



WILLIAM & MARY

CHARTERED 1693

Faculty Assembly Meeting Minutes March 22, 2022 3:30 pm

Officers Present: Mark Brush (President), John Gilmour (Vice President), Harmony Dalgleish (Secretary)

Other Members Present: Lisa Landino, Anne Rasmussen, Josh Burk, Tonya Boone, Marc Sher, Michelle Lelièvre, John Eisele, Marjy Friedrichs, Adam Gershowitz, Rebecca Green, Denise Johnson, Lindy Johnson, Evgenia Smirni, K. Scott Swan, Brett Wilson, Christy Porter

Members Absent: Nicole Santiago, Tom Ward (Faculty Representative to the Board of Visitors)

Others in Attendance: Peggy Agouris (Provost), Terry Meyers (Parliamentarian), Christopher Lee, Suzanne Hagedorn

1. Call to Order

President Brush called the meeting to order at 3:31 pm.

2. Approval of the minutes for the February meeting.

Moved to next meeting to allow more time for review.

3. Provost's remarks

I just returned from a very nice faculty affairs committee meeting at VIMS. Good conversation, good weather!

The Provost then asked for questions from the Assembly.

Brush: Can you tell us any updates on the phased retirement transition plan?

Provost Agouris: It is with the Deans right now. After they review it we will bring it to Assembly and then you can provide feedback.

Rasmussen: Can you give us an update on the search for the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs?

Provost Agouris: I've met with the finalists and am working this week to discuss position terms, etc. I'm hopeful that a decision will be made by the end of this week.

Rasmussen: Did you get feedback from the Assembly and those of us who were able to meet with the candidates?

Provost Agouris: Of course, you provided it directly to the search committee and they provided it to me.

And I'll also give a quick update on the Business School Dean Search: We are in the phase where the committee is discussing the position description and advertisement etc. We are doing a national search.

Lelièvre: I have a couple questions about the Ivy Group's full report (2021 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Assessment and Strategic Plan). First is access: those of us who've asked to see it were asked to sign a form – how was that decision made?

And then I have a question about some of the findings or lack thereof, specifically about termination or separation of faculty from the University. From my read it seems that there wasn't enough information for the group to make a recommendation on that. Is W&M not tracking the information on retention of faculty of color?

Provost Agouris: I wish I could give you good information on this. I was surveyed as part of the study but was not involved beyond that. I do not know how the decision to sign a form was made. I fully endorse the effort to provide this information.

Lelièvre: Can I follow up on the termination question? Doesn't the Provost's Office track that?

Provost Agouris: HR keeps track of that. I'm not sure what was considered a significant sample. I don't know the particulars, but I'm happy to look into it.

Brush: I went to the website where the Ivy Group plan was, emailed as instructed on the website to obtain access, and was sent a link without having to sign a form so perhaps that has changed. I believe Chon Glover told us during a FA meeting last year that information on why faculty of color leave has not previously been captured.

Swan: That is my recollection as well.

Lelièvre and Brush reiterated the question about faculty retention which was then put to Chris Lee, Director of HR.

Lee: within days we will have a formal exit interview survey process. We do some now, but it is less systematic, but not necessarily on minority faculty in particular. Last year Chon Glover tasked me with this exact task to learn better why minority faculty leave. My goal is to reach out to all the TTE faculty who have left, minority and otherwise. I've spoken to 4-8 so far. A 'bumper sticker' conclusion could be that people didn't feel valued.

Gersowitz: In addition to Chris gathering that information could the Provost's office task the Deans and Chairs to gather this information?

Lee and Provost Agouris agreed with a dual approach. Both through HR and speaking with the Provost and/or Deans.

Burk: One thing that has bubbled up in A&S is where the budget for the bonuses came from.

Provost Agouris: a one-time bonus was able to be done because of positions that we were not able to fill. These were not positions we eliminated, but positions we weren't able to fill.

4. Report from Faculty Assembly president, Mark Brush

Yesterday we had the Cabinet Plus meeting. An update from Sebring on status of COVID: we have 4 student positives and no employee positives. We are watching closely. There was a very pointed question on when we might be rid of masks completely – while we do not know, Amy is hopeful it will be soon.

A group of us met with all three Associate Provost candidates and I appreciate the opportunity to have input on that.

The Student Assembly contacted us about getting faculty to participate in a town hall discussion on academic stress. Gilmour offered to co-moderate. I passed on the four names who volunteered, and the Student Assembly will get back to us on the date, time and location.

Gilmour and Brush met with Chris Lee and Deborah Howe in HR to continue discussing potential changes to the Faculty Handbook related to leave policies to ensure compliance with state law and HR policy. We had a very productive meeting and went through the entire leave section of the Faculty Handbook. HR suggested a number of changes and clarifications, but there was nothing major, and nothing that would limit benefits. They offered very kindly to go through the leave section and provide annotated suggestions for us to review. We expect those suggestions in April after which Assembly will have a chance to review them.

We have only two more meetings this academic year. We will hold elections at our May meeting, and need some nominations for Vice President and Secretary. Harmony Dalglish has agreed to run for Secretary again. Anyone can run for either position although VP is a two-year commitment as they become President in the second year.

5. Discussion of Proposed Section III.J of the Faculty Handbook

See February 2022 minutes for background information. Swan moved for a vote and Sher seconded. Hearing no call for discussion, President Brush called a vote. 15 voted in favor. No opposed. No abstentions. Motion passes.

President Brush will submit the changes to the Provost's Office for approval.

6. Discussion of the HR Faculty Position Description

Earlier this year, Assembly discussed the faculty position description that HR uses to accommodate faculty with disabilities, and ways to improve that template and the process. Brush distributed a draft of a revised position description that reflects the wide diversity of faculty activities, allows for a diversity of faculty profiles, and is adaptable to each individual faculty member. The document also includes information on process.

