



# WILLIAM & MARY

CHARTERED 1693

## **Faculty Assembly Minutes, March 19, 2024**

**3:30 – 5 pm**

**Location: Miller Hall 2003**

Zoom: <https://cwm.zoom.us/j/7441676700>

*Officers Present:* K. Scott Swan (Faculty Assembly President), David Feldman (Vice President), Nicholas Popper (Secretary)

*Other Members Present:* David Armstrong (Faculty Assembly Representative to the Board of Visitors), Mark Brush, Josh Burk, Sara Day, Christopher Del Negro, Marjy Friedrichs, Katherine Guthrie (zoom), Erin Hendrickson (zoom), Jessica Martin (zoom), Terry Meyers (Parliamentarian), Randi Rashkover (zoom), Cristina Stancioiu, Evgenia Smirni, Betsy Talbott, Brett Wilson (zoom)

*Members Absent:* Chuck Bailey, Jim Dwyer, John Gilmour, Ayfer Karakaya-Stump

*Others Attending:* Provost Peggy Agouris, Don Butler, Matt Smith, David Yalof

*Others Attending on Zoom:* Ginger Ambler, Pamela Eddy, Chon Glover

The Meeting was Called to Order at 3:32.

- I. Approval of Minutes
- II. Provost's Report

Provost Peggy Agouris reported on the progress of Faculty Productivity Phase II. Faculty Success is more work than anticipated, especially for A&S, but it will produce a higher level of

analysis. Pamela Eddy says that they are currently working on data at the macro level and will have faculty review over the summer.

Agouris reports that there are two searches going on. The Executive Vice President search has a very strong pool, which is fortunate because the previous versions of it did not. New School dean search is also underway. The New School SCHEV proposal has also been submitted. There is still work to be done in terms of responding to SCHEV.

### III. Accreditation

Assistant Provost for Institutional Accreditation & Effectiveness Matt Smith reported that we are underway for our 2026 reaffirmation of accreditation with SACSCOC. A year of self study begins this summer and concludes in the spring, with demonstrations of compliance throughout the year. There are 72 principal standards for accreditation, and they have been completely re-written since last time W&M went through this process, interjecting in some areas considerably more pickiness. The areas for faculty are qualifications, standards, oversight, academic freedom, evaluation processes, and professional developments. Smith requests that the provision of transcripts and demonstration of evaluation be done assiduously.

Christopher Del Negro observes that many faculty received an email requesting their transcripts earlier that day and asks whether there is a specific area he's particularly concerned about. Smith says adjuncts and other contingent faculty would be the most likely area.

David Armstrong asks whether SACSCOC would request transcripts for every faculty; Smith responds that they will do a random sampling. Armstrong points out that Smith is requesting that 400-500 faculty do the work of acquiring transcripts, rather than just the few whose transcripts would be requested later. Armstrong questions whether this is a good allocation of resources. He also asks whether it would not be more efficient to request transcripts at the time of employment rather than belatedly. Smith says this is what they will do in the transcript space going forward but also that doing this now achieves comprehensiveness.

Agouris asks whether the dean's office can check whether they have transcripts, Smith says yes. Smith says it's annoying but something that has to be done. Armstrong points out that there have been people who submitted their transcripts and that they have been lost and suggests that perhaps faculty should be concerned about the institution's care with data and documents. General agreement. Smith says it's hard to keep track of such materials over the long term and apologizes. David Feldman questions whether there is any utility at all to institutional accreditation. Smith replies that such a characterization is overkill.

### IV. Faculty Hiring Pilot

Chon Glover reports on the faculty hiring pilot that has been running since 2021. Recently her office has been creating data, talking to search chairs, getting feedback, and preparing to adjust processes. Over three years, for example, they have run 24 workshops for over 800 faculty. She requests feedback from FA, will also get feedback from search chairs and hiring liaisons, and

then will make a report for the President and Provost. There is no data yet from this year, but they have continued to push faculty to ask questions about diversity and inclusiveness.

Swan characterizes the pilot as seeking, as its main goal, getting a diverse pool, and notes that a second significant goal is getting the highest quality person in. He observes that it is preferable to work with as much data as possible but asks how the pilot model measures quality. Agouris notes that during the most recent BOV meeting there were questions concerning how to hire the highest quality person. The President and Provost volunteered to have further discussions about this. Glover replied that they are trying to keep as many records of diversity as possible. The first year of the pilot, 40% of the hires were from underrepresented backgrounds; 45% the second year.

