

Minutes of the Meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
The College of William and Mary

September 1, 1998 Millington 150

The meeting was called to order at 3:34 p.m., Dean P. Geoffrey Feiss presiding.

I. Minutes of the Last Meeting (May 5, 1998)

The minutes of the May 5, 1998 meeting were approved as submitted.

II. Reports of Administrative Officers

Provost Cell welcomed the faculty back for the new academic year. Over the summer she and Dick Williamson worked on the disability/maternity/parental care leave policy; Dean Feiss has also had input. A draft, presumably a final draft, is now ready to be shared with the deans and the Executive Committee of the Faculty Assembly. As an amendment to the handbook this does not require approval of the various faculties, but Provost Cell would like to have each of the faculties review it. The policy should come before Arts and Sciences in October or November. We are currently being studied by the both governor's blue ribbon commission and by a joint legislative commission on higher education. We should bear in mind that four years ago there was a great deal of hostility to higher education, but that the combined work of the university presidents, the Business-Higher Education Council, and various legislative leaders was able to change the climate. The same resources are available now and we have reason to be hopeful. The Higher Education Subcommittee of the Senate Finance Committee visited the campus last summer. We thanked them for their support of the Swem Library construction, and then showed them the cramped and deteriorated condition of Millington Hall, our next priority for capital improvements.

Nominations for outstanding faculty awards are due in Richmond in early November. The Provost is currently setting up a committee to advise her on the appointment of the next three University Professors for Excellence in Teaching. She noted the progress made over the past year by Dennis Aebersold and Information technology, and congratulated the Arts and Sciences deans on this year's excellent orientation for new faculty.

Dean Feiss delayed his report until after the election.

III. Report of the Faculty Affairs Committee

David Dessler presented the following slate of nominees to serve on the Nominations & Elections Committee, which was approved without further nominations from the floor:

Area I

X Francie Cate-Arries, MLL

X Linda Reilly, Classics

Jerry Bledsoe, Theater and Speech

Maryse Fauvel, MLL

Area II

X Lu Ann Homza, History

Constance Pilkington, Psychology

Area III

George Rublein, Mathematics

X Laurie Sanderson, Biology

One-year replacement term:

X Bob Noonan, Computer Science

Brent Owens, Geology

Candidates whose names are marked with "X" were elected.

II. Reports of Administrative Officers (continued)

Dean Feiss reported that SHEV sent out a lengthy survey on general education last summer. Thanks to Mark Fowler, Randy Coleman, and the staffs of the Registrar's Office and Information Technology for help in gathering and reconfiguring the required information. The sound work on general education done by the faculty beginning in 1990 has resulted in a general education curriculum and assessment plan that stand up well under this scrutiny. In response to

the question of whether the report would be made available to the faculty, Feiss and Cell agreed that the report is based so entirely on existing documents that no purpose would be served in circulating the report itself. Among other recent developments, standards and procedures are now in place whereby departments may request emeritus status for retiring associate professors. Department chairs were asked to submit annual reports over the summer; these reports will provide starting points for upcoming meetings between the dean and each of the chairs. In consultation with the Faculty Affairs Committee, the dean has changed the term of department chairs to five years. Reappointment for up to three years is possible. We hired about twenty impressive new tenure-track faculty last year; we anticipate hiring an equal number this year. We have completed the first post-tenure review cycle; with some adjustments this promises to be a fruitful faculty development experience. Last year Geoff and Joel Schwartz initiated the Community of Scholars Fund, sponsoring a range of activities involving students and faculty outside the classroom. This year they will continue the project, but with double the funds. Students or faculty may initiate requests.

In discussion of the dean's report, Dean Feiss clarified that chairs are not precluded from taking research leaves during their terms. It was observed that the rigor of general education is being undermined by the increasing transfer of college credits earned through community colleges in high schools. Randy Coleman reported that the State Committee on Transfer, which he chairs, is looking into the issue and will report. The trend is troubling. It was further observed that we transfer a community college grade of C -, but do not give credit for an AP score of 3. Our own policies may thus be driving students away from AP and into increased use of transfer credit, particularly since the community college credit is available for a fee that is lower than that for the AP exam. Provost Cell observed that we agreed to the current system under very different circumstances; it is time to renegotiate. In regard to the new US News and World Report rankings, it was noted that while our national ranking is 32, our faculty resources ranking is 62 and spending per student is 129. Provost Cell noted that this very discrepancy is the source of our high efficiency rating. President Sullivan is working to address the problem. In response to whether we are preparing to begin a new fundraising

campaign, Cell answered that we have been working with a consulting firm on the question, but no decision has thus far been reached.

IV. Old Business

No old business was brought forward.

V. New Business

Gene Tracy reported that the new list of committee members currently being circulated is already out of date, as we need someone to serve a one-year replacement term on RPT. Arts and Sciences will also have to elect two additional representatives to the Faculty Assembly, as our constituencies have grown.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Galambush

Assistant Professor of Religion