Minutes
NVCC College Senate
September 20, 2018, 1 PM
Brault 321


Senate Chair Lisa Stelle called the meeting to order.

DR. RALLS welcomed the Senate to a new year. He thanked the Senators for taking on this important role.

- Dr. Ralls asked that any questions or rumors be brought to him so he can confirm or dispel them and start a conversation.
- The Executive team’s current focus is what our enrollment numbers mean for our given budget. The fall numbers are important as they flow into the spring numbers. This makes budget planning more accurate.
  - Summer enrollment was up.
  - Our fall numbers are down but the numbers are actually good news. The College had anticipated a 3.5% decline in enrollment but the actual decline is approximately 2%. The entire VCCS system has seen falling enrollments and some of the schools are down quite a bit (8-10%). So NVCC is in a good position.
  - Fall enrollments got off to a slow start but picked up rapidly over the summer. The College has been focusing on retention by promoting on-campus activities to boost enrollment. The College has also increased monies allocated to financial aid to help students bridge gaps so they are not unenrolled in classes. This strategy allows for more supplemental funds to be available in the late summer than before. Germanna has a similar program and, along with NVCC, had some of the best retention numbers among the VCCS.
  - The College is doing a better job thinking ahead to make sure that funds are available when needed using a biennium budget process. The College is being conservative to avoid negative adjustments like hiring freezes
  - The Discipline Groups and campuses were asked to request money for equipment early. The process is long and the College wants to make sure that faculty have the resources they need in the classroom and that we don’t lose funds at the end of the year. If equipment is ordered late in the cycle, it may not come in within the current-year budget which means that the money in the current-year budget for that equipment will be forfeited and the cost of the equipment will come out of next year’s budget. We want to avoid this situation. The VCCS approved most of the requests in the past few days. The vast majority of requests will be funded. Those that will not be funded include requests that are not within this funding category (e.g., requests for curtains or...
blinds; requests for supplies). Dr. Ralls encourages any campus or discipline group to ask for those funds from other budgets, such as the operational budget. He made a specific note that if faculty are short on supplies (e.g., markers, beakers, etc.), they should talk to their provost as these supplies are funded through the campus operations budgets.

- If new equipment needs arise, ask for the money. It will be funded as money becomes available. Want to avoid the “mad rush” at the end of the year. The process is slow, so we have to start early.
- Dr. Ralls would like help from the Senate with how we can “bend the curve” on textbook costs. He said we are doing a good job with adopting less expensive textbook options for our students such as OER but he thinks we can do more to help students with rapidly rising textbook costs.
- Dr. Ralls suggested an ad hoc task force or committee to address the “islands of disadvantage” in our service area. Our region has 4 of the richest counties in the US but 20% of the poor families in Virginia also live in our area. The differences in income, unemployment, and life spans between the wealthy and the poor are stark. Dr. Ralls believes these areas of need provide an opportunity for NVCC. Transportation issues for students, getting NOVA access to these areas (sometimes called “higher education deserts”) will all be among the issues that the ad hoc committee would consider. He referenced VCU research on Islands of Disadvantage and said anyone interested in the research could ping him for a copy of the report.

INTRODUCTIONS of Senate Executive Team: Chair Lisa Stelle, Vice-Chair Donna Minnich, Secretary Ashlie Warnick, and Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes.

BARBARA HOPKINS, Curriculum Development, presented information about the NOVA-Mason ADVANCE program including the August Performance Report and Policy Update. The Performance Report and Policy Update will come out monthly. The August report is the last report reflecting the fall term. The September report will concern spring enrollments in the program.

- On 8/31, more than 400 students had expressed interest in ADVANCE by completing a Declaration. The number is more than 500 today.
- After a student completes the Declaration form, it must be approved by the ADVANCE team. As of 8/31, 299 students had been approved. Denials were due to the student having more than the 30 credits allowed for entry into the program, not having the required GPA, or not satisfying Mason admission requirements, such as a criminal background check. So far, 44 students have been approved for Spring 2019.
- Of those approved for the Fall term, 129 students are active in the ADVANCE program. They have signed the forms to join the program, have gone through pre-orientation and are currently enrolled in one of the ADVANCE program’s pathways. The team is following up on those who were approved but who have not signed or done the pre-orientation.
- Senator Mary Moseley asked if the program was meeting expectations. Barbara Hopkins said that consultants had anticipated that ~289 students would participate in the program. She noted that the current enrollment is pretty close to half of that and those numbers are with no
advertising (a soft opening). Advertising for the program has now begun and enrollments should increase.

