Dean Lauren Benton called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. in Wilson Hall 103. Approximately 60 faculty members were in attendance.

1. **Approval of the Minutes of the Faculty Meeting of December 6, 2016.**

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

2. **Conversation with Provost Susan Wente.**

   In response to questions from faculty members, Provost Susan Wente offered the following explanations:

   **Promotion and Tenure Review Committee (PTRC).** Provost Wente stated that the role and composition of the PTRC are stipulated in the bylaws of the *Faculty Manual* (Part II, Chapter 3, Section D1c), and its role has remained the same for many years. The membership of the PTRC is available through a VU-password protected link on the Provost’s website (https://www.vanderbilt.edu/provost/committees/index.php). Members of the PTRC evaluate a dean’s recommendation of tenure in order to ensure that the granting of such tenure upholds university standards. The PTRC does not normally review a tenure case from scratch.

   **Authorizing tenure track searches.** Provost Wente explained that she authorizes tenure track searches in May or June for the following fall based on recommendations from deans. When authorizing a search, she does not differentiate requests that come from a department from those that come from an interdisciplinary program. Departments and programs, including small programs, should think creatively about faculty hires and develop three to five year strategic hiring plans. The hiring plan should take into consideration the context of the college and the university and should strive to build the faculty in new ways. Programs should, for example, leverage the Vanderbilt Academic Strategic Plan, Immersion Vanderbilt, and the DIVE program and consider joint appointments. Academic programs should aim for excellence and not seek a faculty search just to replace a departing faculty member or just for the upcoming academic year.

   **Conflict of Interest form.** Provost Wente stated that she will check to see if the Conflict of Interest form has changed and to ascertain what constitutes “external activity.”

   **Unionization drives.** Provost Wente explained that at present there are two unionization drives at Vanderbilt—one for non-tenure track faculty members and one for graduate students—and the two efforts are at different stages and Vanderbilt’s position differs on each. *Unionization effort for non-tenure track faculty members:* She explained that last
Thursday (February 16) the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 205 filed a representation petition at the National Labor Relations Board, seeking to unionize non-tenure track faculty members and postdoctoral fellows whose appointments are in Arts and Science, Peabody, Blair, the Divinity School, and the Graduate School and who are currently teaching at least one course. Provost Wente also explained that she distributed an email message to faculty members the next day that provided information about this unionization effort, and she reiterated points from the email message: Vanderbilt respects and honors all members of its faculty and their rights to consider unionization as an option to pursue. Further, Vanderbilt remains committed to the career development and path of all faculty members and post-doctoral fellows. She said that Vanderbilt will be providing the faculty with factual information in order to help faculty members who are considering unionization make a fully informed decision. Information has been posted on a website [https://vanderbilt.edu/provost/faculty-unionization/](https://vanderbilt.edu/provost/faculty-unionization/) that includes a FAQ section. **Unionization effort for graduate students.** Provost Wente explained that a petition has not been filed yet with the NLRB to represent graduate students. She emphasized that Vanderbilt is committed to its graduate students and to ensure that they are well supported, mentored, and cared for. Vanderbilt also wants to make sure that graduate students have all of the facts available to them about their possible unionization. The university’s position, Provost Wente continued, is that graduate students are best served union free. Education should be the highest priority and inserting a union between students and mentors is problematic.

**Vanderbilt’s long-term strategy for international education and immigration.** In response to the election of President Trump and his executive order on immigration, Provost Wente stated that Vanderbilt has posted information and links to resources on a website ([https://www.vanderbilt.edu/provost/international.php](https://www.vanderbilt.edu/provost/international.php)). She explained that Vanderbilt has been actively reacting to the decisions that have been made, because it is impossible to foresee every possible situation. Issues and needs will be addressed as they arise in a compassionate and supportive way. Vanderbilt, for example, has pledged that it will not divulge information about international students and scholars without a court order, and International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) has been working with Vanderbilt’s general counsel to help anyone affected by the executive order. Further, Vanderbilt has signed an amicus brief that makes its position clear that the executive order inhibits Vanderbilt’s ability to teach, learn, and do research. She explained that it is too soon to determine whether the executive order will have an effect on graduate student applications, especially from international students, because the application deadline this year was before the declaration of the order and there has been some flux in graduate applications across programs over the past several years. Vanderbilt will be pro-active trying to recruit international students, as pro-active as universities in the Northeast and in California.

**Staff well being.** Provost Wente explained that the Chancellor’s Strategic Planning Committee on Mental Health and Wellbeing, co-chaired by Professors Donald Brady and Velma Murry, is investigating ways in which Vanderbilt can further support the mental health and wellbeing of faculty, staff, and students. She stated that it is likely that the committee will present recommendations for new types of resources for faculty and staff.
members. The committee has held several town hall meetings to solicit input. Further information about the committee is available here: https://www.vanderbilt.edu/chancellor/committees/chancellors-strategic-planning-committee-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/

Faculty members thanked Provost Wente for her information.

