

Minutes of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

The College of William and Mary

March 2, 1999, Millington 150

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m. by Dean P. Geoffrey Feiss, presiding.

I. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Secretary proposed amending the posted minutes of the February meeting, replacing all references to a) the "Council of Graduate Studies" with "Council of Graduate Schools"; b) "Associate Dean Franz Gross" with "Dean Franz Gross"; and c) "standards outlined by the Council" with "standards outlined in the Faculty Handbook" (in section IV, on the discussion of section II/B/7 of the faculty manual). The minutes were approved as amended.

II. Reports of the Administrative Officers

President Sullivan reported on the outcome of the State Legislature's "short session." For William and Mary specifically there would be--in addition to the 20% tuition cut for in-state students--a) maintenance of funding for faculty salary increases, consistent with the Commonwealth's commitment to returning its institutions to the 60th percentile among their peer schools; b) a share of a \$650,000 increase in matching funds for eminent scholars; c) a \$570,000 increase in base operating budget (for buildings, library acquisitions, etc.); d) \$250,000 for the Peninsula economic development initiative; e) \$800,000 for planning the renovation and expansion of Millington Hall, along with an increase in the maintenance reserve fund (for necessary repairs to roofs, etc.); f) funds for upgraded utility service; g) more funding for VIMS, including \$200,000 for its aquaculture development center; and h) a 4% across-the-board raise for classified employees (beyond the 2.25% merit pay increase). With regard to the latter, President Sullivan noted that, as a result, administrative faculty would receive the lowest percentage salary raise of any employee group at the College this year, 4%.

Provost Cell congratulated Professor Talbot Taylor for being named recipient of one of eleven Outstanding Faculty Awards by the Virginia State Council on Higher Education, along with two recipients of NEH fellowships: professors Francie Cate-Arries and Chris Howard.

She voiced satisfaction with the progress in approving post-tenure review procedures, noting that all were now with either the Dean, Procedural Review or Personnel Policy.

Provost Cell also reported that the Faculty Assembly had failed to pass a non-academic leave policy but that this proposal will be returned to that body in March (two-thirds of the Assembly's total voting membership must approve in order for it to take effect).

The State Council on Higher Education (SCHEV) has released its report on university general education requirements: Provost Cell reported that, despite her requests, the document fails to make clear that its data do not reflect the College's new curriculum.

Director of Academic Advising Randy Coleman reported that the system for mid-semester reporting of students in academic difficulty is being revised: some 900 such reports were filed last semester, but not all faculty reported. He shared the concern of some faculty that failure to file such reports would undercut the premise on which undergraduate continuation requirements were raised last year--namely that the Advising Office would be able to help facilitate early intervention for such students. It was agreed that the students and their faculty advisors should be notified by email (in addition to the information being available on WORCS) that reports indicating mid-semester academic difficulties have been filed with the Advising Office. Concentration advisors (not just freshmen/sophomore advisors) are encouraged to check their WORCS page in order to see if students they advise are in jeopardy in particular courses.

Dean Feiss reported that the Strategic Plan Update Committee was soon to start work.

III. Nominations and Elections

Gene Tracy presented the following slates of nominees [X denotes elected].

ACADEMIC STATUS (2 positions, one each from Areas I and II)

Area I (1 position)

X Jesse Bohl (Philosophy)

Dan Gutwein (Music)

Area II (1 position)

Berhanu Abegaz (Economics)

X Satoshi Ito (Sociology)

EDUCATIONAL POLICY (3 positions, 2 from Area II and 1 from Area III)

Area II (2 positions)

Ray McCoy (Kinesiology)

Kim Phillips (History)

X Constance Pilkington (Psychology)

X Yana Rodgers (Economics)

Area III (1 position)

X Debbie Bebout (Chemistry)

Ed Remler (Physics)

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (2 positions)

X Martha Houle (MLL)

X Kris Lane (History)

Martin Mathes (Biology)

Deborah Morse (English)

SPECIAL APPOINTMENT Stewart Ware (Biology) has been appointed to the Educational Policy committee for the spring semester to replace a member who is on leave.

IV. Faculty Affairs Committee

David Dessler turned the proceedings over to Dean Franz Gross, who continued a discussion of proposed faculty manual provisions dealing with graduate study (Section II/B/7-13). It was stressed that all provisions approved today would be voted on again

when the entire handbook comes before the Arts and Sciences faculty for a final, official endorsement.

Section II/B/7 on Conduct and Supervision of independent research had been discussed at the February meeting, when concerns were raised about proposed language implying that faculty would have no say in a student's choice of research topics. In response, the Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS) proposed language clarifying that the "selection of a thesis or dissertation topic will be by mutual agreement between the student and the advisor."

In response to another question, Dean Gross said that he did not feel that a line requiring faculty to respect the independence of a student's research "to the extent permitted by the source of a student's funding" suggested that academic research was done solely for the funding agency: he noted that students themselves usually first choose a general area of research and then learn that funding is available (this occurs almost entirely in the sciences). This section was approved.

Section II/B/8 on Comprehensive Qualifying Examinations was approved.

On II/B/9, covering evaluation of student academic progress, Dean Gross noted that a minimum 3.0 grade point average is still needed for "satisfactory progress," but added that COGS did not want to restate this criterion--which is already listed in the Catalog--in the manual. A minor amendment for grammatical purposes was proposed and accepted, inserting the word "and" in the second paragraph. This section was approved.

Likewise on II/B/10, Reporting Grades, Dean Gross noted COGS' preference to leave a specific grading scale out of the manual itself. This section was approved.

Section II/B/11 on grade review will be discussed at the April meeting.

In discussing II/B/12 on procedures for grievances involving graduate students and faculty, Dean Gross noted that COGS had tried to preserve a sense of collegiality in its choice of terms like shall, should and must. In response to concern that department or program chairs not be left uninformed about a grievance in progress, he also agreed to an amendment ensuring that chairs would be notified. This section was approved as amended.

Section II/B/13 basically restates (new) university policy on the Honor System, which is described in the Student Handbook; procedural questions are handled by the Dean of Students. This section was also approved.

On behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC), David Dessler announced coming attractions for the April meeting: FAC proposals for a) new grade review procedures in the faculty manual-- including an appeals process that would no longer leave the ultimate decision to the faculty member, and b) several standardized questions on the student

course evaluation forms so as to allow College-wide comparisons. Dean Feiss encouraged everyone to attend and bring a friend.

V. Old Business

No old business was raised.

VI. New Business

No new business was raised.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clay Clemens, Associate Professor of Government

Secretary's Note: For those faculty who seem unable to attend the monthly Arts & Sciences meetings (as well as others who just can't get enough), the Secretary is considering proposals to make a complete boxed set of the tape recordings available at year's end. An additional suggestion is that faculty who have never attended receive the set in lieu of any merit pay increase. The feasibility of both proposals is being examined; the Secretary will report back.