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

1. **Approval of the Minutes of the Faculty Meeting of September 22, 2015.**

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

2. **Memorial Resolution in honor of J. León Helguera, Professor of History, Emeritus.**

Joel F. Harrington, Centennial Professor and Chair of History, presented a Memorial Resolution in honor of J. León Helguera, Professor of History, Emeritus, written by Marshall C. Eakin, Professor of History. Faculty members paid their respects and signified their assent to the resolution by a moment of silence. The Memorial Resolution is appended to these Minutes.

3. **Review of the Minutes of the Faculty Council meetings of September 29, November 3, and December 1, 2015, the latter pending approval of the Faculty Council.**

Professor Tiffiny Tung, Chair of the A&S Faculty Council, asked if there were any comments or questions about the three sets of Council Minutes or the Council-approved new and revised course descriptions; there were none.

4. **Presentation of the Undergraduate Advising and Teaching Awards.**

Associate Dean Roger Moore presented Haerin Shin, assistant professor of English, *in absentia*, with the Ernest A. Jones Faculty Adviser Award. Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education Karen Campbell presented Carrie Russell, senior lecturer in political science, with the Harriet S. Gilliam Award for Excellence in Teaching by a Senior Lecturer or Lecturer. She then presented Richard Pitt, associate professor of sociology, *in absentia*, with the Jeffrey Nordhaus Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in the Social Sciences; Bruce Hughes, professor of mathematics, with the Jeffrey Nordhaus Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in the Natural Sciences; and Roy Gottfried, professor of English, with the Jeffrey Nordhaus Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in the Humanities. The faculty applauded each of these recipients.
5. **Presentation of the Graduate Teaching and Mentoring Awards.**

Dean Benton, in the absence of Keivan Stassun, senior associate dean for graduate education and research, presented Petal Samuel, from the English department, with the Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching award; Douglass Godwin, from the Psychology department, with the Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Assistant award; Elizabeth Zechmeister, professor of political science, with the Excellence in Graduate Teaching award; and Richard Haglund, professor of physics, with the Excellence in Graduate Mentoring award. The faculty applauded each of these recipients.

6. **Update from Associate Dean Dan Morgan on the Undergraduate Immersion Initiative.**

Dean Morgan presented an update regarding the Undergraduate Immersion Experience component of the Vanderbilt Strategic Academic Plan. He explained that he has met with almost all of the directors of undergraduate studies in A&S departments and programs to discuss the immersion experience initiative, and he stated that he has received some feedback from faculty members but would like to hear more. Dean Morgan stated that he is excited about the immersion experience initiative, for it fits well with the liberal arts goals of encouraging lifelong learning, creating knowledge, and developing talent. The report of the Immersion Committee was distributed at the beginning of this semester (and is available here: [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/strategicplan/action/immersion-vanderbilt.php](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/strategicplan/action/immersion-vanderbilt.php)). It describes the Vanderbilt immersion experience as academically rigorous, extending beyond the classroom, guided by a faculty member or academically based organization (e.g. study abroad), and yielding a tangible product (e.g. report, essay, thesis). Immersion experiences are intended to be memorable for students by enabling them to develop skills, pursue passions, or make a difference in the world. Immersion experiences, Dean Morgan continued, may take one of four forms, or a combination thereof: study abroad or global education; a research experience on or off campus; a creative project; or experiential learning (e.g. internship, service project). Several university faculty committees—in addition to the Immersion Committee—are working on this initiative, including the Laboratory Science Immersion Subcommittee, the Faculty Advisory Committee for International Education, which is developing the immersion criteria for study abroad programs, and the Quality Enhancement Plan committee (the Vanderbilt Immersion Experience has been selected as the QEP for SACS reaccreditation purposes). Implementation of the Immersion Experience will take place in three stages, according to the report: “Opportunities” already exist for Vanderbilt students to have an immersion experience; approximately half of A&S undergraduate students graduating in 2014 participated in some kind of immersion experience. As more students participate in immersion experiences, it will become an “expectation” in campus culture that students will have an immersion experience and students will expect their peers to participate in immersion experiences. Vanderbilt Admissions will be able to recruit students by promoting the many opportunities students have at Vanderbilt to participate in immersion experiences. Finally, with faculty approval, an immersion experience will become a “requirement” for Vanderbilt undergraduate students matriculating as of fall, 2018. Dean Morgan also explained that successful immersion experiences will earn between 9 and 15
credit hours and do not have to be part of a major. Most immersion experiences will have pre- and post-components to them, such as prerequisites and written reports, theses, or creative projects. One noteworthy example of an existing immersion experience, he said, is Professor Steven Wernke’s archeological dig class, in which students have excavated parts of Vanderbilt’s campus.

In response to questions, Dean Morgan stated that the immersion experience will be a requirement for graduation. He acknowledged that many students are already participating in immersion experiences, but this initiative will make it a requirement. A sentence will be added to each student’s transcript noting that s/he has completed an immersion experience. Every department is expected to offer undergraduate students some kind of immersion experience for majors and for non-majors, and for different levels of students (sophomores, juniors, seniors), yet it should not be a requirement for the major. An immersion experience could consist of a set of 3 to 4 courses or an independent contract, similar to a minor or an independent major. Many options are possible. Regarding internships as immersion experiences, the rest of Vanderbilt should build on Peabody’s experience with internships in order to ensure that internships attain a certain level of quality, e.g. that students are not just fetching coffee. Funding for immersion experiences is still being worked out, including tuition charges for summer work. Dean Morgan stated that he is planning to send a follow-up memo to directors of undergraduate studies asking for ideas and recommendations regarding the immersion experience initiative.

