this meeting. She then moved (1) that the faculty of the College of Arts and Science recommend to the Board of Trust that this list of candidates, as amended, be awarded Bachelor of Arts degrees on Friday, May 13, 2011; and (2) that a copy of the final official Commencement Program, as approved by the Director of Student Records and the Dean of the College of Arts and Science, be appended to these minutes as a record of the actions of this faculty in recommending candidates for degrees and in awarding honors, prizes, and medals. There was no discussion, and these motions were unanimously approved by the faculty. The faculty applauded the graduates for their accomplishments.

3. Review of the Minutes of the Faculty Council meeting of May 3, 2011.

There were no comments or questions.

4. Overview of CASP’s recommendation to establish a 24-credit “floor” for A&S non-interdisciplinary majors.

Professor Eakin, Chair of Faculty Council, explained that for several months Council has been discussing the recommendation from the Committee on Academic Standards and Procedures (CASP) to establish a 24-credit “floor” as a method to place a reasonable limit on the amount of double-counting credits between A&S non-interdisciplinary majors. Council approved CASP’s recommendation at the November 30th meeting and presented it to the A&S faculty at the December Faculty Meeting, where it was tabled after a lengthy discussion. Since then, there were extensive discussions with members of the Mathematics department in an effort to understand their concerns and, if possible, to resolve the matter. Faculty Council also discussed the matter with John Rafter, Senior Lecturer in Mathematics and former DUS in Mathematics, in person at the April Council meeting. In response, Council proposed two friendly amendments to the CASP recommendation. Professor Eakin noted that the CASP recommendation had to be taken
off the table at this meeting, or else it would expire and the issue started afresh next year, as the A&S Parliamentarian ruled that motions cannot remain tabled over the summer.

Before a motion to take the CASP recommendation off the table is entertained, Professor Eakin continued, an overview of proposals to limit double-counting credits between A&S non-interdisciplinary majors should be presented. Jonathan Bremer, the Executive Secretary of the Faculty, presented the overview of the issues surrounding the CASP 24-credit “floor” recommendation, including analyses of the implications of the recommendation and three alternatives (see the attached document). Most of the data in the document and the first three analyses were prepared by the A&S Registrar’s Office. The fourth analysis was a logical extension of the third analysis.

Mr. Bremer explained that A&S has two rules that bear on the CASP 24-credit “floor” recommendation. The first one is the 15-credit rule for minors, in which students must earn at least 15 credits that are being counted solely toward the minor. This rule is relevant to the CASP recommendation in two important ways: a) The wording of the CASP 24-credit “floor” recommendation is based on this rule, and b) any new rule limiting the amount of double counting between two non-interdisciplinary majors should make it more difficult to earn a second major than a minor. The second rule is that students must not double count more than six credits between an interdisciplinary major and a non-interdisciplinary major. This latter rule was the basis for the first attempt last year to limit double counting between two non-interdisciplinary majors, but this first attempt was sent back to Faculty Council for reconsideration.

CASP, in its report of November, 2010, argued that some kind of double-counting limitation between non-interdisciplinary majors is needed, because some double-major combinations permit an excessive amount of double counting, such as HIST and CLAS (21 credits) and RLST and PHIL (12 credits). In the aforementioned report, CASP also presented four criteria for an effective double-counting rule: It would place a reasonable limit on double counting between non-interdisciplinary majors; it would require students to take a unique set of courses in order to fulfill each major; it must protect the integrity of majors; and it would prevent it from being more difficult to earn a minor than a second major.

Mr. Bremer presented analyses of the two previous CASP recommendations and two alternatives: (1) last year’s CASP recommendation to limit the amount of double counting between non-interdisciplinary majors to six credits; (2) this year’s CASP recommendation for a 24-credit “floor” in which a student must earn at least 24 credits that count solely toward each A&S non-interdisciplinary major, which he called the “strong” version or interpretation of the 24-credit rule; (3) a modification of the CASP recommendation, proposed by Professors Cliffel and Rafter, that states that “each major must include a minimum of 24 credit hours that are not being counted as part of the 24 credit hour minimum toward another major,” which he called the “weak” interpretation of the 24-credit rule; and (4) a similar modification, proposed by Professors Rafter and Simonett, that replaces “24” with “27,” which he called version 2 of the weak interpretation. Mr. Bremer explained that the analysis of (1) is straightforward—it limits
double counting between non-interdisciplinary majors to six credits across the board, regardless of the number of credits required for each major. Analysis of the CASP 24-credit “floor” recommendation shows that it allows a fair amount of double counting, which increases as the number of required credits for the relevant majors increases. Analyses of the second and third alternatives show that they allow a large amount of double counting, so much so that in the worst case scenario two 48-credit majors could double count every course. Based on these analyses, Mr. Bremer argued that the CASP 24-credit “floor” recommendation and the first alternative satisfies at least two of the four criteria set out by CASP for an effective double-counting rule, whereas the second and third alternative proposals do not satisfy any of the four criteria.

