Minutes of the Faculty
College of Arts & Science

May 5, 2009

Dean Carolyn Dever called the meeting to order at 3:13 p.m. in Wilson Hall 103. Approximately 50 faculty members were in attendance.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Faculty Meeting of April 21, 2009.

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

2. Notice of motion to rescind the motion to approve the course additions, revisions, and deletions passed by the A&S faculty at the February 24, 2009, Faculty Meeting.

Professor Tsakirgis, Chair of the Department of Classical Studies, moved to rescind the deletion of seven Classics courses passed by the A&S faculty at the February 24, 2009, Faculty Meeting. The seven courses in question are CLAS 203, 204, 205, 206, 211, 216, and 217. Professor Tsakirgis explained that she has taught these courses for eighteen years, and for all of this time these courses have been crosslisted between Classics and History of Art. Crosslisting, however, is no longer permitted, per A&S faculty legislation, and consequently she had to decide, as Chair of the Department and as instructor of these courses, whether these courses should belong to Classical Studies or to History of Art. She decided earlier this year, in consultation with the DUS of Classical Studies and with members of the Department of History of Art, that these courses should all belong to the same department, and since History of Art has hired two new faculty members whose research and teaching interests include ancient art, architecture, and archeology, it would be a reasonable bookkeeping move in the short term for these courses to belong to History of Art. This decision was precipitous, she continued, and she would like to rescind the deletion of these courses in order for an amicable discussion to take place between all of the affected faculty members regarding the issues involved with the de-crosslisting of these courses.

Professor Aurbach asked, if this motion were to be approved, where in next year’s Catalog would the relevant pre-architecture courses be classified. Professor Tsakirgis responded that the courses would remain in the Classics section of the Catalog, with the exception of the courses being taught in the fall (2009), which would be in the History of Art section.

There were no other questions or comments and the faculty approved the motion to rescind the deletion of CLAS 203, 204, 205, 206, 211, 216, and 217.

3. Review of the Minutes of the Faculty Council Meeting of April 28, 2009.

There were no comments or questions.

4. Approval of the Candidates for Degrees at the end of the spring semester, April 30, 2009.

Associate Dean Fränçille Bergquist presented corrections to the list of degree candidates that had been 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 and Bachelor of Science degrees, as appropriate, on Friday, May 8, 2009; 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 approved by the faculty.

5. Executive Motion Calendar. From the Committee on Educational Programs (CEP):

A. Proposed revision of the History of Art major. There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the revision of the History of Art major.

B. Proposed deletion of the Russian Area Studies major. There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the deletion of the Russian Area Studies major.

C. Proposed revision of the Jewish Studies major, minor, and honors program. There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the revision of the Jewish Studies major, minor, and honors program.

6. Announcements and Presentations.

Dean Dever congratulated Professors M. Donald Hancock and William P. Smith for being appointed Professors Emeriti and thanked them for their dedicated service to Vanderbilt. Professor Hancock joined Vanderbilt in 1979 and was a founding director of the European Studies program. He has written nine books and numerous articles. Professor Smith joined Vanderbilt in 1965 and has been a consummate citizen and scholar. He is a former department chair, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, and Acting Dean of the Graduate School. She wished Don and Bill well, and the faculty applauded them.

Dean Dever thanked Faculty Council for its guidance and all of the faculty members who attended faculty meetings this year for their participation. Faculty colleagues have been a great help to her, she stated, during this economically roller-coaster year. She then thanked Jonathan Bremer for organizing and keeping record of Faculty Council meetings and Faculty Meetings. Dean Dever also thanked Professor Kassian Kovalcheck for serving as Chair of Faculty Council and Professors Brooke Ackerly and Ronnie Steinberg for serving as Secretary of Faculty Council for the 2008-09 academic year. The faculty applauded all of these individuals for their contributions.

Dean Dever then announced that, at a special meeting of the Faculty Council on April 30, Professor Gregg Horowitz was elected Chair of Faculty Council and Professor Michael Bess was elected Secretary of Faculty Council for 2009-10. The faculty congratulated the two officers.

Pre-major advising: Dean Dever stated that the A&S pre-major advising system will be reconfigured in the fall as a centralized pre-major advising center in The Commons. The Advising Center will be staffed by a director and six full-time advisors, who will advise all first-year and first-semester sophomore A&S students, totaling approximately 1250 students. A centralized hub of pre-major advising, she continued, will be better able to help students negotiate the wide-open choices of the AXLE curriculum, which has led to some unexpected advising challenges. The Advising Center will be able to anticipate the questions and needs of students in a flexible and immediate way. Moreover, staffing the Advising Center with recent Vanderbilt Ph.D. graduates will help them transition from being Ph.D. students to tenure-track faculty members during these difficult economic times. While they are student advisors, they will be able to continue their research, teach a first-year writing seminar in the spring semester, and otherwise become better prepared for the job market. An advertisement will be published soon for the Director of the Advising Center, which will be a senior staff position, and shortly afterwards notices will be distributed for the six advisor positions.
Candidates for the six advisor positions will be required to have their Vanderbilt Ph.D. degrees in hand in an A&S discipline. The new advising system, Dean Dever concluded, will be good for undergraduate students and for recent Ph.D. graduates.

In response to questions from faculty members, Dean Dever and Associate Dean John Sloop stated that experienced faculty members will pair up with the six advisors in order to help train them and that there will most likely be a faculty advisory committee. Pre-major advising training for both faculty members and advisors will be a continuous process. The six advisors will have one- to three-year appointments, which can be terminated early if the advisor has been appointed to a tenure-track faculty position, and the salary will be approximately $40,000 per year plus benefits. The Advising Center will be open in the evenings and on weekends, especially in the early fall when advising is critical. Transfer students will be advised by telephone in early summer and then assigned to a department in which they have expressed interest. Vanderbilt faculty members have other opportunities besides pre-major advising to interact with first-year students—Vanderbilt is committed to a living-learning model of education, which is what The Commons is all about. There are also other opportunities for faculty members to gain research funds, including being a Vanderbilt Visions VUceotor and evaluating assessment essays. The new pre-major advising system will allow faculty members to engage more with upperclass students and especially with majors. Dean Dever and Associate Dean Sloop emphasized that the details of the new pre-major advising system are still being worked out and that more information will be forthcoming. Ideas and questions regarding the new system are welcome and would be appreciated. Please send them to Dean Dever, with a cc to Associate Deans John Sloop and Fräncille Bergquist.

7. Original Motion Calendar.
No issues were raised.

8. Good of the College.
No issues were raised.


The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marshall C. Eakin,
Secretary of the Faculty