Swan: I like it. It was helpful. In the Business School we might add Contributions to the Academic Atmosphere as a type of professional service.

Rasmussen: How do you keep track of that? In Music, we have many events in the evenings and how do we quantify this? The culture of participation has changed especially as we now have so many faculty who live in Richmond.

Swan: It is part of the review. The Deans ask us to report this at merit review time and this goes into merit and promotion reviews.

Dagleish: While this second version does a much better job of covering the breadth of tasks faculty have as part of their jobs, the first version contains much more concrete tasks. The more concrete tasks may be more helpful to doctors when approving or suggesting accommodations.

Brush: I'd considered including these concrete tasks as an example so perhaps a combination would work well. Send feedback to me in the next two weeks and I'll get input from HR. Hopefully, we will vote on it next meeting.

7. Committee Reports

- a. Academic Affairs: Johnson; no report as we are waiting on the hiring of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.
- b. Faculty Affairs: Swan; we are starting to develop the executive summaries and are working on these.
- c. COPAR Landino: I received some feedback on questions that Smirni and Lelièvre forwarded regarding Dennis Manos' annual report to COPAR. The February Budget meeting was cancelled because the state hadn't finalized its budget yet. The next meeting is scheduled for this Thursday, but I don't think the legislature has a budget yet. The Provost added that she thought the meeting will include general summaries about what we have requested as we wait for the Commonwealth to finalize the budget.

8. Other Business

a. Experience with the hiring pilot plan (Smirni):

Smirni: I'd like to talk about the hiring pilot plan. I've used it as hiring committee chair for Computer Science this year. I can tell you my experience. The process has been quite streamlined. And I'd like to give kudos to HR and the Dean's office for moving things lightning fast compared to the year before. Faster and smoother. We submit a hiring proposal in the morning and it is approved by 2 pm – this is a record. Fantastic. I'd like to comment on some new things that have been introduced that have had some pushback - First is the student involvement and the second is the unranked list going to the Dean. For the student involvement, we have always had it in Computer Science but this year we formalized the process and we asked the students to fill out a google form, so that at the end we had a final summary. Actually, I have to report that one of the student summaries really saved us. The candidate did very well with the faculty and the Deans, who provided very positive reviews, but evidently the candidate felt very comfortable with the students and let down their guard and the students perceived the candidate as disrespectful to the faculty and the students. If we did not have the observation and evaluation from the students we would have made this candidate an offer for sure. Clearly, we thought this was a major red flag that could be an issue in the future and we were very grateful. I'm very much in favor of formalizing the student involvement.

For the unranked list to the Dean – it is remarkable that the opinion of the faculty and the Deans coincide in so many cases! Our internal ranking within the department turned out to be similar with what the Deans office did. I felt that all the negotiations with the Dean's Office were fast and quick. I'm very happy to report that the pilot worked out very well for us.

Swan: I was involved in about 6 hires over the last couple of years so I'm pleased to see the process is streamlined. We have also formalized the involvement of students in the Business School and we also think that is an important part of the process. Were the students included on the vote? Was there pushback from the Dean's Office if they didn't vote?

Smirni: We treated the input as advisory. There is nothing in the pilot that gives students a vote.

Swan: With the unranked list, my concern was that it was a loss of information. Did you have any discussion of the loss of such information? I've not seen conclusive information that having an unranked list adds much to our goals.

Smirni: We did 20+ interviews. We sorted by area and gave input on all. And it turned out that our internal rankings matched with the Deans.

Swan: Thank you! Excellent.

Brush: VIMS also has formalized student involvement in searches, but they do not vote. I was curious, did you have graduate and undergraduate student input?

Smirni: We tried so hard to get undergraduates, even giving options to replace quiz grades with participation with the hiring process. But we were not successful.

Rasmussen: When we've done searches, having student involvement isn't written, but it is part of the department practice. We have candidates teach a class and they all teach the same class. It does provide a consistent audience. We usually do some sort of social lunch or breakfast with students as well.

Smirni: Everything was on Zoom until the final offer. The candidates who were offered a position were brought to campus before they had to accept or decline. It saved a lot of money.

Gilmour: Zoom actually increases your ability to interview. You could not have done 20 on campus interviews. In government, we have undergraduates who do participate. We usually can get a group of 3 students who agree. Usually, their feedback is not remarkable. But sometimes, like your experience Evgenia, there was a candidate the faculty liked but the students disliked the candidate strongly, felt they were condescending. That ended that candidate's chances for an offer.

Sher: We did this in Physics last year. A group of four students heard a lecture from the candidate and went out to dinner. It worked really well. Again, they also disliked one candidate.

b. Resolution on Student Debt Relief

Brush: I previously forwarded an email I received which was sent to faculty senates around the nation from the Scholars for a New Deal for Higher Education, an organization working for national reform in higher education and partnered with the AAUP. The group is asking faculty senates to consider passing a resolution calling for the cancellation of student debt. In addition to the discussion we already had by email, are there any additional comments or would anyone like to bring the resolution forward with a motion?

Sher: I would oppose any resolution that cancelled student debt for people making enough money to pay their debt. I oppose the motion.

Porter: I thought it was an interesting idea. There might be good reasons not to vote for such a motion. But I'd like to hear from the group to learn more about both their agenda and their proposal.

Brush: I don't know anything about the group, but I felt it was something I should pass along.

No one made a motion to consider the resolution.

Brush: Is there any other business? Hearing none can I have a motion to adjourn?

9. Adjourn

Sher moved to adjourn. Wilson seconded. President adjourned the meeting at 4:39 pm.

Next meeting: April 26, 2022, via zoom

Prepared by Harmony Dalglish