

Minutes of the Meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Science
April 7, 1992

The meeting was called to order by Dean David Lutzer at 3:30 in Millington 150.

A three man team comprising Messrs Fuchs, Kreps and Welsh was needed to correct the minutes of the March 3, 1992 meeting. In the debate regarding stipends for committee duties, the passage beginning

"Mr.Kreps thought that the chair of FAC might qualify ..."

and ending

"...Mr. Kreps' arguments too general to be valid."

should be replaced by:

"Mr. Kreps thought that the chair of FAC might qualify under these guidelines but that other cases were perhaps equally justified. He saw signs of decay in the culture of governance especially among younger faculty. Isn't the stipend merely a way to buy our way out of these problems? he asked.

Mr. Fuchs said that only a very few committee chairs were thought by FAC to be appropriate for extra compensation. The chair of FAC, the President and Secretary of the Assembly and perhaps the chair of A&S EPC, were the only cases he could think of. He fully agreed with Mr. Kreps' arguments, but thought that they actually supported rather than opposed the FAC's recommendations."

And later, responding to a statement of Mr. Welsh, Mr. Kreps said "All of this *may be true*", not "All of this *is true*".

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Dean:

1. Reminded the audience that only members of the Arts and Sciences Faculty may vote at the meeting.
2. Peddled rumors that Ms. Braxton might receive an award as a Virginia Outstanding Educator and that the Modern Language Department might be awarded a SCHEV Funds for Excellence grant.
3. Announced the impended publication of the preliminary version of the report of the ad hoc Curriculum Review Steering Committee.

The only administrative report belonged to Mr. Merck, He confined his remarks to a tennis court oath given later in the meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Nominations and Elections

Ms. Walker, chair of the committee presented nominations for several standing committees: Academic status, Educational Policy, Chair of Educational Policy, International Studies and Procedural Review. There were no floor nominations for any of these committees. Subsequently elected were:

Academic Status: Earl McLane and Martin Mathes;

Educational Policy: Colleen Kennedy, Gina Hoatson and Anne Henderson to 3-year terms and Katherine Kulick to a 1-year term;

Chair of Educational Policy: Richard Prosl;

International Studies: Mary Voight, Jennifer Taylor and Abdul-Karim Rafeq to 3-year terms and Deborah Morse to a 1-year term;

Procedural Review: Bruce Grant and Martin Garrett.

Faculty Affairs

Mr. McGlennon, chair of FAC, reported first on Assembly matters. He described agenda items for the April 21 and April 28 meetings. There were two items of current business:

1) The Assembly had established a standing Advisory Committee on University Development.

2) The Presidential search committee had virtually completed its work. Mr. McGlennon thanked those who had attended the faculty forums. He said that all faculty comments on the candidates had been put into typescript for transmittal to the Board of Visitors.

On FAC matters, Mr. McGlennon promised an update on the chair compensation issue. He said that FAC wanted to get reaction from the Dean's Advisory Committee on certain facets of FAC's draft report. Also, FAC expected to make a recommendation regarding stipends for college-wide appointed committees.

Next, Mr. McGlennon presented a motion of FAC to the effect that all emeritus appointments to the faculty should be made at the "rank" of Professor.

Mr. Aday asked whether emeritus status is automatically granted to retirees. Yes, said Mr. McGlennon. Mr. Axtell wondered if there had been any serious objection within FAC to this proposal. Not really, said Mr. McGlennon. But then he offered that some people think this proposal is merely a way to avoid discussions concerning real promotions to older faculty.

Mr. Axtell next gave some other arguments against the proposal: It ignores merit, it is inconsistent with the evaluation process currently in force and finally, contrary to Mr. McGlennon's assertion, emeritus status is not always granted to retirees. Mr. Funigiello said this is really a matter of a real promotion versus

a sentimental promotion. He asked about the genesis of the proposal.

The Dean said that the administration in cooperation with the Retention Promotion and Tenure committee had recommended this idea to FAC.

And is this a substitute for a real promotion?, asked Mr. Funigiello. No, said the Dean, and in that regard, Faculty are free to discuss any issue any time they wish.

Mr. McGlennon repeated his earlier claim that all retirees are given emeritus status, but Mr. Aday thought he knew a counterexample. The gainsaying continued: Mr. McGlennon said that the administration said that all retirees are given emeritus status; the Dean agreed that during his tenure, this was the case.

The motion passed.

Educational Policy

Ms. Houle, chair of EPC returned with leftovers from the March meeting: Following the recommendation of the Writing Committee, EPC proposed that I and F become legal grades for Writing 101 and that the cross-grading in that course be eliminated.

Ms. Kennedy, chair of the Writing Committee made some remarks defending the proposal. The Writing Committee had asked for I/F because some students simply disappeared from the class with the absolute guarantee of an R, thereby squandering valuable space in the class as well as taking a *de facto* underload. The WC wished to eliminate the cross-grading since students felt the grading was inconsistent and many faculty felt their authority was undermined by the oversight of a second grader. Ms. Kennedy said that the idea of using student writing portfolios and/or an exit essay exam had been considered as alternatives to the cross grading. Both had been deemed unsatisfactory. The exit exam because it was too small a sample, and the portfolio because it is too large a sample in the sense that many graders would be needed who would expend vast amounts of time to achieve grading still likely to be inconsistent.

