Interim Dean John Sloop called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. in Wilson Hall 103. Approximately 100 faculty members were in attendance.

1. **Update on Trans-Institutional Programs (TIPs).**

Dean Sloop explained that one of the elements of Vanderbilt’s new Strategic Plan is the Trans-Institutional Program initiative (TIPs). This initiative has great potential, he said, and the possibilities are exciting. Dean Sloop then introduced John Geer, vice provost for academic and strategic affairs, who will present information about the TIPs initiative and, as co-chair of the TIPs Council, will help determine which TIPs proposals receive funding.

Vice Provost Geer explained that the TIPs initiative remains a work in progress, but most of the components have been determined. In about a week, for example, the composition of the TIPs Council will be announced. Other aspects of the initiative have not been finalized, and, consequently, questions from faculty members are critical to help clarify these unresolved issues.

As Dean Sloop mentioned, the TIPs initiative is one of the four pillars of Vanderbilt’s Strategic Plan. The initiative encourages innovative and ambitious ideas that focus on multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary problems, not on disciplinary questions, and that integrate research and teaching. Vice Provost Geer emphasized that by “trans-institutional” programs, he is not referring to inter-university collaborations, such as those between Vanderbilt and Duke, for example, or between Vanderbilt and Rice. TIPs programs will take advantage of the geographic proximity of Vanderbilt’s ten colleges by fostering collaborative interactions across the university and by supporting One Vanderbilt.

Vice Provost Geer explained that it is important to understand the differences between the last Vanderbilt Strategic Plan and the 2014 Strategic Plan. The 2002 Plan was three years in the making and launched the Academic Venture Capital Fund, which provided $100 million for 11 new initiatives tied to the theme of Humanities, Minds, and Matter. The 2014 Plan has been one year in the making and will provide $50 million in new funding. From the 2002 initiative Vanderbilt learned much about how trans-institutional programs work and do not work; some of the initiatives that were funded succeeded and some did not. Most importantly, the 2002 initiative created a greater culture of collaboration across Vanderbilt than existed before, and the 2014 Plan hopes to take advantage of the successes of the earlier Plan.
The 2013-14 Strategic Plan was a faculty-driven process, he continued, and the Plan recommended the establishment of a TIPs Council, whose charge will be to strengthen and diversify Vanderbilt’s research and teaching portfolio by guiding investments in new trans-institutional programs. The idea behind this approach—the establishment of a TIPs Council composed of faculty members—is that it is difficult to predict which proposals will succeed. Faculty members will have the chance to submit their best ideas to the TIPs Council, which will assess the proposals and decide which ones will be funded. This initiative, moreover, will unfold over the next five years in order to provide for greater flexibility, so that new ideas and collaborations that develop in the near future will have the opportunity to receive funding.

In comparison with the proposals funded by the 2002 initiative, Vice Provost Geer explained, the 2014 initiative will take smaller, riskier bets and will not focus on interdisciplinary centers. Moreover, the decision-making process will be more transparent and faculty driven, and it will place a greater emphasis on learning and teaching. The 2014 initiative will provide $10 million for each of the next five years, and proposals that succeed immediately will be eligible to receive further funding.

It is a good time to strategically invest in new programs and to gain from Vanderbilt’s competitive advantage over its competitors, he continued, after a few lean budget years, and now that barriers are breaking down between the various Vanderbilt colleges. There will be three types of TIPs proposals, as he understands it: Seed grants, which will be the most common, will provide funds for developing an idea to see if it succeeds. The funds could be used for a graduate student or two, or a postdoctoral scholar, or for conferences. It would not be used for faculty lines. The amount of money provided for each seed grant has not been determined yet, but it would most likely be somewhat more than $50,000. Second, proposals will also be permitted from existing centers in order to allow them to advance to the next level. Third, proposals may also be submitted for bigger projects that already have college-based support, for funding start-up packages or for remodeling office space or resolving other kinds of infrastructure issues. For example, Dean Sloop might have provided support for a new program by funding some faculty lines, and the new program might need additional support for the aforementioned purposes. Only a few of the latter two types of proposals will receive funding.

