



WILLIAM & MARY

CHARTERED 1693

Faculty Assembly Minutes, October 17, 2023

3:30 – 5 pm

Location: Board Of Visitors Room, Blow Hall

Zoom: <https://cwm.zoom.us/j/91047315062>

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

Other Members Present: David Armstrong (Faculty Assembly Representative to the Board of Visitors), Mark Brush, Josh Burk, Christopher Del Negro, Jim Dwyer, Marjy Friedrichs, John Gilmour, Katherine Guthrie, Erin Hendrickson, Terry Meyers (Parliamentarian), Marc Sher, Evgenia Smirni, Cristina Stancioiu, Brett Wilson

Members Absent: Aaron Griffith, Randi Rashkover

Others in Attendance: Peggy Agouris (Provost), Pam Eddy, David Kranbuehl, Dennis Manos, Jeremy Martin, Katherine Rowe (President), Silvia Tandeciarz

Members Present Via Zoom: Betsy Talbot, Jessica Martin

I. Approval of Minutes

David Feldman makes motion to approve minutes, seconded by Marc Sher.

II. President Katherine Rowe

President Rowe began by informing us that the Board of Visitors have issued a charge to revise the Faculty Handbook, and that she is currently consulting with Scott Swan, David Feldman, and David Armstrong on the process. She notes that this is a sensible time with the new school coming and accreditation looming, and that the current iteration is inconsistent, outdated (last updated in the 1990s), and difficult to use. Also notes that the BOV wants a more uniform reported hierarchy across schools. Makes clear that this process should be led by faculty, and that the BOV wants it done by November 2024. Anticipates Section I can stay largely the same, but that Section II (delegations) and Section III (policies) likely need more revision, which hasn't been done since 1990s.

David Armstrong notes there was a revision in 2008 with university counsel involved, and that the BOV voted on it as a document as a whole to approve holistically. There have been amendments since. President Rowe acknowledges.

President Rowe notes that there are different amendment processes in the current handbook for each of the three sections. Her proposal streamlines this by having the Faculty Assembly and Personnel Policy Committee act together, the President and Provost act together, and the BOV act as an entity.

President Rowe proposes to constitute a Working Group to spearhead process. Adam Gershowitz has agreed to be Chair. She proposes that the working group should determine substantive and non-substantive changes (must be unanimous to qualify as non-substantive), and that the Working Group should be authorized to make non-substantive changes. Substantive changes would get circulated in advance to solicit comments, then there would be an up/down vote by FA and PPC, after which the recommendations would then go to the President and Provost en route to the BOV. The goal is to avoid line edits from the floor slowing down the process.

Silvia Tandeciarz asks about the mechanics of circulation to avoid overly iterative editing and unwanted surprises. President Rowe suggests a month lead time during which the faculty will have access to the changes as a whole. She observes that everyone will be coming into this process at different times, but that it's important to have enough time before up/down voting.

Mark Brush noted the prior existence of a handbook committee and observes that the Working Group as proposed – with IT, HR, university counsel representation, etc. – is well suited. President Scott Swan commends the way the proposed process handles the potential problem of going back and forth between PPC and FA and the delays that entails.

President Rowe reinforces that there will be open calls to various entities soliciting information on what changes they need.

Jim Dwyer asks for confirmation that the changes will just concern the handbook, not additional handbook documents or bylaws. President Rowe says yes, though pointing out that there may be need to adjust after. The current charge is only for the handbook.

Dwyer asks whether the proposed Working Group is a university-wide committee, as used in the slide deck. Rowe says that it is not, but that it is advisory and involves faculty, and that the

President can propose amendments without any faculty consultation and should be free to enlist faculty for consultation purposes sometimes without a formal process of appointment.

John Gilmour notes that the handbook has a lot of vagueness and ambiguity and asks if this revision will help resolve this. President Rowe says yes and points out, for example, how the relationship between the handbook and contracts is unclear. Swan asks for confirmation that the Working group would be confirming as well as assessing, which Rowe gives.