Mr. Eger suggested that the proposal would be improved by simply eliminating the R altogether. But Ms. Kennedy said the WC still wanted to experiment with the R. Mr. Conlee agreed: the presence of the R permits Writing 101 instructors to impose high standards on students without the burden of assigning a disfiguring grade on the students permanent record. Mr. Selby also agreed that the R was a good idea. An F would only be given a student who blatantly violated the intent of the course as a serious attempt at writing practice.

Mr. Fehrenbach next made some extensive remarks connected with the general subject of the writing requirement. He explained that he had long advocated the abandonment of cross-grading. The R grade was originally intended to allow students to demonstrate proficiency in a variety of different ways. But these alternative paths to salvation were never implemented. He still thought that some sort of exit requirements could be established. He reminded the Faculty that the concentration writing requirement was intended to "...ensure that students continue to develop their ability to write ...". He complained that current practice did not even start students to develop their ability to write.

Responding to Ms. Kennedy's remarks, Mr. Fehrenbach asserted that cross-grading was not supposed to ensure consistency of grading, it was supposed to ensure writing proficiency in students. Indeed, he said, many criticisms of Writing 101 suffer this same misapprehension. Too bad if instructors are undermined, too bad students complain about inconsistency, too bad about any other considerations. The only valid discussion of Writing 101 is this: Either it does or it does not produce writing-proficient students.

Mr. Fehrenbach's recommendations:

- 1) Insist on writing proficiency and provide academic machinery to help students;
- 2) Emphasize, throughout the curriculum, the value of good writing;
- 3) Discard attempts (like the current proposal) to distribute "good feelings" about the writing requirement absent a true evaluation of students' writing accomplishments.

Mr. Fehrenbach next did a straw poll among those present, asking how many were currently teaching Writing 101. There were no takers. He then asked Mr. Conlee, chair of the English Department, to count the number of permanent staff members currently teaching the course. 8 of 12 are being taught in the current semester by permanent staff and 12 of 14 in the Fall '92 term, said Mr. Conlee.

So, lets get serious about the writing requirement said Mr. Fehrenbach. Too many students appear in advanced writing courses who are simply not proficient. We should send this proposal back to EPC for serious debate.

Mr. Axtell wondered about the identities of the cross-graders. They are other 101 instructors, said Ms. Kennedy. In effect, the 101 instructors trade students for cross-grading purposes. She pointed out that if there were an exit exam, the same population of graders would be doing that as well. She insisted that the Writing Committee is serious about the writing requirement, but that the idea of an exit exam is not feasible for non-native speakers or slow writers, among others. In fact, instructors in writing intensive courses complain, not about general writing proficiency, but rather about the inability of students to do sustained topic-oriented writing. Unfortunately,

the writing faculty simply has no resources to engage this problem. It may be, she said, that the alternative requirement of a suitable grade in a Freshman seminar would be a good way of having our cake and eating it: students would practice writing and practice writing about something interesting at the same time. Furthermore, this scheme would relieve some of the burden currently borne solely by the English Department.

Mr. Fehrenbach rejoined: It will not be healthy if a Freshman seminar is turned into a writing skills course. And, he said, there were supposed to be other methods, besides an exit exam, by which students could verify writing proficiency. We just haven't worked hard enough to develop them.

The motion passed unanimously.

Next, Ms. Houle introduced a second proposal of EPC to formalize the structure of the freshman seminar program, and to link "W"-designated versions of those seminars and other courses to the writing requirement.

Mr. Finn thought that the "priority" given to freshman enrollees in the freshman seminars should be more than that. He, in particular, was already disenrolling sophomores from the Religion freshman seminar. Ms. Houle said that non-freshman enrollees could be accommodated if there were room, and indeed, Mr. Finn's disenrolling procedure could easily be enforced by making all enrollments in a freshman seminar be by instructor's consent.

Ms. Houle was again agreeable.

Mr. Fuchs therefore moved to amend the proposal so that non-freshman may be enrolled only with consent of the instructor. Mr. Haulman found this idea attractive since a late blooming sophomore might decide to major in a subject where the freshman seminar is required and automatic exclusion would be unreasonable.

Now the registrar, Mr. Savely, raised a technical issue: there is no way to identify a student's status during preregistration. Mr. Fuchs found this difficult to believe, but Mr. Savely said that the status of a student could only be learned in "batch" processes. The Dean said this detail could be worked out.

Mr. Eger suggested that no preregistration be permitted in a freshman seminar thereby excluding upper class persons. But Ms. Houle pointed out that a rising second semester freshman should have access to seminars. Mr. Funigiello was anxious to preserve the freshman-only character of the seminars.

Mr. Fuchs' amendment passed and so did the amended EPC motion.

