

Faculty Assembly Minutes

Tuesday, February 3, 2026, 3:30–5:00
Location: 1027 Miller Hall

Present: Anna Chason, Melanie Dawson, Carrie Dolan, Aaron Griffith, Katherine Guthrie, John Lombardini, Robert LaTour, Christy Porter, J.C. Poutsma, Josh Puzey, Hannes Schniepp, Mike Seiler, Stephen Sheehi, Chelsea Smith, Rom Lipcius, **Noelle St. Germain-Sehr**, Scott Swan, Andrew Tobolowsky, Cynthia Ward, Jay Watkins, Andrea Wright. Not present: Terry Meyers, Nick Popper, Andreas Stathopoulos.
Guests: Josh Burk, Rich Lowry, David Yalof, Ira Giufferida, Rachael Gable, Matt Smith, Jayson Richardson, MeiMei Sanford,

3:30 – 3:35 Approval of Minutes & Opening Remarks

- Minutes approved

3:35-4:30 Reports & Updates / Old Business

- President Updates: Katherine asks for updates on contacts for speakers.
- Academic Affairs: John Lombardini
 - H1B visa support group/legal support
 - Recently, John has heard more support is needed for faculty and students holding H1B visas, perhaps in the form of a support group. He has spoken to Iria about the potential for indirect support in the form of legal advice or counsel.
 - AI updates: Town halls, Accountability Issues
 - Town halls will be held this semester (perhaps in March) in conjunction with A&S to go over guidelines distributed by STLI. Diane Thesinger says this will help faculty take ownership of AI policies and will demonstrate clear language regarding what's permissible and what's not.
 - John will meet with Andrew Shell at VIMS as they are setting up a standardized AI policy. John notes that Dave Gilbert suggests calling AI guidelines a framework rather than policy. Suzanne Raitt is also planning AI-related town halls for faculty. Provost Agouris is beginning a council including Iria Giuffrida and Chris Carone (Chair). Three faculty will be on this council. Jim Barber in charge of AI guidelines in the
 - School of Ed. Noelle notes that some students are resistant to using AI.
 - Academic Freedom Statement
 - John's statement of AF reiterates faculty rights and responsibilities in a convenient form and points faculty to the *Handbook*.

- A motion is made to create links from the statement to the *Handbook* and add the statement to the online policy library. The motion passes with one abstention. Christy will post on the Assembly website.
- COPAR: Rob Latour
 - Research survey
 - Faculty reviews plot types, the heatmap and “waffles” for ease of use, comprehension, or organization. Comments will be anonymized and aggregated into big blocks. Rob will send FA the mock-up on a platform called shiny app and it will be available on FA website.
- Faculty Affairs: Josh Puzey
 - Faculty Survey app is ready and Josh has asked stakeholders for feedback as it’s expected units will need different data. He expects the survey to go live in 10 days. Josh considers Assembly’s suggestions. Iria says she can send out from FA through the Provost’s listserv.
 - A motion is made to adopt the survey as it is including suggestions made today. The motion passes.

4:30 – 5:00 New Business

- Josh Burk: Update on the COLL review
 - Josh presents the Rector’s request for a review of the COLL curriculum. Phase 1 is this year and Phase 2 is next. A report will be sent to the Provost on 3/1/26 and will be shared with FA, then shared with BOV in April. Josh and the data committee have been gathering data from faculty, students, and alumni.
- Christy Porter: Archiving 20 years of FA, VA Higher Ed Advocacy Day
- Scott Swann: Scott notes direct admit procedures to the Business School are not yet determined.