- Most of the students enrolled in ADVANCE are at the Annandale and Loudoun campuses.
- Success coaches for the ADVANCE program will be placed on each campus starting the first week in October. Some of the coaches will float among campuses based on enrollment numbers.
- Senator Jill Caporale asked how faculty, as advisers, should help students with ADVANCE. Is there someone to send advisees to for more information? Barbara Hopkins said that much of the information that a student needs is on the ADVANCE webpage on NVCC.edu. There is information about eligibility requirements, pathways available, milestones and requirements. There is also the phone number and email to reach a Success Coach. The Success Coaches – on campus starting in October or through the phone/email on the website – can answer more in-depth questions a student might have. Counselors at each campus have also had ADVANCE training and information sessions about the program so they are a resource too.
- Discussion about how ADVANCE interacts with competitive programs like Nursing or Physical Therapy. All students – in ADVANCE or not – have to apply to gain admission to NVCC’s competitive programs, like nursing. An ADVANCE student selecting the Nursing Pathway must still be accepted into that program. A student who gets accepted to the NVCC Nursing program, is in ADVANCE and completes the milestones, do not have to apply again to the Mason RN to BSN nursing program.
- 30 credit maximum requirement is a bit confusing as AP, IB, and other test-based college credit is not included in that total but dual enrollment courses are.
- Students in ADVANCE are non-degree students at Mason while at NVCC. When they graduate from NVCC (encouraged but not technically required) and enter Mason they are moved into degree-seeking status. The reason for this is that a student can only have one home institution at a time for financial aid. Non-degree students can get a Mason ID, use Mason facilities, attend Mason events, and participate in student life. They can pay for a parking pass for Mason. If they take a co-enrolled class (a class that is part of the 2 year NVCC pathway but is offered only at Mason), the student would have to pay Mason tuition
  - Discussion about how tuition in the ADVANCE agreement between GMU and NVCC works with the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area which GMU and NVCC are both part of. Cross-registration under the Consortium agreement has students pay their home school’s tuition rate.
- ADVANCE Tech Task Force – looking at STEM and technical degrees to add to pathways
- Several positions related to ADVANCE are being filled:
  - Coordinator of Student Services for ADVANCE (Mason employee) will oversee the Success Coaches
  - Director of ADVANCE (Mason employee) will report to Mel Schiavelli and Michelle Marks at Mason.
  - These positions are funded by both institutions; Mason is doing the hiring with NVCC input.
- Faculty Summit on 10/8 @ Mason where NVCC and Mason faculty discuss issues relevant to their disciplines. Invites are going out soon. But Barbara Hopkins encouraged interested faculty to reach out to Mason counterparts to work together, even outside the Summit.
• The completion of the IT Pathway is a priority
• ADVANCE will only be with Mason. No plans to have similar arrangements with other 4-year partners.
• But Barbara’s office is working to ensure that the informed pathways for our top 5 transfer partners and schools with a guaranteed transfer agreement are accurate and maintained.

NEW BUSINESS:

1) Discussion of Senate Membership

Senate membership, aside from Presidential Appointees, comes from the Campus Forums. An older version of the NVCC Constitution and Bylaws of the College Forum (2009) stated that senators would be those who were the top vote-getters in the forum elections. That provision was replaced in a 2016 Constitution and Bylaws that calls for the Forums to elect their Senate representatives from among their membership. The old Constitution is still posted on the Senate website while the current (2016) one is posted in the Faculty Handbook. At least some campuses have been using the older method rather than the current procedure. To correct this problem, 2 proposals were considered:

a) Reconstitute the Senate now by asking Forums to hold elections to choose their Senate representatives from their Forum membership

b) Continue with the Senate as currently seated and use the correct method following the March 2019 Forum elections

Chair Lisa Stelle and Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes stated that they had contacted Robyn Seabrook with the legal team and either option would be acceptable from a legal standpoint.

Senator Lisa Fitzpatrick made a motion to adopt the second proposal above (continue with the Senate as currently seated and follow the correct method in the future). Vice Chair Donna Minnich seconded the motion. Discussion about the proposal commenced. Senator Robert Johnson questioned whether the outcome would be different if the proper procedures had been followed. The Annandale Campus Forum chair, Arthur Schuhart, who does not serve on Senate stated that he believes that following the wrong procedure had taken an opportunity from him to sit on the Senate. Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes stated that the question was just about the current Senate since the proper procedures would be followed going forward under both proposals. There was also discussion about the classification of the new Associate Dean positions. AVP for HR Charlotte Calobrisi stated that the Associate Deans are classified as Professional Faculty. A vote was taken on the motion by a show of hands. 16 Senators voted Yea; 16 Senators voted Nay; 3 abstained. Since there was no majority, the motion failed.

Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes made a motion to ask Campus Forum Councils to elect their Senate representatives for the current Senate’s term. The motion passed without discussion on a voice vote with no opposition (2 abstentions). Forums are asked to elect their Senate members and to email those names to Chair Lisa Stelle before October 5.

2) Discussion of the Reward and Recognition Programs: Teaching Faculty; Administrative & Professional Faculty; and Classified Staff.
The Teaching Faculty R&R program was instituted in 2013 while the AF/PF and Classified Staff programs began in 2016. The committees were formed from the Senate. This discussion is about what worked and what needs changing.