Dean Benton reiterated that the immersion experience initiative is a university-wide project; it is a component of the Vanderbilt Academic Strategic Plan. She encouraged faculty members to regard the initiative as an opportunity for departments to develop creative immersion experiences for students that are consistent with and augment their programs’ goals. The immersion experience may also be an opportunity for students to engage in intensive, unique educational projects that they can highlight for graduate and professional schools and for employers. Students might discover that the immersion experience may be a worthy alternative to a second major or a minor. Dean Benton thanked Dean Morgan for working on this important project.

7. Announcement from Senior Associate Dean Karen Campbell.

Dean Campbell reminded faculty members that the deadline for submitting proposals for teaching Humanities 1610 next year (2016-17) is January 18th; the call for proposals has been sent to departments. She explained that Humanities 1610 is a rich opportunity for teams of tenured faculty members to explore a special topic of interest. It was first offered in spring, 2002, and there have been approximately a dozen iterations of the course on a variety of topics. This year’s course was titled “Immigrant Journeys: Nashville and Beyond,” directed by Professors Katharine Donato and Jonathan Hiskey. The course comes with a $20,000 budget to cover expenses related to guest speakers and to provide research funds for the faculty members who organize the course.
8. **Original Motion Calendar.**

No issues were raised.

9. **Good of the College.**

Dean Benton announced that the Vanderbilt Web Communications department is developing an electronic instrument whereby departments and programs can share information about their upcoming talks and events with faculty members in other A&S disciplines. A monthly email message, with relevant items from the university calendar, will be distributed to all A&S faculty members. She explained that this initiative is in response to the faculty members who have asked her for such information in the various meetings she has had with A&S academic programs.

Dean Benton thanked faculty members for their warm welcome. She stated that she feels privileged to belong to the A&S faculty and that she has had great visits to departments and programs.

Dean Benton also noted that it appears to be a productive recruiting year.

10. **Adjournment.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m. to a reception honoring the faculty award recipients.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert A. Driskill,
A&S Secretary of the Faculty
Born in New York City, Joseph León Helguera grew up in a multi-lingual, multi-cultural family. His father had immigrated to New York City from Mexico in the aftermath of the revolution, and his mother’s family arrived from Austria in the 1890s. He developed a love for books and Latin America while spending many hours in bookshops with his Austrian grandmother and during visits with his relatives in Jalisco, Mexico. Shortly after his eighteenth birthday he enlisted in the U.S. Army, and he was eventually stationed in the Philippines (1944-46). On the G.I. Bill he attended a burgeoning new college created for American students in Mexico. At Mexico City College (now the Universidad de las Américas) he studied Hispanic and Hispanic American history graduating in 1948. At a time when the number of publishing historians of Latin America in the United States could be counted in the dozens, Helguera chose to do masters and doctoral work at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Rather than his ancestral Mexico, he decided to concentrate on the history of Colombia and northern South America. Even before receiving his Ph.D. (1958) he had begun teaching at North Carolina State University. In 1963 he moved to Vanderbilt University at the rank of associate professor. He was promoted to full professor in 1968 and continued teaching in the History Department until his retirement in 1991.

In the 1960s, León Helguera became one of the leading figures in the history of nineteenth-century Latin America, in particular, the history of Colombia. The focus of his dissertation, and most of his many published articles was the life of General Tomás Cipriano de Mosquera (1798-1878), one of the heroes of Colombian independence in the 1820s, and president of the country on multiple occasions. Directing nearly two dozen Ph.D. dissertations
and M.A. theses from the 1960s to the 1980s, Helguera played a key role in building up the study of Colombian history in the United States. He spent a term as a visiting senior fellow at St. Antony’s College, Oxford University, served on many review panels, and on editorial boards during his long career. With the creation of the Peace Corps in the early 1960s he was one of the experts hired to train the first group of volunteers heading to Latin America. Among his hundreds of articles, essays, and reviews his most important work was a four-volume edition of the correspondence of General Mosquera edited with one of his former students, Robert H. Davis. Helguera was a proud member of the historical academies of Colombia and Venezuela, and he was awarded the Order of Andrés Bello for his contributions to the study of Venezuelan history.

At Vanderbilt León spent nearly three decades invested in teaching and service (even as he published dozens of articles). He was an early supporter of what was then called the Afro-American studies program, and he was deeply involved in the Center for Latin American Studies. In 1986-87 he served as director of the Vanderbilt-in-Spain program in Madrid. One of his most cherished responsibilities for many years was his work as the director (for many years) of the Vanderbilt Student Communications Board. Over the years, León developed a devoted following of students and alumni who deeply appreciated his teaching and mentoring. Known to be irascible at times and a lover of politics and geneology, students often reveled in his tough love and quirkiness. One of those former students, W. Patrick McMullan, III (A&S ’74) generously endowed a graduate fellowship in the History Department in Helguera’s honor in the late 1990s.

Beginning with a year in Bogotá in the early 1950s, Helguera spent decades assiduously tracking down and collecting books, pamphlets, newspapers, and personal archives in Colombia.
He helped build an extensive collection of *colombiana* in the Vanderbilt University Library as well as an equally rich personal collection in his home. In his last years, he added many of these personal materials to the Vanderbilt Library making it the finest collection on nineteenth-century Colombia outside of Bogotá. During more than two decades of retirement Helguera spent countless hours in the Vanderbilt University Library assisting in the cataloging and processes of this collection.

J. León Helguera passed away on April 20, 2015 after a short illness. He was preceded in death by his daughter, Eugenia Byrd Helguera. He is survived by his wife, Byrd S. Helguera, and two sons, Joseph Hamilton Castle Helguera and Leon Arcadio Eduard Helguera.

Madame Dean, I ask that a copy of this Memorial Resolution be entered into the minutes of this meeting and that copies be sent to his family.

Marshall C. Eakin

Vanderbilt University