In a post-reorganization Vanderbilt should there be 1 Senate or 2 Senates?

One of the Senate’s Standing Committees, Senate Affairs, was charged this academic year with evaluating whether the Faculty Senate would be divided into two Senates after the reorganization or would remain as one Senate body. As Senate Affairs Chair Buddy Creech (School of Medicine) noted, “We considered the possibility of two separate Senates, one for the School of Medicine and Nursing and one for the rest of the University. The Committee pretty quickly converged on the view that, because Kirkland Hall remains the epicenter of faculty appointments at Vanderbilt University, only one Faculty Senate was needed.” Vice Chair Ann Price (School of Medicine) observed, “This notion of Kirkland as the epicenter of faculty life is also codified in the fact that there will continue to be one faculty manual that governs the relationship between Vanderbilt and all its faculty, regardless of their employer: the University or the Medical Center. Having one Senate as a bridge between Vanderbilt and the faculty is entirely in keeping with that parallel treatment.”

Because faculty related benefits, such as the tuition reduction plan, promotion and tenure, are unchanged there will be one faculty manual for all faculty - faculty at the medical center and faculty at the university. Medical Center faculty will be governed by additional policies, however. As is true now, faculty employed by VUMC will also be subject to the policies of VUMC. For example, faculty attending clinicians will remain subject to corrective practices and disciplinary measures under the VUMC Medical Staff Bylaws if a clinician neglects his/her clinical duties. As before, if there are performance issues related to clinical duties, those matters will be addressed by the Medical Center.

In summary, after the reorganization there will be two employers, VU and VUMC. A faculty member will have his or her primary employment appointment with VU or VUMC. However, after the reorganization, the faculty manual will continue to govern every faculty member’s faculty appointment, regardless of employer. Because the Faculty Senate is the representative, deliberative, and legislative body of all the Vanderbilt faculties, like the Faculty Manual, it will govern and represent the interests of all Vanderbilt faculty, regardless of whether their primary employment rests with the University or the Medical Center.