Del Negro noted that in previous years his department hadn't searched so hadn't been paid close attention, but that they are conducting a search this year and that many faculty are questioning the benefit of the pilot's insistence on an unranked list. Several attendees noted that committees in their units ignored this directive.

Swan also raised the point that demanding an unranked list removes information from the hiring authority, and wondered why this was a good thing. Brush recounted that he broached this question to the previous head of HR, who replied that this was "best practices" but was unable to give any evidence. Popper reported having the same experience and said that he had investigated the hiring practices of all of our SCHEV-determined peer institutions and found none at all that required an unranked list.

Agouris replied that if there is a conversation between the search chair and the hiring authority, then there should be no loss of communication. She also said that a ranked list creates expectations that might not be met. In general discussion it was pointed out that there is no guarantee that future deans will engage in that conversation rather than simply appointing who they choose, that the current system provides incentive to search committees to exclude candidates who they are worried the dean will choose rather than the candidate they see as stronger, that communication is not always so frictionless, and also that if the dean does overrule the department recommendation there is no harm but rather benefit in that being clear rather than obscured by a unranked list.

#### V. Safety Report from Ginger Ambler and WMPD Chief Don Butler

Ambler reports that there is lots of overlap between student affairs and public safety, especially in issues such as mental health, campus safety, Title IX matters, hazing, and more. W&M is hiring an AVP for Public Safety. The past few years have seen considerable investment in measures to improve campus safety and the mental health climate for students, faculty, and staff.

Chief Butler outlines the aspects of his office. They have 28 officers, six staff, are fully accredited, and have Units for Patrol, Communication, and Investigation, and someone is on ty du24/7/365. They make individualized Safety Plans faculty, staff, and students upon request, deliver active threat presentations, etc. Their principles are commitment to integrity, professionalism, fair and impartial assessment, and a community focus. There is also a threat

assessment team, whose purpose is to assess threats and take mitigating and minimizing action as necessary.

Butler notes that weapons are prohibited by state administrative code on campus. The WMPD cannot arrest those carrying weapons but can make them leave campus; if they refuse, they can be charged with trespassing. There is legislation being studied where this prohibition would be moved to criminal code to enable swifter and more significant response. He encourages self responsibility, the rave guardian app, and preparedness; moving forward there will be better lighting, more locks, better systems of weapons detection, and more.

## VI. Unfinished business

David Armstrong reports that Faculty Productivity met with Pam Eddy, that there is a good structure in place with some elements to be filled out. The metrics are easier to see in the sciences, harder for humanities and some social sciences. In particular they want to know about student authors, which is difficult information to extract. Swan points out that this group will be involved in SACSCOC.

Armstrong switches gear to note that more meetings concerning handbook revisions lie ahead. Changes to emeritus benefits articulated in the handbook – in particular removal of some – are moving ahead. They are working to equalize deans' authority across schools. They are also trying to devise a name for NTE's that does not include negative language like "non." Friedrichs asks whether there will be substantive changes for NTEs. Armstrong says it's under consideration but that the committee has not embarked on this yet.

Talbott reports that the New School Implementation Committee is interviewing people about the value of the liberal arts. They are also talking to undergraduates.

Swan notes that at President Rowe's request there is data being collected on tuition remission.

Wilson reports that they have received 254 responses to the survey so far. It initially didn't get to VIMS for some reason, so they are still working on getting it to people.

Feldman reports that there have been some changes in the pilot retirement plan. The initial vision was to make a first offering to everyone, then to have an age window in which qualifying individuals could opt into the plan. Now he reports hearing that it will be just a one-year opportunity and that the second pillar will not be there, but the one-year version might be moving to the BOV. Agouris explains that because it's not clear what the impact of the first element will be, the intention is to leave door open for some future measure, and they are trying to gauge how frequently they could offer an incentive package, but nothing has been finalized yet.

Popper notes that there will be reports from various committees that report to FA in the remaining meetings.

## VII. New business

There is a bereavement policy under discussion under other assemblies, but general agreement that it is more applicable to the student and staff assemblies than to us.

Feldman asks whether Legal Counsel Carrie Nye has provided legal advice on the changes to emeritus benefits. Armstrong says she has to some degree. Agouris notes that explicitly elaborating specific benefits in the handbook limits flexibility and range. Armstrong observes that the draft policy would allow schools to increase explicit benefits for emeriti. Agouris says by putting specific benefits in the handbook it limits the range.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.