II. Vice President for Strategy and Innovation Jeremy Martin on strategy

Martin recapitulates the three goals of Vision 2026 (expand our reach, educate for impact, and evolve to excel), with subgoals as well. Units “planned in” to this framework, leading to university-wide initiatives, many of which are in the implementation phase and moving into the evaluation phase relatively soon.

President Rowe brings up the upcoming “demographic cliff” and with that in mind W&M needs to try to lock in community-minded students. The recent news concerning the Jefferson Lab’s selection as Department of Energy’s premier data facility should make this area a “national hub.” Faculty hiring to support it should be robust.

Provost Peggy Agouris says it’s a good sign that Virginia political leadership is excited and wants credit for making Jefferson Lab award happen. She also commends its multidisciplinary and how it links to the New School, and comments on how meaningful such geographical and local connections can be.

Marc Sher asks whether they’ve discussed with other schools or political entities in similar situations, such as Oak Ridge in Tennessee. Rowe says yes and that on that example it will bring in resources, business development, interdisciplinary possibilities, etc. Agouris says that while it takes a great deal of work and years of coordination for such campaigns to work, universities matter for the faculty talent they have.

III. Provost Peggy Agouris’s report

The BOV at their recent meetings further discussed the Key Performance Indicators. Areas agreed upon include student success, faculty research and impact, post-graduation outcomes, faculty teaching, applied learning. The question is what the right metrics should be, with heavy faculty input for faculty metrics. Emphasis on making the KPIs simple and straightforward for easy BOV consumption. The approach to the research KPI will be consistent with developing

thinking concerning “faculty research productivity phase II” and with strategic efforts to improve our national ranking. Provost Agouris stressed that she wants to work with the faculty on discussing what metrics would be useful.

The BOV is also interested in understanding how peer institutions are defined, and also how to use them to compare metrics. Notes that there are various systems of determining peer institutions (SCHEV, Chronicle of Higher Education), so we want to think through this. But notes again that we this should inform our approach to thinking about our rankings.

IV. FA Rep to the BOV David Armstrong:

Armstrong emphasizes that his conversations with the BOV indicate that they aren’t looking for anything granular and that many data points will be aggregated by school. The BOV is interested in simple metrics and whether we’re improving.

Katherine Guthrie asks how far back they will be looking. Armstrong conjectures five years. This will allow the BOV to see whether we’ve recovered from pandemic dips or effects of investment; Guthrie notes that we might be able to see the effect of the COLL curriculum.

Agouris says the KPIs should simultaneously allow the BOV a better understanding of W&M but also allow us to better understand ourselves.

Swan asks what the process will be and whether KPIs would be put to a vote. Agouris says they will not.

Vice President Feldman says that draft KPIs for university finance were also presented to the Board’s Finance Committee on such things as "Operating Margin", "Financial Resources", "Budget to Actuals and says that faculty can and should evaluate these preliminary measures and offer suggestions. The goals are to teach the board about college finance and get them to buy in.

Brett Wilson points out that certain of the metrics under discussion skew to the preference of certain fields/disciplines, and accordingly he emphasizes need to calibrate appropriately across disciplines, especially in the arts and humanities.

Jim Dwyer asks whether Provost Agouris is consulting with deans and chairs and asks for a clarification of the benefit of consulting FA. Agouris says that she will ask lots of constituencies and suggests that the BOV wants to hear from the FA.

V. Unfinished business

President Scott Swan briefly discusses charges for FA committees and thanks committee chairs and volunteers.

He notes that we have to fulfill our charge to advise on new school. Says that we would like to move forward by offering our advice, describing the opportunities and strengths while also articulating what concerns and risks we see, and solicits input from FA. He reports that the Provost has guaranteed that we will have an important role in implementation.

To Jim Dwyer's question concerning process, Swan says that at the October 31 meeting we will consolidate a document, which will be circulated in advance.

Evgenia Smirni asks if we've already done this. President Swan replies that we have given feedback but that this will be about priorities and giving Provost Agouris a manageable sense of opportunities to take and issues to address.

At 5:02 Marc Sher moved to adjourn, and Evgenia Smirni seconded.