Minutes of the Faculty  
College of Arts & Science  

November 19, 2013

Dean Carolyn Dever called the meeting to order at 4:12 p.m. in Wilson Hall 103. Approximately 50 faculty members were in attendance.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Faculty Meeting of October 15, 2013.

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

2. Review of the Minutes of the Faculty Council meeting of November 5, 2013.

There were no comments or questions.

3. Executive Motion Calendar.

A. From the Committee on Educational Programs (CEP):

   I. Proposed study abroad program at Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-Rio, Brazil), administered by CIEE. There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the study abroad program at PUC-Rio.

   II. Proposed study abroad program at Kunming, China, administered by Middlebury and CET. There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the study abroad program at Kunming, China.

B. From the Committee on Graduate Education (CGE): Proposed Astrophysics Ph.D. program. There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the Astrophysics Ph.D. program.


Dean Dever delivered the annual State of the College Address. Highlights of her Address are summarized below.

Dean Dever explained that she has written the State of the College Address to be as informative as possible, and she thanked Nancy Wise and the Arts and Science deans in Kirkland 301 and 311 for their help. Dean Dever said that she presented this Address twice last month—once to the Arts and Science Board of Visitors and then to Arts and Science staff members at the second Annual Staff Meeting.

Dean Dever emphasized that the guiding theme of the College of Arts and Science is inquiry—the pursuit of inquiry motivates and engages everyone at Vanderbilt to learn, teach, and discover.
Undergraduate education. Dean Dever stated that the Arts and Science faculty is attracting top students from across the country. The College of Arts and Science received almost 23,000 applications for this year’s incoming class of 1000 students, and the four Vanderbilt undergraduate schools received 31,000 applications in total, continuing a trend of dramatically increasing applications over the past decade. Moreover, the average SAT score of the incoming class increased this year, to 1485. The student body is also becoming more diverse, almost 38% of this year’s Arts and Science incoming class characterize themselves as belonging to a minority ethnic group, while 45% characterize themselves as white and 12% decline to identify their ethnic identity. Arts and Science students are regionally diverse as well, and Vanderbilt is pushing to increase enrollment from the west coast, especially California. Tennessee has historically been the number one feeder state, the state from which the most undergraduate Arts and Science students come, and, for the third year in a row, New York is the second-highest feeder state.

For 2013, as it has been for the recent past, Economics has the most majors, followed by Medicine, Health, and Society, Political Science, Neuroscience, Psychology, English, and Mathematics. It is interesting to note, Dean Dever continued, that all Arts and Science divisions, including interdisciplinary programs, are represented in the top ten majors.

One matter of concern to Dean Dever is the rapid rise in the number of INOT majors. The INOT major, which is an individually designed interdisciplinary major, or contract major, can be a creative and stimulating plan of study, she continued, but it is often a proxy for a business major. After a brief discussion among faculty members and academic advisers, it appears that information about the INOT option is spread by students among themselves and is touted as a unique Vanderbilt feature. It also appears that the INOT major is attractive to students who are concerned about getting a job after graduation. The trend toward INOT majors deserves a careful review by the faculty, Dean Dever concluded.

Dean Dever stated that Vanderbilt offers 90 study abroad programs in 36 different countries, and the Maymester program is becoming increasingly popular. Since 2008, the number of Maymester courses has increased from 7 to 17, and the number of students enrolled in Maymester courses has increased from 79 to 215. She thanked Associate Dean Martin Rapisarda for his work in this area. Dean Dever also highlighted the Center for Second Language Studies, led by Professor Virginia Scott and Todd Hughes. Foreign language instruction is an important component of Vanderbilt’s global strategy, and the CSLS offers state of the art facilities for learning foreign languages and for foreign-language teaching workshops.

As Dean Dever reported, last year’s Graduating Student Survey (GSS) reveals that almost one-third of Arts and Science students participated in a research project with a faculty member and more than a quarter completed an independent study. Of special note is that more than 8% of students published or presented a paper off-campus. The survey also reveals that 63% of graduates seeking full-time employment secured a position before graduation, which is much higher than the national average of 16%. Many other graduates, 36.5% of the total, continue their academic studies at graduate or professional schools. Of those students who gain full-time employment, almost one-third work in financial services, 13% in education, 12.6% in consulting, and 10.6% in healthcare. Vanderbilt is perhaps the top feeder school for Teach for America, she said. Other top employers of Vanderbilt
graduates are Deloitte Consulting, Capital One Financial Group, and the United States Armed Forces.

