Dean Carolyn Dever called the meeting to order at 4:14 p.m. in Wilson Hall 103. Approximately 60 faculty members were in attendance.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Faculty Meeting of February 21, 2012.

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

2. Review of the Minutes of the Faculty Council Meeting of March 13, 2012.

Professor Dana Nelson, Secretary of Council, presented Council business to the faculty in the absence of Professor Timothy Hanusa, Chair of Council, who was out of town at a conference. There were no comments or questions about the minutes or the courses.

3. Executive Motion Calendar.

A. From the Committee on Academic Standards and Procedures (CASP): Proposed revision of the course approval procedure for Military Science courses. Professor Nelson explained that the proposed change in the approval procedure for Military Science (MS) courses would bring it in line with the approval procedure for other A&S courses. Once an instructor and a course are approved by an A&S department, MS courses would be available for credit for ROTC students and non-ROTC students. This proposal formalizes the procedure by which MS courses are approved.

In response to questions of clarification from faculty members, the following explanations were offered: Mr. Bremer stated that, in the current course approval procedure for MS courses, MS courses are approved on a case-by-case basis by each Vanderbilt undergraduate school. In the past, the A&S faculty has decided that some MS courses count for credit, some count for credit only for ROTC students, and some do not count for credit for anyone. Senior Associate Dean Karen Campbell explained that the proposal reinstates the Provost’s Officer Education Advisory Committee, which would be responsible for approving instructors appointed by the Pentagon to teach ROTC courses at Vanderbilt. CASP added language to the original proposal (in step #7 of the proposal), which establishes another level of oversight of MS courses in the College of Arts and Science. An A&S department must approve the instructor and the course for an MS course to count for credit in A&S. Consequently, the proposal shifts control over MS courses to departments. Dean Campbell also explained that the other Vanderbilt undergraduate schools had already approved the proposal from the Provost’s Office before CASP added the language in step #7, and hence that language applies only to A&S, unless Associate Provost Cynthia Cyrus asks the other Vanderbilt undergraduate schools to consider it. The faculty then approved the recommendation from Faculty
Council that the proposed revision of the course approval procedure for Military Science courses, as amended by CASP, be approved and noted for the record the position of the A&S faculty on non-discrimination: we do not support the policy of the U.S. military on transgender individuals and we hope through our educational process to move toward the abolition of such policy.

B. From the Committee on Educational Programs (CEP):
   
i. **Proposed revision of the History major.** Professor Nelson explained that the proposal clarifies capstone credit for seniors who start the Honors track but do not complete all of the Honors requirements. It allows majors to receive capstone credit if they have completed the first course in the two-course Honors capstone sequence. There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the change in the History major.

   ii. **Proposed revision of the Chemistry major.** Professor Nelson explained that two laboratory courses required for the major have been changed from two credits to three in order to reflect the amount of work in the courses, and this increases the number of credits required in the major from 32 to 34. There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the change in the Chemistry major.

   iii. **Proposed elimination of English and History interdisciplinary major.** Professor Nelson explained that the departments of English and History have requested the elimination of this interdisciplinary major for a number of reasons. The departments have not been able to develop enough interdisciplinary courses to make the major more than a dual-track major and have had difficulties staffing the Workshop course, which is required for the major. The major is not working as it was originally proposed. Moreover, the departments have tried without success to revise the major in order to address these issues and have concluded that it should be rescinded. The faculty then approved the elimination of the major.

   iv. **Proposed creation of Environmental and Sustainability Studies minor.** Professor Nelson explained that the proposal is a new interdisciplinary minor, grounded in the humanities and social sciences, and has been strongly supported by undergraduate students. The director of the program is Professor David Hess, a new faculty member in Sociology. In response to a question from Professor Ellingham, Professor Hess stated that, in comparison to the Environmental Studies minor offered by the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, the old minor places more emphasis on the sciences and has not been revised in a long time. The proposed minor is oriented more toward the humanities and social sciences than the natural sciences and has a capstone course requirement. The faculty then approved the new minor.

   v. **Proposed elimination of Environmental Studies minor offered by the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences.** There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the elimination of the minor.
C. From the Ad hoc Faculty Council Non-tenure Track Subcommittee: **Proposed amendment to the Vanderbilt Faculty Manual.** Professor Nelson explained that this proposal is the fourth attempt by Faculty Council to consider a new rank system for non-tenure track faculty. It would add the rank “Principal Senior Lecturer,” higher in rank than Lecturer and Senior Lecturer, to the list of titles of non-tenured faculty in the Vanderbilt Faculty Manual, and also add the new title to the Salary Supplement section of the Faculty Manual. The new title would be used to recognize Senior Lecturers who make outstanding contributions to a department. Principal Senior Lecturers may be appointed or reappointed for a term of no longer than five years.