Mr. Bremer then explained that three major concerns have been expressed about this year’s CASP recommendation. First, some faculty members claimed that this new rule would make it very difficult for students to double major. An analysis by the A&S Registrar’s Office shows, however, that, of the most popular double-major combinations, only one—Economics and Mathematics—would be adversely affected by the proposed rule.

Second, faculty members in the Mathematics department argued that at present students are able to earn a double major in Economics and Mathematics by taking 30 credits in Economics and 29 credits in Mathematics, but, if the CASP recommendation were to be approved, this would no longer be possible. This is true, Mr. Bremer continued, but only under very limited circumstances (six simultaneous conditions would have to be met), and even then the affected student would have to take just one more Mathematics credit. No Economics-Mathematics double major has ever been under this set of circumstances. Nonetheless, in response to this concern, Faculty Council proposed a friendly amendment to the CASP recommendation, which would be introduced if the faculty were to approve the CASP recommendation.

Third, faculty members in the Mathematics department expressed concern that another A&S department or program might add Mathematics courses to its list of required courses that count toward the major, thereby making it more difficult to double major in that discipline and Mathematics. This “what-if” scenario is possible, Mr. Bremer continued, but there are ways to avoid the problem. For example, the Chemistry major requires two semesters of calculus courses, but these credits do not count toward the credits required for the major. In response to this third concern, Faculty Council proposed a second friendly amendment, which would be introduced if the CASP recommendation is approved.

In response to questions from faculty members, Mr. Bremer stated that the A&S Registrar’s Office did not comprehensively research the amount of double-counting credits that students have actually taken, but a quick survey revealed that some students were double counting nine credits. There are real policy differences between the four options, and the analyses reveal some of these differences, although he acknowledged that at present most A&S majors are best represented by the two columns on the far left of each analysis. Mr. Bremer stated that he is responsible for the table that shows the
extent to which each option satisfies CASP’s four criteria of an effective double-counting rule.

5. Executive Motion Calendar.

From the Committee on Academic Standards and Procedures (CASP). Tabled from the December, 2010, A&S Faculty Meeting: Faculty Council recommends approval of CASP’s recommendation that each A&S non-interdisciplinary major must include at least 24 credit hours that are being counted solely toward the major. The faculty approved a motion to take the CASP recommendation off the table, with seven faculty members opposed.

Several faculty members, including members from the Mathematics department and the Earth and Environmental Sciences department, spoke against the proposed rule. They were primarily concerned that the rule would adversely affect students. The rule would make it more difficult to double major, they argued, especially when the unpredictable effects of the recently approved 48-credit upper limit on A&S non-interdisciplinary majors are taken into consideration or come into being. For example, in the case of Economics-Mathematics program 2 double majors, students might have to take one more Mathematics course than at present, and, in the case of one of the EES tracks, it would be very difficult to double major in another natural science discipline, because EES option 2 requires many science courses. If it becomes more difficult to double major in Mathematics, then students are likely to be less successful gaining entry into graduate and professional schools and into the workplace, because many schools and businesses think that a student is better prepared if they have earned a Mathematics major alongside their first major. Another faculty member stated that it is a difficult balance between avoiding the creation of new hardships for students and protecting the integrity of a major, which is one benefit of the proposed rule. Others said that this rule would be one more academic rule that students, advisers, and the Registrar’s Office would have to keep in mind.

Several faculty members responded to the above concerns, including Professors Becker, Campbell, Gaca, Getz, and Dean Bergquist. They argued that the data and a comparison of major requirements show that few students would be adversely affected by this rule. Even in the most difficult cases, students would still be able to double major by carefully selecting the appropriate courses. A&S students earn at least 120 credits in order to graduate, which is more than enough to double and triple major, even in majors that do not overlap (partly because credits earned toward fulfilling the AXLE curriculum may count toward major requirements as well). Moreover, if a problem develops and a student’s double major hinges on a single credit, the student could petition the Administrative Committee for relief from this rule. Finally, students need only one major to graduate, so even if this rule would make it more difficult for students to double major, the rule would not make it more difficult to graduate. Professor Scherrer countered that if this proposed rule would adversely affect few students, then the rule is not needed; it solves a problem that does not exist. This inference does not follow, others responded, because there are other reasons for advocating the proposed rule and the lack of known
cases of excessive double counting between non-interdisciplinary majors does not mean that cases do not exist or will not occur.