Senator Janet Giannotti discussed the Classified Staff Reward and Recognition program. She stated that there are 820 Classified Staff and most are not on campus. The nominees were not vetted at the campus level. The committee set up three tiers for rewards ($2000; $1000; $500) and one for recognition ($75 Amazon gift card). There were 110 nominations for 90 individuals. Emails were monitored by the committee as they came in. The criteria for the award was set by HR (to mirror the criteria for the Teaching Faculty program). The committee created a rubric and pre-screened nominations to assign each a value based on that rubric. Ultimately, 54 rewards were given (25 @ $2000; 19 @ $1000; 10 @ $500), 24 gift cards were awarded, and 12 nominees received no reward or recognition.

One problem with the process was that the quality of the nominations varied widely. One suggested change is to change the form to add text boxes below each criterion to encourage those completing the form to provide specific support and details.

Senator Jennifer Horton said one problem with the program is public knowledge about who is on the committee. Names of those on the Teaching Faculty Reward and Recognition Program are not made public.

Senator Pat Gordon suggested getting rid of the tiers. Or giving short explanations along with the awards to explain why the winner won.

Parliamentarian Patrick Dawes asked for a Motion or to move along to other items on the agenda.

Senator Charlotte Calobrisi said that she wants to continue with the committees for the Reward & Recognition programs for Administrative/Professional Faculty and Classified Staff. The Teaching Faculty Reward and Recognition program has its own policies. She suggested setting up a Committee to revise, if necessary, the AF/PF and Classified Staff protocols. Senator Jennifer Horton suggested that a more meaningful evaluation might be done by those on the campus who know the nominee’s work.

A motion was made to create an Ad-Hoc Committee to evaluate the current procedures for the Reward and Recognition programs for Administrative/Professional Faculty and for Classified Staff. Motion was seconded by Senator Robert Johnson. Non-senators can serve on ad-hoc committees. Motion passed by voice vote with unanimous consent. Information will be forthcoming from the Chair about the new committee.

Discussion about the Reward and Recognition program for Administrative and Professional Faculty was tabled until the next Senate meeting. Senator Christiane Silva will present that information.

3) ALICIA TUCKER presented information from the Personnel Services Committee about Teaching Faculty’s role in advising.

A 5/17/18 draft of a proposal about Teaching Faculty’s Role in Advising was circulated among the Personnel Services Committee membership. The concern is that the language of the proposal is vague and appears to be changing faculty responsibilities. The Personnel Services Committee believes
that such changes should include the advice and recommendations of the Personnel Services Committee and the Senate. The Personnel Services Committee is concerned about, among other things, whether a proposed new 2 hour/week commitment to advising would be part of a teaching faculty member’s 10 hours/week of office hours; the strain on faculty to work 2 hours/week in the Advising Center during “peak” advising times when “peak” times for advising are also “peak” times for faculty’s teaching responsibilities; how well non-expert/non-professional advisors (faculty advising outside their discipline) will do advising students in disciplines they are unfamiliar with (are faculty really helping the student in this situation?); how using faculty to “triage” in the Advising Center would be a waste of resources. The Personnel Services Committee has been informed that the Administrative Council will take up the proposal on October 1.

A motion was made to ask the Administrative Council and Executive Team to refer the proposal to Personnel Services for review and recommendations and then to the Senate for review and recommendations before it is considered or enacted by Administrative Council. The motion was amended to refer to the entire Advising Plan, not just one document draft. Amendment passed. Amended motion to ask the Administrative Council and the Executive Team to refer the Advising Plan to the Personnel Services Committee for review and recommendation and then to the Senate for review and recommendation before enacting the Advising Policy. Motion passed by unanimous consent with no abstentions.

4) Report from Virginia Faculty Senate

JILL CAPORALE explained that the membership of the Virginia Faculty Senate comes from teaching faculty at colleges across Virginia. She has served and is willing to continue serving but an additional teaching faculty Senator should also serve on the Virginia Faculty Senate. The Virginia Faculty Senate allows for the exchange of ideas and the enrichment of the academic environment. A motion to table the discussion was made but Senator Jill Caporale stated that this decision needs to be made soon as the next Virginia Faculty Senate meeting will take place soon after the NVCC Senate’s next meeting. Senator Mary Bramley made a motion to have the Chair run an online nominating and voting process for choosing who represents NVCC on the Virginia Faculty Senate. Motion passed by voice vote. [This process will be delayed as the Senate membership may change as the forums choose their Senate representatives; see New Business #1 above]. Senator Barbara Canfield also suggested that information could be solicited from the Campus Forum about what issues were important to teaching faculty for presentation at the Virginia Faculty Senate.

5) Forum Council Reports – TABLED

MEETING ADJOURNED. NEXT MEETING: Thursday October 18th 12:30-3, Brault 321