Professor Bisch argued against the proposal. Non-tenure track faculty members are highly valued members of departments, and A&S needs a mechanism to allow outstanding non-tenure track faculty members to be recognized. Yet, this proposal does not do it and is not worth it. The new rank would not be significantly different from “Senior Lecturer” as there is not much of a difference between a three-year and a five-year term of appointment. What would be significantly different is a non-tenure track position with security of employment. Moreover, the promotion process for this new rank is not clear. Lastly, the new rank would cause unhappiness among Senior Lecturers, he continued, some of whom would be promoted to the new rank and some not. Several faculty members, including Professors Aurbach, Ellingham, and Singleton, expressed concern, with Professor Bisch, about the lack of details for the new rank, and some faculty members also expressed support for longer terms of appointment for Principal Senior Lecturers, if that title is approved.

Professor Conklin, Chair of the Subcommittee, responded that amending the Faculty Manual to include “Principal Senior Lecturer” is only the first stage of the process. At this stage, only the new title and maximum length of contract for persons appointed to the new rank is at issue. After the new title has been approved and added to the Faculty Manual, the second stage would include changes to the Rules and Procedures for Faculty Appointments, Renewals, Promotion and Tenure in the College of Arts and Science (“R&P”) that would define the new position, outline the promotion procedure for this new rank, and present the terms of appointment. The proposal is narrow, based on the parameters and charge given to the Subcommittee by Dean Dever. At the end of the report, she continued, the Subcommittee recommends that some other issues, beyond its scope, be discussed and addressed, such as professional development programs or opportunities for non-tenure track faculty members and the definitions of “Lecturer” and “Senior Lecturer.” The A&S faculty has the opportunity to discuss these broader issues and changes to the R&P at a second stage once this new title is approved. This new title, if added to the Faculty Manual, would not be implemented in A&S, Dean Dever stated, in response to questions from Professors Ellingham and Rogaski, until there is further faculty discussion about the standards of this position. A&S does not have to implement or use all of the titles outlined in the Faculty Manual, Deans Bergquist and Sloop further explained. The title “Professor of the Practice of” is in the Faculty Manual, for example, and A&S could use it, but A&S does not use it and it is not included in the A&S R&P. If A&S were to add “Professor of the Practice of” to the A&S R&P, it could define the title in a different way from the definition used in Peabody College. The Faculty Manual
allows the various Vanderbilt schools to stipulate the terms, for their own purposes, of many of the non-tenured faculty titles. A&S can stipulate the terms and specify the details of the new rank when the A&S faculty deliberates the revision of the A&S R&P that would implement the position, Dean Campbell added.

In response to a question, Senior Lecturer Rafter, a member of the Subcommittee, explained that the Subcommittee chose “Principal Senior Lecturer” as the new title based on an investigation of the titles used by peer institutions, the titles proposed by the previous Faculty Council subcommittees, and Vanderbilt practice. Some five or six universities comparable to Vanderbilt use “Lecturer,” “Senior Lecturer,” and a higher third rank, but no two chose the same title for the third rank, and even the use of “Lecturer” and “Senior Lecturer” is not universal, although it is prevalent. Northwestern University, for example, uses “Distinguished Senior Lecturer” as a third rank for non-tenured faculty members and Carnegie Mellon University uses “Principal Lecturer.” The Subcommittee strongly considered “Distinguished Senior Lecturer,” but “Distinguished” has a special meaning at Vanderbilt, and “Principal Lecturer,” but this is an unusual title and many might not understand it. The Subcommittee also considered Carnegie Mellon’s rank order system of teaching professors, similar to Vanderbilt’s research professor system, and the University of California system of having numerous levels for each position, e.g. professor rank 1 - 5. After discussing these possibilities, the Subcommittee preferred “Principal Senior Lecturer.” In response to a question from Senior Lecturer Holt, Mr. Rafter did not know whether there is a correlation between job satisfaction and rank order and titling systems for non-tenured faculty members. The Subcommittee did not contact other schools.

