

Minutes of the Meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
The College of William and Mary  
150 Millington Hall December 2, 1997

The meeting was called to order at 3:37 p.m., Dean P. Geoffrey Feiss presiding.

## I. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the November 4, 1997 meeting were approved as submitted.

## II. Reports of Administrative Officers

President Sullivan announced that he is about to travel to Washington, D.C., where he will bring "good news" of the college to the alumni. The president warmly thanked the faculty for the work that makes it possible to spread such good news about the college. The president then commented on prospects for the upcoming legislative session. "Vision 2000," a document drafted by President Sullivan for the Business-Higher Education Council, is intended to urge upon Virginia's citizens and business leaders the importance of higher education for the state's economic development. The document calls for additional investments in higher education totalling nearly \$1 billion over the next biennium. SCHEV has similarly (though more modestly) called for an additional \$760 million for higher education over the next biennium. Although President Sullivan finds the assembly's general attitude toward higher education much more positive than it was six years ago, uncertainties regarding the phase-out of the personal property tax as well as amendments Governor Gilmore might make to Governor Allen's budget make it especially difficult to predict the next biennial budget. The university presidents have agreed to press the following budget priorities: 1) continued progress toward bringing faculty salaries up to the sixtieth percentile of peer group salaries; 2) increased funding for student financial aid; 3) increased funding for technology; 4) increased funding for operating expenses; 5) developing systematic financing for capital outlays. In response to the question of whether a new capital campaign will be launched in the near future, President Sullivan answered that no decision has yet been made.

Provost Cell addressed questions raised by the Board of Visitors regarding both the college's general education curriculum and the Black Studies program. The board and the provost devoted part of an afternoon to the subject of the college's general education requirements. The provost presented four cornerstones of the new curriculum: 1) the statement of goals and objectives; 2) the new advising system; 3) assessment--incorporation of the results of previous assessment into the new curriculum and ongoing assessment; 4) faculty-wide (rather than department-by-department) responsibility for the new curriculum. The provost pointed out that students matriculating under the new curriculum have been flocking to traditional "core" courses such as physics, biology, and English Renaissance literature. She reported that the board seemed pleased and reassured.

In regard to the board's concerns regarding the Black Studies program the provost noted that the board had not been notified of the program's formation and that the board's

perceptions were probably influenced by widely publicized problems with the VCU curriculum. In fact the board is not routinely notified of new programs that develop under the auspices of the Interdisciplinary Studies concentration (a concentration that was discussed and approved by the board). Provost Cell elucidated the rationale for and the particulars of the Black Studies program.

In answer to a question as to whether financial problems are impinging on faculty research assignments and summer research grants the provost replied that the budget has not changed and its allocation is left up to the committee. The demography of the faculty continues to change, however, and the large number of new junior faculty puts a variety of pressures on research funds. In response to a question regarding the slow pace at which college-wide committees are appointed and organized the provost commented that this is a systemic problem; she would welcome suggestions toward solving it.

### III. Report of the Faculty Affairs Committee

Jack Willis reported that FAC, Dean Feiss, and the provost have been discussing the Medical Disabilities Act with Dick Williamson of the law school, trying to clarify the college's parental leave policy. While the need to clarify the policy as soon as possible is apparent, the legal matters involved are obscure. Professor Willis also reported that the committee will bring the sections of the Faculty Manual dealing with "Conduct of Classes" before the faculty next spring, after which the faculty will vote on the revised manual as a whole.

Professor Willis reported that the committee has not yet found evidence that would decide the question of whether the Honor Code prohibits the proctoring of exams. Meanwhile, the language (and therefore the policy) remains ambiguous.

### IV. Nominations and Elections

Steve Knudson presented the following slate of nominees to the Faculty Affairs Committee:

Area I:	George Greenia (MLL)
X	Colleen Kennedy (Eng)
Area II:	Philip Funigiello (Hist)
X	William Hausman (Econ)

The slate of nominees was accepted without further nominations from the floor. The candidates whose names are marked with "X" were elected.

### V. Reports from Educational Policy Committee and the Committee on Graduate Studies

Larry Ventis (EPC) and Franz Gross (COGS) presented the follow-up to the Final Report on Teaching Assistants and Teaching Fellows. The follow-up report, prepared by the

Advisory Working Group on Teaching Fellows and approved by EPC and COGS, contains guidelines for evaluating the plans of individual departments and programs for training and assessing their teaching fellows (TFs). The report stipulates that "a unit plan" (a given department/program's plan for training and assessing its TFs) should include: 1) description of the department/program's TF program; 2) the criteria used to select TFs; 3) description of the department/program's training program; 4) the supervision to be provided by each TF's faculty mentor; 5) professional development experiences to be provided each TF; 6) procedures for the mentor's formal evaluation of each TF; 7) procedures for the department/program's evaluation of its own TF program.

Professor Gross stressed that responsibility for training is shared by the department/program and the dean's office. Although some faculty members questioned the wisdom of using graduate students as instructors of record, the committee underscored that the college has employed TFs for some time; the task at which the EPC and COGS have been working is to ensure that this teaching is done well. The advantages of the system, namely providing excellent training and experience for our top graduate students as well as providing staff that some programs depend on, were also mentioned. Some expressed a desire that the new training guidelines not signal an expansion in our use of TFs. No such expansion is planned. Others suggested that this kind of training might benefit new faculty or adjunct instructors and should not be limited to graduate students. It was observed that the guidelines for TF evaluation do not include establishing a baseline (e.g., student satisfaction with a given course when taught by full-time faculty members) against which a TF's performance can be measured. The guidelines specify that the department will evaluate both the individual TF and its overall TF program; it was agreed that student evaluations of TFs should be included in the data that departments forward to the dean.

Mentors' evaluations become a part of each TF's internal record. Students receiving negative evaluations would presumably not be rehired to teach additional courses. It was clarified that the guidelines for training and evaluating TFs were developed in response to a recommendation in the 1993 new curriculum proposal that the use of TFs be formalized so as to ensure their adequate training and supervision. The new curriculum proposal was reviewed and approved by the Board of Visitors. It was agreed that COGS will report annually on the number of TFs employed during the previous year. EPC and COGS will gladly receive further comments or suggestions via email.

## VI. New Business

As no new business was brought to the faculty, the meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Galambush  
Assistant Professor of Religion