

**Minutes of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
The College of William and Mary
February 12*, 2001, Millington 150**

[*moved from February 5 due to all-College meeting on the budget]

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

I. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the December, 2001 meeting were approved as posted.

II. Elections

Faculty Affairs Committee, Chair for 2002-2003

X Rex Kincaid (Mathematics)

Faculty Affairs Committee, Area II (one 2-year term)

Tomoko Hamada (Anthropology)

X Clyde Haulman (Economics)

Faculty Assembly, Area I (one 3-year term)

Barbette Spaeth (Classical Studies)

X Nancy Gray (English and Women's Studies)

Faculty Assembly, Area III (one 3-year term)

X Deborah Bebout (Chemistry)

John Drew (Mathematics)

International Studies Committee, three-year term (vote for two)

X Yangfang Tang (Modern Languages and Literatures)

Elizabeth Wiley (Theatre, Speech, and Dance)

Ismail Abdalla (History)

X Timmons Roberts (Sociology and Environmental Studies)

International Studies Committee, one-year term (vote for two)

Rachel Dinitto (Modern Languages and Literatures)

X Carey Bagdassarian (Chemistry)

X William Fisher (Anthropology)

Daniel Gutwein (Music)

Procedural Review, four-year term (vote for one)

Deborah Morse (English)

X Thomas Heacox (English)

III. Administrative Reports

Provost Cell reported that, as reported in the press, the Governor's most updated revenue figures were gloomier than expected, indicating an even higher budget deficit for the next biennium and thus by implication possible further budget cuts. Reports of his comments on tuition are somewhat confusing, she added, but the assumption is that the hard cap will be removed, making a rise of more than 5% possible. There is also discussion in the legislature of decoupling tuition from budget cuts, possibly meaning more freedom on the former (though the Assembly may have language on "intent" limiting any hike). Yet in any case the legislature will need \$100 million dollars to plug the hole. For its part the College needs to know the specifics and needs to figure out what the market will bear in terms of a tuition increase, especially for out of states.

Provost Cell pointed out that with the two legislative houses set to exchange bills on the upcoming weekend, the situation remained fluid. Events in Richmond may make it possible for the College to share more information with the faculty soon and an opening meeting will be held. She noted that the administration will also start working with the Budget Policy Advisory Committee on priorities. Hearings will also be scheduled to discuss affected programs and deans will consult with the relevant faculty advisory committees in each case. She again stressed that the administration would share information as soon as possible (no university has yet been able to do so). The College has drawn press heat for merely explaining the Governor's tuition plan.

Provost Cell thanked those faculty who attended the Charter Day ceremony. The Governor had spoken about education's importance to Virginia, stressing the link to economic development.

In reply to a question, Provost Cell noted that despite some modest talk in the press of an effort to raise taxes, the House speaker remains adamantly opposed and is likely to remain so short of a major change of opinion in that body. Yet she added that the more widely information about the effect of the cuts is reported the more likely the topic is to continue resurfacing.

One faculty member proposed that the College could economize by eliminating all printed material such as both, the course catalog, and the registration bulletin. It was pointed out the latter will indeed appear from now on in an on-line version only and the Flat Hat is covered by student fees.

Another faculty member who is on the ad hoc committee on the Child Care Center noted that the latter's report had been submitted a year ago and asked when the administration would respond, a matter of concern to many parents given the precariousness of its status (some of the report's recommendations had budgetary implications but not all). Provost Cell reported that there has been some progress in naming a new director and that the administration finds the report's recommendations sensible, but those with budgetary effects are a problem.

In response to a question, Provost Cell said she saw no sign as to whether the biennium's second year might be better in terms of the budget, and whether cuts will be across the board or not. There has been some hint of a shift from having one percentage for all but it was not yet clear. Most proposals now relate funding allocations to base adequacy assessment—those universities

lowest on the latter scale may not need to cut as much now, which means above all schools which have grown a good deal (the College is only in the middle of the pack in this sense).

The State Council on Higher Education has done a study on the salary effect of having no raises for four years linked to peer salaries and to the cost of living index, and a separate study of the effect of a 3.5% increase. The College would be in the 16th and 24th percentiles respectively.

In reply to a final question of whether departments should plan for the fall semester as usual or should consider canceling courses, Provost Cell agreed that the College has to plan now—it can't wait until March or April. College proposals to the State did include budget impact statements: fewer faculty will affect the number and size of courses, and whether all students will be able to graduate in time—these are things the public needs to know.

