

Faculty Senate

Year End Committee Report 2021-2022

Committee: Senate Affairs

Chair(s): Debra Friedman, Cindy Reinhart-King

Members: Karen Bloch, Nicole Cobb, Eric Grogan, Robert Miller, Julia Phillippi, Marcy Singer-Gabella, and Elliot McCarter.

EC Liaison: Rebecca Swan

Standing Charge: To be concerned with all matters pertaining to the functioning of the Senate. Responsible for a continuing review of the Rules of the Senate, recommending new rules when appropriate, and assisting in the interpretation of existing rules. Considers proposed revisions of the Constitution of the Faculty Assembly and Senate when this duty is assigned by the Senate.

Focused Charges for this Academic Year

Impact of VU/VUMC Legal Separation

1. Closely monitor and contribute to the discussion over the 2021-22 academic year of issues arising from the split between VU and VUMC.
2. Work with SPAF and Faculty Life committees to consider the need for a new standing committee, or a change in the charge of a current committee, that would monitor on an ongoing basis the academic relationship between the VU and VUMC.
3. Present an overview of the committee's initial discussions and recommendation in the January or February Senate meeting.
4. If substantial changes are recommended, prepare and present a Resolution to the Faculty Senate for considering during the April or May Senate meeting.
5. In your final report for the year, make recommendations for the committee to consider or follow-up on in the 2022-23 academic year.

The SAC held a number of meetings with its members, SPAF, Faculty Life and the Executive Committees around this theme. This was presented to Senate in our interim report in January and a follow up in March.

The following is a summary of the background and recommendations:

Background: Vanderbilt University (VU) and Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) became separate legal financial entities on April 30, 2016. While there are many benefits from this separation for both entities there are potential unintended consequences.

Recommendation: As the Faculty Senate functions as "One Vanderbilt", the Senate Affairs Committee recommends to the Executive Committee that an ad hoc committee be organized to further evaluate the benefits and challenges of the VU/VUMC separation, particularly in response to the impact on the missions of education and research. Further, we recommend that the committee focus on the following charges:

Faculty Senate

- Evaluate challenges to the educational mission resulting from the VU/VUMC separation. This should include an analysis of challenges of mentorship and training of VU students by VUMC faculty and VU School of Medicine students by VU faculty.
- Evaluate challenges to the research mission resulting from the VU/VUMC separation. This should include an analysis of challenges resulting from the need for subcontracts and impact on indirect costs, limited institutional submissions and ease of collaboration between faculty.
- Develop a prioritization strategy for addressing these challenges, and any others that that the committee may identify.
- Develop a strategy whereby recommendations to address challenges identified may be appropriately operationalized. This would include, but not be limited to engaging both VU and VUMC leadership for further consideration.
- Ongoing, evaluate, as needed, future policy changes in VU and/or VUMC that result in challenges to the missions of the other institution or collaborative work arising from separation, providing input to leadership on the potential challenges.

Grievance Policies

6. Work with the Provost's office, the Office of the General Counsel, and other internal offices as appropriate to examine the relationship between the roles of a faculty grievance committee and the Equal Opportunity and Access office (or the Title IX office) if there are allegations of discrimination/harassment/retaliation raised in a grievance.
7. If necessary, work with the Faculty Manual committee to develop clarifying language about the interplay between these two processes for the Faculty Manual.

The SAC leadership had a series of meetings surrounding this issue and the Senate Affairs Committee is currently working with Equal Access, the Office of General Counsel, and the Office of Faculty Affairs to further clarify and streamline the process for addressing reports of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation which may be made during the grievance process. This work builds on last year's clarification in the Faculty Manual for allegations which include sexual harassment as defined under the USDOE regulations implementing Title IX.

We plan to bring a proposal to the Faculty Senate next fall after further work over the summer.

Suggestions for Future Charges/Actions

1. Follow up on the formation of a committee to explore the impact of the VU/VUMC legal separation on mission
2. Further explore strategies to clarify and streamline the process for addressing reports of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation which may be made during the grievance process