

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
The College of William and Mary
November 3, 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

The secretary amended the October 6, 1998 minutes as follows:

Under III. Report of Faculty Affairs Committee, paragraph two, change the sentence beginning "The original motion was amended" to begin: "The motion to have evaluations submitted anonymously was amended. . . ." The minutes were approved as amended.

II. Reports of Administrative Officers

Provost Cell is on her way to New York on a development effort. In regard to midsemester reporting Randy Coleman noted that it is difficult to gauge our initial success given that the only reports received were those in which the instructor reported problems. That is, if an instructor posted a report for a class in which all students were performing adequately (or better) the report was not registered by the computer. Almost 700 reports were registered, about 240 of them on freshmen.

Suggestions for improvement included a means whereby an instructor can register "no problems" for a class and a more flexible means for instructors to indicate why a "marginal" or "unsatisfactory" rating was assigned. The question was raised as to whether this report is to be entered at midsemester, or is to reflect the student's performance through midsemester. The crucial factor is that the report be available in time for use during the advising period (in the fall semester, late October). It was noted that more and more sophomores are declaring majors in the fall. Do we therefore need more systematic concentration advising during the fall semester? Answer: probably so.

III. Report of the Faculty Affairs Committee

David Dessler introduced discussion of the latest draft of the Disability Leave Policy, noting that the Faculty Assembly expects to vote on this policy (or a future draft of it) at the November 24 meeting. Please address any concerns to askfac@facstaff.wm.edu and/or attend the assembly meeting. Barbara Watkinson, a member of the assembly's Academic Affairs Committee, provided a brief history pertaining to the policy.

Last year FAC began work rewording the disability policy, which, as set forth in the new handbook, drastically altered the college's maternity leave policy. FAC's goal was to draft a policy that reflected the desires of the A&S faculty. The FAC version recommended the

inclusion of parents-in-law as "family members," but this definition was not included in the final draft from the provost. Given the legal constraints governing such a policy, Dick Williamson was asked to work on the policy; the current draft is substantially Williamson's and is based on federal mandates. These mandates are, however, themselves undergoing revision and we will need to update the policy continually to reflect federal laws. Since the October Arts & Sciences meeting substantial changes have been made in the document: Under b.ii. Paid Dependent Care Leave, language stipulating that leave must be taken within a single semester was tempered to specify that leave should be taken within a single semester "if practicable." Under b.iv., Classroom Instruction, new language expresses a stronger commitment to replacing teaching personnel on leave. Section b.vii, Extension of Probationary Period, now specifies that persons using substantial leave or whose circumstances would have allowed them to use substantial leave during their probationary period may petition to have the probationary period extended.

Leisa Meyer noted that the policy continues to exclude the partners of lesbian, gay, and unmarried heterosexual faculty members, and moved that the faculty take a straw vote affirming that the term "family member" includes all members of a faculty member's household. It was noted that the issue of including same-sex partners in faculty benefits was addressed several years ago, and that the faculty sent a strong message at that time that we favor such inclusivity. The extent to which the faculty can "instruct" its representatives to the assembly was debated; it was agreed that the faculty can charge its representatives to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Faculty Assembly to revisit this question in light of the faculty's desires. The motion affirming the desire of the Arts and Sciences faculty that any paid disability policy be as inclusive as possible, and charging our representatives on the Academic Affairs Committee to consider this question in light of the faculty's desire was passed by unanimous voice vote. The faculty charged the Arts and Sciences members of the Faculty Assembly's Academic Affairs Committee to strive to craft a policy that will include lesbian, gay, and unmarried heterosexual partners under the rubric of "family members," even if the actual language of the policy document is not this specific.

Additional issues regarding the Disability Leave Policy included the still-unresolved question of how faculty members on leave are to be replaced, and the relationship of this policy to the state disability policy. The state policy, which is restricted to faculty on the VRS retirement plan, is separate from this, and is relevant only in cases of prolonged disability. Don Baxter moved a straw vote endorsing this disability leave policy, as qualified by our request for an inclusive definition of "family member." Such a statement effectively conveys the sense of the Arts & Sciences faculty to the assembly, despite our having no official vote on the question. It was observed that the policy is still under revision; the document voted on by the assembly may differ from the one we endorse today. The vote was therefore taken in regard to the current draft, with the more inclusive definition of "family member." The motion to endorse the current version of the Disability Leave Policy, with the request that the definition of "family member" be made more inclusive so as to include the partners of lesbian, gay, and unmarried heterosexual faculty members, was passed by unanimous voice vote.

Discussion turned to the status of noninstructional professional and administrative faculty members, who are covered by this leave policy, but who have no representation on the assembly, and are nonvoting members of the Arts & Sciences. The status of noninstructional faculty members within Arts & Sciences is ambiguous, as they do not report to the Dean of Arts & Sciences. A motion to advise the Arts & Sciences members of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Assembly to address the issue of representation for professional and administrative faculty on the Faculty Assembly was passed by unanimous voice vote. With neither old nor new business on the horizon, the meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Galambush

Assistant Professor of Religion