**Graduate education.** Dean Dever stated that Arts and Science graduate programs received 5234 completed applications last year, and 565 offers were made. Of those offers, 256 students accepted. GRE scores this year averaged 564 for the verbal section and 683 for the quantitative section. Of all the students who accepted offers this year, 50% were women, 4% were African-American, 5% were Hispanic, and 29% were non-U.S. citizens. Based on these numbers, Dean Dever remarked that Vanderbilt has to work on increasing diversity in its graduate student body. This year, Arts and Science has 846 graduate students enrolled in 25 graduate programs, most of them in Ph.D. programs.

Financial aid to graduate students is expensive, Dean Dever explained, yet it is a crucial investment in support of faculty members, research projects, and academic disciplines. Aid this year to graduate students from Vanderbilt sources, including wages, stipends, and scholarships, totals $34.9 million, of which $25 million comes from unrestricted operations, while the rest comes from restricted operations. Some departments have endowed funds to support graduate education, but she said that it is difficult to raise money for graduate education. Today’s graduate students are the faculty of tomorrow, and Dean Dever challenged faculty members to ensure that their graduate students are prepared to earn tenure in a secondary education environment that is likely to be significantly different from the current one.

**Faculty.** Dean Dever reported that there are 88 endowed chairs in Arts and Science, more than double the number seven years ago. Thirteen faculty members have been appointed to an endowed chair since January 2012, including Lorrie Moore, Kevin Murphy, and Isabel Gauthier. Twenty new tenured and tenure-track faculty members were appointed this year in eleven departments and one program.

Diversifying the Arts and Science faculty is still a work in progress, Dean Dever stated. The diversity of the faculty by ethnicity and by gender decreases as rank increases. Ethnic minorities constitute only 13% of full professors, for example, and women constitute only 21% of full professors.

External funding for faculty research projects increased this year to $47.9 million, a significant increase from last year, despite the effects of the Federal budget sequestration and the subsequent budget cuts to the Federal granting agencies. Dean Dever congratulated all the faculty and staff members who worked on funding proposals. There is a great deal of uncertainty about the amount of future research funding from the Federal government, she continued, given the changing economic situation from year to year.

The Dean’s Office completed 46 faculty actions last year, Dean Dever reported, which is an unusual amount due to the burst of hiring before the economic downturn. After a rigorous and careful review of dossiers, five Arts and Science faculty members were promoted to full professor, eleven were promoted to associate professor with tenure, and twenty-four were reappointed. The quality of work represented in these dossiers was humbling and inspiring, she said.
Arts and Science staff. There are 288 staff members in the College of Arts and Science, Dean Dever explained, one-third of whom are supported by restricted funding sources such as grants, contracts, or faculty members’ research funds, while the rest are supported primarily from the Arts and Science operating budget. Staff members are doing a great job, she continued, especially in light of the recent significant infrastructural changes, such as the new travel system, the new procurement system, and the new paid time off policy. Moreover, many staff members are experiencing the psychological effects of the deep layoffs in the Medical Center. Dean Dever urged faculty members to continue to show support to staff members for the vital work that they do for Vanderbilt.

Finance and Administration. Dean Dever reported that several building projects were finished last year: The HVAC system in Benson Hall was completely redone in order to ameliorate the mold and radon issues in the building; the Communication Studies department moved to 1801 Edgehill; the Managerial Studies program moved into the space in Calhoun vacated by Communication Studies; and a new welding shop was added in the Studio Arts building. Several other renovation projects were also completed, including those in Wilson, Furman, and Neely Auditorium.

Dean Dever explained that many Arts and Science expenses are fixed, including salaries and benefits, student financial aid, and IDS taxes. These fixed expenses constitute a very large portion of the overall budget and make it difficult to significantly alter the budget from year to year. Budget guidance for next year has not yet been received from the Provost’s Office, nor has information about possible salary increases for next year, but the budget situation appears to be similar to last year’s. Dean Dever then introduced Dennis Saucerman, the new business officer for the College of Arts and Science.

Opportunity Vanderbilt Fundraising. Dean Dever emphasized that Vanderbilt’s need-blind admissions policy, established in 2003, and its no-loan student financial aid policy, established in 2008, are critically important for improving and diversifying the student body. More than 16% of the Arts and Science operating budget is devoted to financial aid to students. To help pay this expense, the Opportunity Vanderbilt fundraising campaign has raised almost $50 million for Arts and Science scholarships. From this money, 119 new Arts and Science scholarship funds have been created.

