

## **Faculty Assembly Minutes**

**February 26, 2008**

Approved March 25, 2008

Present: Katie Bragdon, Liz Canuel, Bill Cooke, Larry Evans, Alan Fuchs, Carl Hershner, Colleen Kennedy, Lisa Landino, John Lee, Heather Macdonald, Rip McAdams, Alan Meese, Terry Meyers, Todd Mooradian, Tom White, Gene Tracy

Absent: Francie Cate-Arries, Mike DiPaolo, Adam Potkay, Dee Royster, Carol Sheriff, Laurie Wolf

Others in Attendance: Interim President Reveley, Provost Feiss, Dean Strikwerda, Ann Repeta, Timmons Roberts, Students from SEAC (Student Environmental Action Coalition)

### **1. Approval of Minutes From December and November Meetings**

The minutes were approved with one correction regarding attendance at Faculty Assembly meetings.

### **2. Interim President Taylor Reveley** reported that he has spent much time in the last weeks meeting with various groups. He listed six areas on which he is focusing now:

- Re-establish ties and trust of the William and Mary community – we need to get back to the point where we like and trust each other.
- Need to finish this academic year, this class has to graduate and graduate reasonably happy. That will take work on everyone's part
- The BOV has tried to make clear that the values that President Nichol stressed (diversity, Gateway, civic engagement, and internationalization) will continue. At the core too are other fundamental values, teaching, learning, research, contributing to the store of knowledge. Those fundamental pursuits continue.
- Look for ways in which we can make demonstrable progress to get favorable attention on campus, to alumni, and to the media to make clear that we are moving forward. Some large gifts for the Gateway Program would be nice.
- The reputation and prestige of William and Mary have taken a hit and we need to do something to address that.
- We need address the financial situation for the stability of the university. The \$3.25 million cut from the state is unhelpful. We are pushing hard for salary increases and want to be able to raise tuition in the near term to keep the College moving forward. Issues related to restructuring.

#### Questions and comments:

Larry Evans suggested using the vacant seat on the BOV to add an academic to the BOV (from the alumni who are in higher education). Terry Meyers asked about concrete responses that would demonstrate that the BOV didn't respond to external pressure related to ideology and that would lift the reputational cloud. Liz Canuel commented about the disheartening financial situation. What might be done? Possibilities: Increase annual giving, increase tuition, change in size of student body, change in in-state/out-of-state ratio. Bill Cooke asked about development and fundraising. Need to find donors

who can make the very large gifts and work to increase annual gifts. Rip McAdams returned to the point about the BOV and ideological pressure. Response: Members of the BOV made it clear that they didn't respond to that pressure. What about the perception? John Lee commented about the student editorial in the Flat Hat.

Interim President Reveley concluded by stating that faculty are crucial to William and Mary and that he welcomes any wisdom from the faculty.

3. **Provost Geoff Feiss reported** on the budget situation. The faculty group from FUPC will be sending him their report. In terms of the budget cycle, the funding situation looks good on the capital side and less good on the operating side. There is money in the pool for the possibility of funds if we don't raise tuition.

Anita Poston, Chair of Academic Affairs Committee would like the Committee to meet with faculty and she would like to expand that meeting to include the deans as well.

It will be a very difficult admission season given recent events. Experience tells us that when institutions go through this type of situation, it will take time to work its way through the system. Earl Granger and Henry Broadus are considering strategies. The yield may be different this year. Question: Could you give faculty phone numbers of admitted students so they could make some phone calls. Response: We will be looking at those kinds of things.

#### 4. **Academic Affairs Committee Report**

The Committee was charged with investigating the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment. Students from the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) made a presentation in strong support of the President signing the Commitment, which was submitted to President Nichol, sent to the LandscapEnvironment Committee, and endorsed by that Committee. The students presented the case for why signing the Commitment would be good for William and Mary. Their points include: it makes sustainability an official priority of the institution, many other colleges have signed, it grants us access to an expert community of colleges and universities dedicated to climate issues, reaffirms William and Mary as a leader. Under the Commitment, climate neutrality and sustainability would be a part of the curriculum and of the educational experience for all students, within one year we would begin purchasing or producing at least 15% of our institutions electrical consumption from renewable sources, and so forth.

Questions and discussion focused on curricular and financial implications.

Financial discussion – What is the cost for signing the statement? We would realize significant savings on utility bills (\$2.5 million). All we are doing is cutting costs and promoting efficiency. What is the cost of increasing energy efficiency of buildings? There is a capital cost barrier. There are ways we can get over the capital funding hurdle. Energy service company will take payment out of our savings. Clinton Foundation funds are another possibility. Student green fees could fund a Sustainability Office.

Curricular discussion - questions about the clause requiring inclusion of sustainability in the curriculum. SEAC – our interpretation of the clause is that inclusion of sustainability programming during orientation would satisfy the requirement; also this is something we do

during orientation now. Clause appears to require curricular change; an orientation program is not part of the formal curriculum. Does this mean every student (undergraduate and graduate)? Graduate students do not participate in the orientation programs for undergraduates. Some faculty/schools already teach about climate and sustainability. President Casteen declined to sign this statement because of this clause. One possibility is to have the President sign a signing statement that the President would not require faculty to teach this. It is important to acknowledge that neither the President nor the Faculty Assembly has control of the curriculum. The faculty control the curriculum. A letter to the interim president – the Faculty Assembly has no involvement in curricular decisions of the schools. The motion is a weak motion. Some strong support for signing the commitment, some concern about financial implications. Curricular decisions need to be made by the schools.

Motion: The Faculty Assembly finds that the President's Climate Commitment, properly interpreted, does not infringe upon the curricular autonomy of the faculty. Motion passed.

Motion: The Faculty Assembly refers this proposal to FUPC for consideration of its financial implications and requests a report back in a timely fashion. Motion passed.

## **5. New Business**

Motion: Ask the Faculty Affairs Committee to prepare a resolution with respect to the recent resignation of President Nichol and report back to the Faculty Assembly at the next FA meeting. Motion passed.

Discussion: Different resolutions have been made by different groups on campus. The School of Marine Science sent a letter to President Nichol thanking him for his service and another letter to the BOV. The Faculty Affairs Committee of Arts and Sciences sent a letter to the BOV. It would be helpful to have a sense of the Faculty Assembly. The last discussion was divided. What has been the place of the Faculty Assembly in all this? Why haven't we had any input as a body? Discussion to continue with consideration of the resolution(s) that will be prepared by the FA FAC.

## **6. Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Macdonald, Secretary  
Faculty Assembly