In response to a question from Professor Singleton, Dean Dever explained that this proposal can move forward to the Faculty Senate without A&S faculty approval, but the proposal would be stronger with faculty approval and she urged faculty members to support it. The Faculty Senate, once it receives the proposal, would then offer its advice to the Provost and the Chancellor in its consultative capacity; the Senate does not have to approve it. The Provost would then have to approve the proposal before “Principal Senior Lecturer” could be added to the Faculty Manual.

Dean Dever stated that she supports this proposal because A&S does not have a way to recognize outstanding, career non-tenure track faculty members. Some A&S Senior Lecturers are extremely distinguished, teach at a very high level of quality, and dedicate themselves to serve their departments. This proposal simply makes an effort to recognize outstanding Senior Lecturers while preserving the contractual nature of their appointments and retaining the meaning and distinction of tenure.

Several faculty members expressed support for the proposal. Professor Fryd stated that the proposal would create a way to reward those non-tenure track faculty members who contribute tremendously to A&S departments. Many are dedicated and work very hard and do not receive research funds or start-up funds. Professor Wuerth argued that the difference between a three-year and a five-year contract is not insignificant in terms of whether to buy or rent a house, whether one’s spouse should look for a new job, and
concerns about going through the renewal process repeatedly. Moreover, it is a fact of life that some people advance to higher positions and some do not. Professor Geer said that he could not understand at first how the A&S faculty could support this proposal without the important details, but given that there would be a second stage in which the A&S faculty could discuss and specify the details of the position, if the new title is added to the Faculty Manual, then he does not understand at present how the A&S faculty could not support the proposal. If A&S does not approve the proposal, the faculty has squandered an opportunity to recognize excellent non-tenure track faculty members and squandered the time and knowledge of the Subcommittee members. It is also demoralizing, Professor Nelson added, for Senior Lecturers, who have watched the A&S faculty debate this issue for more than eight years without devising a system to recognize outstanding non-tenure track faculty members.

Dean Bergquist then called the question. Her motion was seconded and approved. The main motion, to approve the new rank of “Principal Senior Lecturer” in the two relevant places in the Vanderbilt Faculty Manual, was approved, with two faculty members opposing and two abstaining.

4. Updated final exam schedule.

Dean Campbell urged faculty members to carefully check the final exam schedule and to tell students the correct time and date of their final exams. An incorrect final exam schedule for this semester was posted last fall, and it has been corrected. The notice for this meeting included a link to the corrected schedule: (http://registrar.vanderbilt.edu/cms/wp-content/files/Final_Exam_Schedule_Spring_201213.pdf) Alternative exam times have been affected as well, so please check those too. Email notices have been distributed to faculty members and will be sent to students.

5. Use of MyVU for official notices.

Dean Dever reported that Vanderbilt considers the MyVU web site as the place of record for university-wide policy changes and is the repository of Vanderbilt policies. In the past, she said, paper memos or email messages were used to notify faculty and staff about updates to Vanderbilt policies, but this is no longer the case. She advised everyone to read the MyVU announcements and the MyVU archived information (at http://news.vanderbilt.edu/myvu/ under the A-Z, resources, and benefits tabs or the archives at http://news.vanderbilt.edu/myvu/myvupreview-archives/).

One such policy change announced this month on MyVU, Professor Bisch stated, is the reduction in the tuition benefit, which will go into effect on September 1, 2012. The new policy is available here: http://hr.vanderbilt.edu/policies/education-assistance-programs.php Dean Campbell stated that she is on the benefits subcommittee, which recommended no change to the tuition benefit policy. Vanderbilt’s tuition benefit, she said, is higher than most of Vanderbilt’s peers, but not significantly so.
6. Original Motion Calendar.

No issues were raised.

7. Good of the College.

Dean Dever announced that SACS, which is Vanderbilt’s accrediting body, is requiring all institutions and faculties to certify the terminal degrees of their faculty members. The Provost’s Office is planning to certify Vanderbilt’s faculty members through a national database. New junior-level faculty members will be required to provide graduate transcripts or degree certifications, and the terminal degrees of new senior-level faculty members will be confirmed by the national database. In response to a question, Dean Dever emphasized that this effort will be used to certify the terminal degrees that faculty members claim on their CV; it will not be used to determine whether each faculty member has a terminal degree in his or her field.

8. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

Written by
Jonathan E. Bremer
Executive Secretary of the Faculty

Reviewed by
Julian M. Wuerth,
Secretary of the Faculty