The TIPs Council, Vice Provost Geer explained, will be a small committee composed of ten faculty members, each of whom has exhibited public spiritedness, has valued and represented diversity, and has worked well with others, plus the two co-chairs (Vice Provost Geer and Associate Vice Chancellor Larry Marnett). Membership on the TIPs Council will rotate, and the terms will be staggered. Moreover, conflict of interest rules will be in effect, which means that no Council member will be able to submit a TIPs proposal. The members of the TIPs Council, due to its small and manageable size, will not have expertise in all academic areas, and consequently three review panels will also be created, each of which will evaluate one-third of the proposals. Conflict of interest rules will be in effect for the review panels as well. After receiving the comments about each proposal from the review panels, the TIPs Council will present its recommendations to Provost Susan Wente and Vice Chancellor Jeffrey Balser, who will, along with the
respective deans, negotiate the specific amount of funding for each proposal that is approved.

Exact details have not been finalized and these dates are somewhat flexible, but Vice Provost Geer stated that TIPs pre-proposals will be due by December 2. Pre-proposals should describe the TIPs idea in two pages and provide preliminary budget information on a third page. The pre-proposal stage will give the TIPs Council an indication of how much interest and demand there is for the TIPs initiative and for funds. The TIPs Council will provide feedback on each pre-proposal by December 19 and might reject some proposals at that time. Full proposals of six pages, not including budget requests, will be due by January 30, 2015. The three review panels will complete their evaluations of the proposals by mid-March, and the TIPs Council will present its recommendations to Provost Wente and Vice Chancellor Balser by May 1. Throughout the later stages of this process, the respective deans will also be involved as strategic decisions need to be made about a variety of factors.

Vice Provost Geer also explained that the TIPs Council will also review nominations for the Chancellor Faculty Fellows program and review proposals for Discovery Grants and for Research Scholar Grants.

In response to questions, Vice Provost Geer stated that budget details have not been completely finalized, including whether approved proposals will be funded year by year or in full from the start. Decisions such as these might be determined for fiscal reasons rather than policy reasons. Also, budget details will depend on the number and quality of proposals submitted; the Provost’s Office is not committed to approve a particular number of proposals or amount of funding per year. It will be up to the proposer to specify the time length or time frame of the project; a case could be made, for example, that a proposal should be funded for two years at $75,000 per year instead of three years at $50,000 per year. Proposals will be funded for up to three years, after which the organizers can apply again for TIPs funding or the program could receive funding from the relevant departments, from the Provost’s Office, or become part of the regular mission of a Vanderbilt college or school. Continued funding could also come from external sources or from philanthropy. If a project includes a teaching component, then it should be included in the proposal and, if approved, the details would be negotiated later. These details might be complicated, and the Provost’s Office and the deans will be sensitive to them. It is unlikely that TIPs money will be approved for staff positions or staff support. Proposals for seed money should be supported by the relevant department chairs and/or program directors. Non-tenure track faculty members might be able to submit proposals, but this question has not arisen yet. Existing faculty collaborations will be able to submit proposals—a proposal would be strengthened if it were to show that an existing collaboration has a solid track record.

External reviews of Discovery Grant applications will be scaled back; Vanderbilt has enough talent to review the applications in house. There might be some situations, however, when there are not enough review panel members without a conflict of interest to review an application, and in this case, an external review will be needed.
The ad hoc committee that Vice Provost Dennis Hall assembled each year to review Research Scholar Grant applications will continue to be formed each year; it will become a quasi-review panel for the TIPs Council.

Questions about the TIPs initiative may be directed to Vice Provost Geer; Dean Sloop requested that he be copied in the message.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Faculty Meeting of September 16, 2014.

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


Professor Beth Conklin, Chair of Faculty Council, explained that three important issues were discussed at the October Council meeting:

a. Faculty voting rights in departments and interdisciplinary programs. She explained that an A&S department presented a recommendation to Dean Sloop earlier this year that two faculty members, who are primarily appointed to interdisciplinary programs, be given voting rights in the department. Before Dean Sloop can grant these voting rights, she continued, the Provost’s Office has directed A&S to establish a procedure to grant such voting rights. Council decided to form an ad hoc committee, whose first task would be to identify the relevant questions and to clarify the issues related to the granting of such voting rights. These issues include the voting rights of faculty members in departments and programs, the definition of secondary appointments, and the connection, if any, between committee service in departments or programs and voting rights.