IV. Report of the Faculty Affairs Committee

Professor Katherine Kulick began with a brief update on Faculty Affairs Committee activities:

Budget: FAC has been discussing the Dean's possible cuts and setting priorities lists.

International Studies: FAC has been discussing a charge for the International Studies Committee.

Electronic Grade Review: After meeting with the Registrar, FAC believes this will not be possible until fall 2003 (given a lack of computer links between the former and Academic Advising)

Committee Appointments: FAC continues to recruit members. Former Graduate Dean Gene Tracy will chair a committee to set criteria for new graduate programs.

Policy Handbook Review: To date nine departments have received FAC feedback.

Grade Review: FAC has just modified the policy and it will come to the faculty in March.

After that, Professor Kulick submitted data that faculty members had requested in connection with December's discussion of undergraduate course loads. These data indicate that students average 14.7, 15.3, 15.1 and 14.9 credits in their four years, respectively (14.9 overall). Over 60% of all courses are 3 credits, less than 20% are 4 credit (20%+ for freshmen, about 10% for juniors). With one credit courses removed, the average course load is 4.3, 4.6, 4.6 and 4.4 in each of the four years respectively. She offered these data as a basis for further discussion.

One faculty member expressed skepticism about the fixation on course load, arguing that a case could just as easily be made for a three course load as for a four course load. Another asked if FAC had compared the College's course load to that of Ivy league schools (Professor Kulick said that it had not yet done so). It was asked whether given rising tuition etc. a comparatively heavy course load would price the College out of the market. Provost Cell reported that our peer schools overwhelmingly have four course loads. Another faculty member suggested that these

date confirm that we are spreading students too thinly across too many courses.

Another noted that this may be due as much to the GERS as the overall course load and asked about the impact of a lower course load on science concentrations. It was also pointed out again that any discussion of reduced course load would have a domino effect for concentrations, second concentrations, and other curricular issues. And it was stressed that lower loads would not mean more time to think about course material.

At this point Dean Feiss noted that the faculty appeared split and that perhaps departmental autonomy would have to prevail: he voiced reluctance to charge FAC with conducting a study. There was a proposal for an email vote of the faculty but this won little support because most participants would be uninformed by the debate. It was also noted that, if any study is to be done, the Educational Policy Committee rather than FAC do it. Yet a member of the previous curriculum review subcommittee on course load asked whether the faculty really wanted to get into another such process given everything else that is going on. Dean Watkinson pointed out that the EPC in any case is in the midst of reviewing GER assessments.

Finally it was proposed that the idea of a course load study be tabled until sometime next year once EPC has completed its other work. The motion passed on a voice vote.

V. Report of the International Studies Committee

Professor Chris Lane delivered the ISC report. He cited the President's commitment to getting students to study abroad and reported that participation in such programs is expanding: in the most recent year 22 students went to France, 49 to Florence, 10 to Beijing, 16 to Mexico and 69 to Cambridge. He also reported that the Asian Studies program has received a \$1.4 million grant from the Freeman Foundation. Finally he reported that the ISC has been working with the chairs, the FAC and the Reves Center in order to establish a clear charge: it is eager to cooperate with Reves—often it feels that its own decisions are not considered binding but the problem is solvable.

A question was raised as to whether a premed program was really compatible with junior year abroad given the need to take the MCAT in the junior year; it would require concluding all requirements by the end of sophomore year. Professor Lane agreed that this is a perennial problem; there is always the option of summer abroad. It was pointed out that the test can in fact be taken abroad, in Paris for example, though of course this requires a degree of organization.

A member of the ISC strongly seconded the notion that the committee feels a need for greater oversight of the Reves Center. Professor Lane noted that with the Center director at the Dean level, the ISC is more of an academic advisory committee. Another faculty member pointed out that the faculty does have ultimate control of the curriculum through the EPC. The ISC member noted that the real concern lies less with curriculum than with study abroad programs.

The Dean adjourned the meeting at 5:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Clay Clemens

Professor of Government

Secretary's Note: With budget cuts and the need to economize in mind, the Secretary urges faculty to make no more than one copy of each month's Arts and Sciences minutes. Plainly it is very useful to have multiple copies so that you can catch up on the events of these meetings whether at home, at the office, in your car, on vacation etc. And word has it that teachers are even distributing minutes to students for instruction in creative use of the passive voice. But at a time of budgetary shortfalls, these are the kind of luxuries we will have to learn to do without.