One major purpose of the recently approved rule that allows disciplines to require up to 48 credits, Professor Ellingham stated, was to allow and encourage departments to include prerequisites to their majors into their list of major requirements. If departments were to do this, then it would be more difficult for students to double major. For example, if a natural science department were to include Mathematics courses into its list of courses, then the proposed rule would make it more difficult to double major in that science discipline and Mathematics. This was not the intent of the 48-credit cap, replied Professors Tuchman and Hutson, both of whom are members of Faculty Council at present and were Council members at the time the 48-credit cap was considered and approved. The primary intent was to make sure that students are informed of all the courses that are needed to complete a major, analogous to a “truth in advertising” maxim. The rules and courses needed to complete a major should be transparent. This does not mean or require that departments should include prerequisite courses into the list of courses that count toward the major. For example, one year of calculus is required for the Chemistry major, but the credits earned by completing the one year of calculus do not count toward the Chemistry major. To use another example, foreign language proficiency is a prerequisite for many majors, but for most programs the courses that a student takes to gain language proficiency do not count toward the major. Moreover, a department could specify that if a student is double majoring in one of its majors and another program’s major, then a particular requirement may be waived, thereby avoiding this problem.

The A&S faculty then voted to approve the CASP recommendation:

Each A&S non-interdisciplinary major must include at least 24 credit hours that are being counted solely toward the major. It should be noted that adoption of this rule would apply also to the non-interdisciplinary major for those students who combine such a major with an interdisciplinary major.

32 faculty members voted in favor, 23 were opposed, and 6 abstained.

Professor Eakin introduced the first friendly amendment to the above resolution: “The Committee on Educational Programs (CEP) shall carefully review the impact of proposed program revisions on popular double-major combinations, especially with regards to the 24-credit ‘floor’ rule.”

Several faculty members argued that this amendment should be approved, because it is a helpful reminder or alert to the CEP and it is not clear that this would otherwise be part of the charge or mandate of the CEP. It is also good, Dean Dever added, to have the weight of the faculty behind it. Many faculty members suggested and the faculty agreed that “popular” and the “s” of “regards” should be deleted. The faculty then approved the amended first amendment, with one opposed. The amended amendment reads:
“The Committee on Educational Programs (CEP) shall carefully review the impact of proposed program revisions on double-major combinations, especially with regard to the 24-credit ‘floor’ rule.”

Professor Eakin then introduced the second friendly amendment to the CASP recommendation:

“The A&S faculty encourages students to petition the Administrative Committee if s/he is double majoring in Economics and Mathematics and finds herself/himself one credit short of fulfilling both majors because of the 24-credit ‘floor’ rule. The A&S Registrar shall keep a record of the number of petitions received and granted by the Administrative Committee that are related to this rule.”

Professor Becker argued that this amendment should be approved because it addresses a noted potential problem with the 24-credit “floor” resolution and might allay some of the concerns of the Mathematics department to have this note in print. After a brief discussion, Professor Folgarait moved to amend the amendment by replacing “The A&S faculty encourages students to” with “A student may.” Several faculty members argued that this change of wording considerably weakens the resolution and requested that it be considered by itself. The faculty approved the amendment to the second amendment, with three voting against and three abstaining.

Professor Armour suggested that “, for example,” be inserted after the “if” in order to not exclude other situations in which a student could reasonably petition relief from the 24-credit “floor” rule. The faculty approved this amendment to the second amendment, with two faculty members abstaining.

The faculty then approved the amended second amendment, with three voting against and three abstaining. The amended amendment reads:

“A student may petition the Administrative Committee if, for example, s/he is double majoring in Economics and Mathematics and finds herself/himself one credit short of fulfilling both majors because of the 24-credit ‘floor’ rule. The A&S Registrar shall keep a record of the number of petitions received and granted by the Administrative Committee that are related to this rule.”

6. Announcements and Presentations.

Dean Dever announced that one A&S faculty member has been appointed Professor Emeritus this year: Charles E. Scott has been appointed Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus. She thanked him, in absentia, for his long and dedicated service to Vanderbilt and congratulated him. The faculty applauded Professor Emeritus Scott.

Dean Dever reported that, at a special meeting of the Faculty Council on April 28, Professor Timothy Hanusa was elected Chair of Faculty Council and Professor Dana Nelson was elected Secretary of Faculty Council for 2011-12. The faculty congratulated the two officers.
Dean Dever thanked all of those faculty members who have served in leadership roles this year as department chairs, program directors, directors of undergraduate studies, directors of graduate studies, and committee chairs. She also thanked Professor Marshall Eakin for serving as Chair and Professor Shane Hutson for serving as Secretary of Faculty Council. She also thanked Professor Roy Gottfried for serving as A&S Parliamentarian, Professor Kathy Anderson for serving as Secretary of the Faculty, and Jonathan Bremer for his faculty governance and accreditation work. The faculty applauded all of these individuals for their contributions.

7. **Original Motion Calendar.**

No issues were raised.

8. **Good of the College.**

No issues were raised.

9. **Adjournment.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn H. Anderson,
Secretary of the Faculty