

Department Heads Council

September 30, 2008

Odum Library 1604

Members in Attendance: Bob Bauer (Psychology & Counseling), Jim Baxter (Chemistry), Carl Cates (Communication Arts), Ed Chatelain (Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences), Fred Downing (Philosophy & Religious Studies), Bob Gannon (Biology), Mike Griffin (Kinesiology & Physical Education), Phyllis Holland (Management), Don Leech (Curriculum, Leadership, & Technology), Rej Martinez, Jr. (Adult & Career Education), Lynn Minor (Early Childhood & Special Education), A. Blake Pearce (Art), Jim Peterson (Political Science), Mylan Redfern (Mathematics & Computer Science), Paul Riggs (History), J.A. Shrader (Music), Mark Smith (English), Barbara Stanley (Middle, Secondary, Reading & Deaf Education), Cindy Tori (Marketing and Economics)

Guests: Dr. Patrick Schloss, President

Dr. Louis Levy, Vice President for Academic Affairs

Ms. Traycee Martin, Assistant Vice President, Financial Services

Dr. Mark Smith, Chair of the DHC, opened the meeting at 4:01 pm. He introduced Dr. Patrick Schloss, VSU President. Dr. Schloss made appreciative comments about the contributions made by department heads in managing their academic units. He then moved on to remarks about both the FY 2009 and FY 2010 budgets. For the current fiscal year, VSU's budget cuts amounted to 5.6%. Most of the cuts came from the non-academic areas. For example, Business and Finance incurred cuts totaling \$1.9 million. Some academic departments that had not spent their full amounts in the previous two years experienced cuts in their operating budgets. Tentative thinking is already taking place in the event that cuts would be necessary in the next fiscal year. He acknowledged that, if those cuts are necessary, there are few easy cuts that the university can make. However, early planning includes discussion about a strong push to increase enrollment, consideration of setting up a selective number of "super sections," and a search for further "efficiencies."

Dr. Levy then supplemented these remarks with additional perspectives on the budget. He mentioned that Academic Affairs had absorbed \$760,000 of overall cuts that totaled \$3 million. It had been necessary to cut faculty development funds by \$50,000. The library's new funds, which were requested in an initiative, were cut by \$90,000. However, GIL express will continue operation through the end of fall semester. Further, he has appointed a high level committee to study faculty salaries. In particular, the committee will examine the Faculty Salary Model to see how it accounts for faculty productivity and longevity. He also made comments about searches for faculty positions. In September he released seventeen positions so that the search and hiring

process could begin. In November, he will take another look to see if additional positions could be released so that more faculty searches could resume.

Dr. Schloss then made a few additional comments. He wanted to mention that he was creating a Policy on Policies Committee that will create a “policy on policies” document. The charge of the committee is to help ensure consistency in creating and administering university policy.

Dr. Smith then introduced Ms. Martin. She passed out the new Gratuities Policy (802.14). VSU both will change its policy to conform with this new Board policy and will insert that change in the Employee Handbook. She also underlined the priority of the P (Purchasing) Card and observed that an audit of it will take place later in the year. She reminded the group that PeopleSoft Financials V8 will be activated on October 8. Workshops to train budget managers are currently taking place. One notable change will be that monthly budgets will now contain encumbered travel money. They have not done so for a number of years.

Dr. Smith then asked for consideration of the minutes of August 26, 2008. The DHC approved them unanimously, without amendment. He noted that Dr. Martinez is currently making plans for a workshop for department heads on the topic of faculty evaluations. Dr. Martinez then requested volunteers to comprise this workshop. The next DHC meeting is October 28, 2008, 4:00 pm, in Odum Library 1604.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Peterson, Recording Secretary