## VSU Department Heads Council Meeting Odum Library, Rm. 1604 Minutes – May 27, 2008 - 4:00 pm

<u>Attendees</u>: Jim Baxter, Deb Briihl for Bob Bauer, Carl Cates, Ed Chatelain, Robert Gannon, Don Leech, Rey Martinez, A. Blake Pearce, L. Wayne Plumly, Mylan Redfern, Paul Riggs, James Shrader, Viki Soady, Mark Smith

Guests: Louis Levy, Jane Kinney, James Black

- 1. The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm by Chairperson Mark Smith. The first order of business was consideration of the March 25, 2008 meeting minutes. Without addition or correction, the minutes were accepted to be filed.
- 2. Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Louis Levy addressed the Council. His remarks included:
  - a. Dr. Connie Richards had been selected and accepted the position of Dean of the College of Arts and Science. She will begin her post in July. Dr. Levy complimented the search procedure and expressed his appreciation to all who were involved.
  - b. The Council was invited to make suggestions to President Zaccari for comments to be included in the "transition handbook" he is developing for the new President. Dr. Levy suggested statements regarding the role and function of the Council would be appropriate.
  - c. Dr. Levy discussed the new requirement for entering freshman and transfer students, who are not exempt based on ACT or SAT scores, to register for the Regents Examinations in their first semester at VSU. He asked Council members to encourage faculty advisors to stress this new requirement during summer orientations.
  - d. Department Heads should soon be receiving grade distribution reports from the Registrar's Office. Dr. Levy remarked that these reports should be used in the formative assessment of faculty members to help them improve.
  - e. Dr. Levy raised the challenge of how to best evaluate advising. He remarked this is a difficult task. Council members stated that a duplicate advising form is being used to document proper advising, but sometimes even after students have been advised and their flag lifted, they enroll for other courses. Dr. Levy said that "advisor error" was not a good reason for course substitutions; however documentation of proper advising is essential. All degree checklists should be reviewed to reflect the current requirements for each degree program. Dr. Baxter mentioned he regularly advises student to request their graduation check at least two semesters prior to their anticipated date of graduation. Dr. Martinez suggested that perhaps more emphasis could be placed on the evaluation of advising in the Senior Survey that all graduates are asked to complete.
  - f. Dr. Levy relayed a request from Dr. Christy Coons Yates for Department Heads to update progress on a monthly basis for all departmental initiatives, especially those that have been funded, in the strategic planning database.

- g. Dr. Levy mentioned the need for Department Heads to individually meet with faculty members regarding their annual performance evaluations. If a faculty member had received an "unsatisfactory" rating during the Spring evaluations, then a formal or informal follow-up meeting should be held the subsequent Fall semester to assess the progress that had been made. He suggested that two reviews during the year should provide the documentation needed to then determine whether or not a faculty member successfully met the evaluation criteria for the next annual evaluation. Dr. Wayne Plumly asked Dr. Levy to clarify the need to evaluate a non-tenured faculty member who had received a terminal contract. Dr. Levy stated that an evaluation need not be completed but the evaluation form should be completed for that faculty member with the statement that this was to be that faculty member's terminal year.
- h. Dr. Ed Chatelain asked Dr. Levy to remark on the status of the implementation of the "Turnitin" plagiarism Internet initiative. Dr. Levy stated that the process was still in the "pilot stage", and if the Council members knew of more faculty members who wished to pilot the service this Fall semester to please contact Dr. Shari Gravett. Dr. Don Leech remarked that WebCT Vista has also developed a similar service, and he believed some faculty members were going to implement the service in the Fall semester.
- i. Dr. Levy closed by thanking the Council for their collective and individual contributions to the work of the university.
- 3. Dr. Jane Kinney addressed the Council regarding the upcoming SACS accreditation process with the following remarks:
  - a. Beginning with the Fall 2008 semester, Department Heads must have formal evaluations of all full-time and part-time faculty members. This requirement means that all adjunct instructors, on and off-campus, who teach classes, must be given a formal evaluation. A document that described the procedures that other institutions have implemented was shared with the Council. Dr. Kinney suggested that a common mechanism for all Department Heads to utilize may be the best approach to meet this requirement. Dr. Ed Chatelain asked if this expectation included the "E-Core" classes delivered by the USG. Dr. Kinney replied that those courses were not part of VSU and thus we were not responsible for conducting the evaluation of the faculty teaching those courses.
  - b. After much discussion on various approaches to evaluate part-time faculty, Dr. Viki Soady moved to adopt "Part A Teaching and Instruction" of the current VSU faculty evaluation form as the means to evaluate part-time faculty. Dr. Bob Gannon seconded the motion. The motion passed.
  - c. Dr. Soady then moved that the instructions to "Part A" be modified to incorporate the directions that part-time faculty will be required to complete only this section of the evaluation instrument as part of their annual evaluation. Dr. Wayne Plumly seconded the motion. The motion passed. Dr. Redfern, who serves as the Council's Liaison to the Faculty Senate, will take this action to the Senate for consideration.
- 4. Mr. James Black, Vice President for Finance and Administration then addressed the Council with regards to upcoming changes in purchasing procedures. His remarks included:

- a. The directive from the Chancellor's Office is that all business transactions must be "totally transparent and totally accountable".
- b. An email message had been sent to all Deans, Directors, Department Heads and Budget Managers with a listing of dates and times a special training class on the use of the P-Card will be held at VSU. This class is mandatory for the aforementioned administrators with budget responsibilities.
- c. Mr. Black also referenced the new mandatory reporting procedure for any "suspected malfeasance" with regards to business transactions. Failure to comply with this directive could leave an individual liable for prosecution.
- d. The issue of the acceptance of gratuities from vendors was also discussed. Mr. Black informed the Council that vendors are being required to complete a disclosure form in which they must report individuals who have accepted invitations to lunches, dinners, or accepted tickets to events. Public employees must not be perceived as having a conflict of interest with vendors. The bottom line is not to accept anything from anyone.
- e. Deadlines for the return of cash advances will be strictly adhered to in the future and failure to meet the deadline must be reported.
- f. Dr. Paul Riggs asked if greater use of "golden rod" forms might be coming given the controversies that now exist regarding the use of the P-Card for purchases. Mr. Black commented that greater use of this form may occur in the future. He commented that he is committed to helping Department Heads conduct business as easily and quickly as possible. P-Cards will remain an option; however its use must be carefully scrutinized since there is little room for error and could lead to legal action for inappropriate purchases. Mr. Black remarked that everyone needed to keep good records of all purchases.
- g. Mr. Black ended his remarks by informing the Council that a new "ethics statement" to be signed annually by state employees will likely be disseminated this Fall.
- 5. Chair Mark Smith ended the meeting by announcing that Council meetings during the 2008-09 academic year will remain on the last Tuesday of the month. He asked members to send to him any remarks or commentary to be forwarded to President Zaccari for possible inclusion in his transition handbook. In closing Dr. Smith asked the Council to please submit to him ideas for Council activities for next year.
- 6. The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reynaldo L. Martinez Jr. Vice Chair