Dean Dever reported that $15.8 million in new money, through gifts and pledges, was raised last year for the College of Arts and Science, an increase from $14.1 million the previous year and from $10.4 million in 2009. In fiscal year 2013, unrestricted giving to Arts and Science totaled more than $2.7 million, from 8,697 individual donors. The average gift was $319. Fundraising is used to help pay for faculty support, student support, and library and technology support. For example, she continued, it requires approximately $2 million to establish a faculty chair, $1 million to support the work of a promising faculty member, $1 million to establish a graduate student fellowship, $300,000 to establish an athletic scholarship, and $100,000 to support a special library collection.

Professor David Weintraub lauded the Opportunity Vanderbilt policy, yet expressed concern that many students, who without the policy would not have been able to attend Vanderbilt, cannot afford to fully participate in Vanderbilt educational opportunities, especially extracurricular activities. The policy might have the unintended effect of creating two Vanderbilts, one for those who can afford to fully participate and one for others. Dean Dever
sympathetically responded that Vanderbilt has not yet understood all of the implications of the Opportunity Vanderbilt policy and acknowledged some problems. Financial aid, for example, is not available for summer study abroad programs, and there are few STEM support services for people of color. Vanderbilt might look to other universities for guidance.

Other topics. Dean Dever explained that Faculty Council at its November meeting requested that two topics be included in this year's State of the College Address, the first of which is campus security and safety. The faculty needs to engage in a serious conversation about safety, she continued, especially after the alleged sexual assault on campus in June and the recent robberies on campus and just off campus. Such a conversation will be started by Provost Richard McCarty and Audrey Anderson at the December Arts and Science Faculty Meeting. The second requested topic is the Chancellor’s strategic planning initiative.

An update on Vanderbilt’s strategic planning initiative was presented by Professor John Geer, who is co-chair of the executive committee of the initiative. He explained that the initiative was announced by Chancellor Zeppos at the Vanderbilt Faculty Assembly last April. Professor Geer emphasized three points: First, the strategic planning initiative is a faculty-driven process, and participation has been impressive. Sixty-nine faculty members have agreed to serve, and there were nine faculty retreats between June and September. Arts and Science is well represented. Second, the end result of the initiative will form the basis for the next Vanderbilt capital fundraising campaign, which Chancellor Zeppos plans to launch next summer. The initiative is not an examination of existing programs, he continued, but focuses on new projects and funding moving forward. Third, the initiative will focus on the four overlapping and interconnected themes of education technologies, healthcare solutions, the undergraduate residential experience, and trans-institutional programs. Each of these four themes has its own steering committee.

Professor Geer further explained that the pace has been quick and the time frame is narrow: Each of the four steering committees issued reports to the executive committee by October 15; these reports are being reviewed by subgroups of the executive committee, which will produce a draft report to Chancellor Zeppos by the end of the calendar year. This report will then be the topic of faculty discussions and town hall meetings during the spring semester, after which it will be presented to the Board of Trust at its June meeting. Professor Geer stated that there is widespread support for Opportunity Vanderbilt among faculty participants in the initiative; it is a source of pride for Vanderbilt. Dean Dever noted that a recent report concluded that it is less expensive for a student to attend Vanderbilt than the University of Tennessee for a Tennessee family earning less than $150,000 per year. She also noted that this is the first time that Vanderbilt as a whole has participated in a strategic planning process.

5. **Announcements from Senior Associate Dean Karen Campbell.**

Dean Campbell presented several announcements. She reminded faculty members of Vanderbilt's Dead Week policy—quizzes, tests, and final exams, and even parts of final exams, are not permitted to be given during the final seven days of the semester (November 29 – December 5 this semester). Essay assignments and lab reports may be due during Dead Week, lab quizzes may be given, and oral presentations may be made, however. She also requested that faculty members adhere to the final exam schedule and to the two-hour exam periods.
Dean Campbell reported that Vanderbilt has established a new policy for taking students on academic trips in the United States. The new policy and checklist are not intended to be onerous, she said, but are meant to reduce and manage risk during Vanderbilt off-campus academic experiences. The policy and checklist have been posted on the Arts and Science website:
http://as.vanderbilt.edu/docs/Risk%20During%20Off-Campus%20Academic%20Experiences.pdf
and
http://as.vanderbilt.edu/docs/Academic%20Travel%20Checklist.pdf

6. **Original Motion Calendar.**

No issues were raised.

7. **Good of the College.**

Dean Dever urged everyone to bring a colleague to the December Arts and Science Faculty Meeting, which is scheduled for Tuesday, December 10, in Wilson 103. As noted earlier, Provost Richard McCarty plans to lead a discussion on campus safety and security.

8. **Adjournment.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lesley Gill,
Secretary of the Faculty