Ad Hoc Committee on Indoor Tennis Center

Mr. Edwards, chair of the committee introduced the circulated report of his committee. He explained that a \$3M gift had been made as part of the \$150M fund drive, but that the gift was dedicated to the construction of an indoor tennis facility. A parallel gift of \$800K was also available only as an endowment for operating expenses of the facility. The committee had concluded that, subject to certain provisos, the gift should be accepted and the facility constructed.

Mr. Funigiello moved to postpone discussion of the report to the May meeting. Though Mr. McGlennon testified that postponement would cause no particular problem for the Assembly, Mr. Ward and Mr. Willis urged the Faculty to take the opportunity to comment. Mr. Funigiello's motion failed.

Mr. Garrett wondered how the committee had reached its 4-court plan. Mr. Edwards described the plan as a compromise between people who don't like the whole idea and those with some sympathy perhaps even for a 6-court facility. He agreed with Mr. Garrett that the 6-court plan would permit some interesting "other" uses.

Mr. Funigiello recalled a statement of the Provost to the effect that no state funds and no general student fees would be used to support the facility. But, he wondered, if there is a deficit, and the Intercollegiate Athletic Budget is required to cover the shortfall, the funds will inevitably have to come from student activity fees. Mr. Edwards refused to predict the future. He did say that Intercollegiate Athletics would have to place a line item in its budget for the facility and that they would be explicitly warned against future claims on student fees that might be justified by a deficit in this line.

When Mr. Funigiello asked for reassurance that user fees (together with the \$800K endowment) would be sufficient to cover costs, Mr. Edwards declined. So, in reality, the student fees are the last guarantor for maintenance of the facility, said Mr. Scholnick. True, said Mr. Edwards, but the College can go to considerable lengths to emphasize that any deficits arising from the operation of the tennis facility will first cause very great pain to the Intercollegiate Athletic Budget before a student fee increase will be tolerated. But Mr. Scholnick thought he could predict that there would be a deficit with consequent pressure on the student general fee.

Ms. Slevin asked Mr. Edwards to comment on the propriety of a donor entailing his gift in this fashion. Mr. Edwards said the committee sensed no pressure to accede to the idea of the facility just because construction funds were available.

Mr. Welsh thought that the Assembly's support of the construction would provide a good opportunity for it to gain more influence in matters of Athletics. Mr. Wiseman agreed. But he was puzzled by the amount of attention being paid to a relatively small item compared to the other expenditures made in Athletics.

Mr. Finn was nervous about the College's financial commitment to the facility that was implicit in the construction. He remembered that the College had been stuck for the cost of maintenance of the Muscarelle Museum.

Mr. Funigiello disagreed with Mr. Wiseman's estimate of the importance of the project. By the reckoning of the committee, the endowment would cover 1/3 of the operating costs. University Development will have to seek other funds for support of the facility and more worthy funding projects will suffer. Mr. Edwards agreed that additional efforts by the University Development on behalf of the tennis facility would not be appropriate. But shortfalls will have to come from somewhere said Mr. Funigiello. Not before Intercollegiate Athletics suffers first, said Mr. Edwards.

Mr. Selby hoped that the College would make absolutely sure that there was no linkage of general fees to the facility. But he pointed out that a 6-court facility and the resulting alternative PE uses would allow a clever bookkeeper to launder general fees or even E&G money in support of the facility.

Mr. McGlennon remarked on the unseemliness of the College's rejection of the gift, especially considering that the facility was one of the items on the \$150M wish list. He defended the current debate against Mr. Wiseman's charge that other athletic matters were more significant and finally, he suggested that the faculty might discuss ways of reducing the scale of the facility so as to minimize the possibility of an operating deficit.

Now Mr. Kreps raised a new problem. What about long-term maintenance: refinishing of courts, roofing, etc. We didn't discuss this, said Mr. Edwards. Mr. Wiseman returned to his earlier theme: How come we didn't have a debate about the wisdom of Tercentenary Hall? Mr. Tiefel, attempting to focus the discussion, asked Mr. Edwards what he wanted from the Faculty. Mr. Edwards explained that no action was needed, that he was merely giving information in the hope of eliciting useful comments from the Faculty.

Ms. Archer, a member of the committee, announced her support for the 4-court idea. She was opposed to a "multiple-use" facility. In particular, the 6-court building would be so imposing that revenue issues would have to drive policy regarding its use. And what if we decide to drop tennis, asked Mr. Scholnick. Then what will we do with the thing?

Ms. West, another member of the committee, announced her support for the 6-court idea. Most of these facilities are self-supporting she said. The central function for the building is to allow the tennis team to practice indoors without having to travel to Newport News. We will have a valuable asset if the facility is constructed. There will be many other users.

Mr. Fuchs stated that on first hearing about the facility, he had been most skeptical, but that the excellent report of the committee had convinced him that the idea was a good one.

Mr. Merck got the last word: He had originally appointed the ad hoc committee. He thanked the committee for its valuable work and said that the number and variety of comments he had just heard were most useful. He hoped for similar discussions in the future regarding capital projects.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



George Rublein
Secretary to the Faculty