[UPDATED: Tuesday, March 31, 2026]

Faculty Senate Statement on the VCU Provost Office's New Post-Tenure Review Policy

WHEREAS, the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) - University Council's Philosophy of Shared Governance states, "We believe in collaboration that seeks and represents the voice of all constituencies in decisions and matters that impact those constituencies—recognizing that shared governance is neither consensus nor democratic governance";

WHEREAS, the University Council's Philosophy of Shared Governance states, "We value transparency in university and unit decisions such that the various constituencies of the university are aware of how decisions are made and the rationale for those decisions, which will ensure the university remains mission-focused";

WHEREAS, the results of the 2024–2025 COACHE Survey reflect significant faculty dissatisfaction regarding senior leadership and key elements of shared governance (including shared sense of purpose, adaptability, and productivity), placing VCU in the bottom 30% of comparable institutions on these metrics, underscoring the importance of strengthening shared governance practices in institutional decision-making;

WHEREAS, VCU has expressed "commitment to enhancing faculty experience" and to using these data to "provide actionable insights to meet this commitment";

WHEREAS, the VCU policy on Creating and Maintaining Policies and Procedures requires that the responsible office (1) consider "appropriate substantive requirements, potential impact on university stakeholders, and other university policies either in final or draft form," and (2) "draft the policy in consultation with stakeholders and relevant subject matter experts";

WHEREAS, the "stakeholders and relevant subject matter experts" directly impacted by VCU leadership's proposed revision to the University's Post-Tenure Review Policy, including tenured and tenure-eligible faculty, were not consulted in drafting the policy;

WHEREAS, no evidence-based or strategy-aligned rationale has been provided to faculty to justify either the need for a new Post-Tenure Review Policy or the June 2026 deadline for its submission to the Board of Visitors;

WHEREAS, the new policy was developed without faculty input, and an ad hoc faculty committee was formed only after a full draft had already been developed by the Provost's Office and circulated to Deans and the Integrity and Compliance Office (ICO), thereby constituting a failure to meet VCU's stated requirement that policies be drafted in consultation "with stakeholders and relevant subject matter experts";

WHEREAS, it is the role of the VCU Faculty Senate "to help create, maintain, and protect a university-wide environment conducive to growth of scholarship, creativity, learning, teaching, research, service, and respect for human dignity and rights," "to consider such policies, programs, and other matters as the administration, school faculties, student organizations, and individual members of the Faculty may propose," and "to express opinions on University affairs as the Faculty Senate deems appropriate and necessary";

THEREFORE, the VCU Faculty Senate finds that the process by which the Provost's Office has developed the new Post-Tenure Review Policy is antithetical to the principles of shared governance and misaligned with VCU's stated priorities.

THEREFORE, the Faculty Senate has not endorsed or approved the new Post-Tenure Review Policy in any form.

THEREFORE, the Faculty Senate requests that the Provost's Office demonstrate a commitment to shared governance by engaging in a transparent, collaborative, evidence-based, and strategic process for developing this and future policies that significantly impact faculty and students. The Senate calls for the new Post-Tenure Review Policy draft to be set aside and for the process to be restarted with meaningful faculty involvement from the outset, including the formation of a faculty-led task force given sufficient time to review comparable policies at peer institutions and to bring forward recommendations through established shared governance channels.

THEREFORE, the Faculty Senate affirms that such a process is necessary to address concerns identified in the COACHE Survey regarding dissatisfaction with shared governance, to build trust between faculty and senior leadership, and to ensure that any final policy advances the University's mission.