b. Sexual harassment in fieldwork. Professor Conklin explained that Professors Tung and Gilligan are gathering information and initiating discussions about sexual harassment in fieldwork and about Vanderbilt’s policies related to sexual harassment. Graduate students and postdoctoral scholars in Anthropology asked Professor Tung for the department’s response to a PLOS article published in July that revealed that many graduate students, especially female graduate students, are sexually harassed in the field. Vanderbilt does have a code of conduct related to sexual harassment, Professor Tung learned, yet it is not clear whether it applies to fieldwork and whether the reporting mechanism is well-known or effective in such situations.

c. Concur. Professor Conklin explained that, even though Concur is not an A&S responsibility, Faculty Council determined that there is sufficient interest and concern in A&S for Council to take action regarding the technical and policy issues surrounding the new Concur travel expense and reimbursement system. Council decided to draft a letter to the Faculty Senate requesting that it investigate whether it would be possible for there to be more faculty oversight into the
Concur system and for there to be better communication between the administration and faculty regarding its policies and practices. Professor Conklin encouraged faculty members to send her specific problems that they have encountered with Concur.

d. Issues to be discussed at future Council meetings, Professor Conklin stated, include incentives and recognition of non-research service for faculty members and the academic preparation of first-year students.

There were no questions or comments about the Minutes or about the new and revised course descriptions.

4. Executive Motion Calendar: Second reading—Proposed revision of the *A&S Rules and Procedures for Faculty Appointments, Renewals, Promotions, and Tenure*.

Professor Conklin explained that this is the second reading of a proposed revision of the *A&S Rules and Procedures*, and the faculty may decide at this meeting whether to send the proposed revision to the faculty for an email referendum vote of approval. The significant change in the proposed revision, she continued, is the addition of sections related to the new rank of Principal Senior Lecturer for non-tenure track faculty members.

Professor Conklin explained that she met with Professor Bisch to discuss the concerns that he presented at the September A&S Faculty Meeting, and Faculty Council approved changes to the revised proposal in light of his concerns. His first concern was whether “balanced” should be replaced by “equal” in the clause stipulating the membership of JARC and SARC in II.C.11. Council agreed with his point that “balanced” is ambiguous and should therefore be changed to “equal.” His second concern was whether the *Rules and Procedures* should specify the kinds of documentation required to support a candidate’s application for Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, or Principal Senior Lecturer. The current *Rules and Procedures* specifies the kinds of documentation required to support a candidate’s application for Lecturer—“(covering peer observations, syllabi assessments, student evaluations, and examination review)” —and the proposed revision extends this requirement to Senior Lecturers and Principal Senior Lecturers. Council members agreed to delete the parenthetical clause (in the brackets above) and replace it with “of teaching” in all three places in the document (III.B.1,2,3).

Professor Rafter expressed two concerns about the proposed revision of the *Rules and Procedures*. His first concern is about the purpose and placement of the proposed new clause III.D. Renewals, when there already is a section III.B. Appointments and Renewals. His second concern is about the usage of “professor of the practice of . . .” The College of Arts and Science is using this title, and hence it should be included in section V Other faculty appointments. Dean Sloop stated that he would talk with Professor Rafter to discuss his concerns.
The A&S faculty then approved a motion forwarding the proposed revision of the A&S Rules and Procedures to a full vote of the tenured and tenure-track A&S faculty by electronic ballot, contingent upon addressing the two concerns raised by Professor Rafter.

5. Announcement from Senior Associate Dean Karen Campbell.

Dean Campbell explained that all faculty members who teach courses in the College of Arts and Science should have received from their department chair or program director a copy of the final report of the Provost’s Committee on the Evaluation of Teaching and Learning. Over the past two years, the Provost’s Committee reviewed Vanderbilt’s course evaluation form and the course evaluation process in general. Associate Provost Cynthia Cyrus and Vice Provost Timothy McNamara are seeking feedback on two parts of the report: a. the proposed changes to the questions on the course evaluation form, and b. the proposed strategy to change the culture at Vanderbilt regarding course evaluations. A special email address (as.evaluation.feedback@vanderbilt.edu) has been created to which feedback should be directed. Dean Campbell stated that she plans to compile the comments by late October or early November and send them to the Provost’s Office.

6. Original Motion Calendar.

No issues were raised.

7. Good of the College.

No issues were raised.

8. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lesley Gill,
Secretary of the Faculty