3. Introduction to Vanderbilt’s DIVE (Design as an Immersive Vanderbilt Experience).

Lori Troxel (associate professor of the practice of civil and environmental engineering), Derek Bruff (director, Center for Teaching), and Clive Mentzel (director, Office of Active Citizenship and Service) presented an overview of Vanderbilt’s new DIVE (Design as an Immersive Vanderbilt Experience) program, which is this decade’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for reaccreditation purposes. DIVE aims to increase student exposure to design thinking, skills, and methodologies through immersive, mentored projects in multidisciplinary teams. Such exposure will provide students with a set of tools to solve real-world problems on campus and in the community. Design thinking, or human centered design, can be used by people in any discipline, not just in engineering, the end result of which can be a new product or a process. It starts with empathy, getting to know the end users of the product or process in order to understand their needs, and then finding ways to meet those needs through an iterative process of defining the problem, brainstorming, prototyping, and testing.

Vanderbilt’s DIVE program includes Boot Camps and Deep DIVE Experiences. A DIVE Boot Camp is a basic introduction to design thinking and is open to all Vanderbilt students, staff members, and faculty members. It will be offered several times per year, and the pilot Boot Camp is scheduled for March 25, between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., at the Wond’ry. Interested persons may sign up for a Boot Camp at the DIVE website (https://www.vanderbilt.edu/immersion/dive/). There are three different types of Deep DIVE Experiences—Design-Enhanced Courses, Co-Curricular Projects, and a University Course. For the first type, faculty members can build design thinking into their existing or new courses in order to resolve open-ended or poorly defined problems. The Center for Teaching (CFT) can help faculty members incorporate design thinking into their courses through its Course Design Institute, which will have an optional design thinking track this year. Applications for the May 8-10 Institute are due by March 12th. The idea behind Co-Curricular Projects is to apply student centered design methodology, in conjunction with service learning pedagogy, to enable students to address social problems and challenges, such as gentrification, food waste, and the lived experience of refugees in Nashville. These non-credit granting projects offer students an opportunity to make a difference in the world. Third, Professors Rogers Hall and David Owens will team teach a university course, “Design Thinking, Design Doing,” in fall 2017, that will be an introduction to theories and practices of design. The course will be open to all Vanderbilt undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

Professor Troxel encouraged faculty members to attend a DIVE Boot Camp, add a human-centered design project to courses, and enroll in CFT’s Course Design Institute.
Faculty members may also follow @VandyDIVE on Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook, and email questions or comments to dive@vanderbilt.edu. In response to a question, she stated that it would be appropriate for an existing Vanderbilt research or faculty group to incorporate design thinking into their projects. Faculty members thanked the three presenters for the information about the DIVE program.


Professor David Weintraub, chair of the Faculty Council, asked if there were any comments or questions about the Minutes of the two Council meetings or the Council-approved new and revised course descriptions; there were none.

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

A. Proposed revision of the Mathematics major. Professor Weintraub explained that the Mathematics department proposes that at least 15 credit hours of the Mathematics major be earned at Vanderbilt. There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the revision of the Mathematics major.

B. Proposed revision of the Asian Studies major and creation of a Minor in South Asian Language and Culture. Professor Weintraub explained that the Asian Studies interdisciplinary program proposes a new South Asia track (“area of concentration” in the Catalog) within the Asian Studies major and a new Minor in South Asian Language and Culture. There were no comments or questions, and the faculty approved the revision of the Asian Studies major and the creation of a new minor.

6. Approval of the Candidates for Degrees at the end of the fall semester, December 17, 2016.

Associate Dean Roger Moore moved that the faculty of the College of Arts and Science recommend to the Board of Trust that it confer upon these candidates their degrees (a list of degree candidates is attached to these Minutes). His motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

7. Original Motion Calendar.

No issues were raised.

8. Good of the College.

Professor Myrna Wooders, a member of the Vanderbilt Faculty Senate, stated that quorum at recent Senate meetings has often not been obtained, and, consequently, the Senate needs faculty members to actively participate in its business. Further, she stated that five of the six members of the Senate’s executive committee are non-tenure track faculty members. Although these non-tenure track faculty members are distinguished in
their own right, she continued, non-tenure track faculty members might have different interests than tenured and tenure-track faculty members. She therefore urged faculty members to identify and encourage interested tenured and tenure-track faculty members to serve on the Faculty Senate (nominations and elections of A&S representatives to the Faculty Senate will take place later this spring). One such person, she said, is Professor Edward Saff, who has stated to her that he is willing to actively serve on the Senate.

9. **Adjournment.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert A. Driskill
A&S Secretary of the Faculty