

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

**November 5, 2002
Millington 150**

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 October 1, 2002 meeting were approved as posted.

II. Nominations and Elections Committee

No activity this month.

III. Report of Administrative Officers

Dean Geoffrey Feiss discussed three items. First, Connie McCarthy, Dean of University Libraries, has announced that an anonymous faculty member has made a challenge grant of \$5,000 to match contributions by faculty to the Library. Those interested in contributing can go to the Swem web site. Since the Library budget has been cut \$400,000 this year, any contributions would be most welcome.

Secondly, after last month's presentation by three students from the Honor Council, FAS has established permanent contact with the Honor Council. Barbara Watkinson, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, has already met with them once.

Thirdly, Dean Feiss gave an update on the university's budget cuts and their impact on Arts & Sciences. The Finance Committee of the Board of Visitors has approved the university's plan for budget cuts and a mid-year tuition hike of \$400. There will be two new cuts in the Arts and Sciences budget totaling \$148,303: a reduction of \$84,000 for hiring adjunct faculty and the elimination of two classified positions, one in Applied Science and one in the Dean's Office, amounting to \$64,303.

Dean Feiss also explained upcoming cuts in the 2003-2004 budget. There will be a permanent cut of \$400,000 for adjunct faculty positions (that is, 90 course sections), and there will be a reorganization of Academic Advising which reduces its budget by \$125,000. At this time, the total reduction in the Arts and Sciences budget for next year is \$525,000. The university still needs to cut the 2003-2004 budget by \$2,821,493, however, so Arts & Sciences may take further cuts. Dean Feiss explained that tuition hikes are being considered for next year. The revenue generated by an increase in tuition of \$100 is \$587,500. Until the next biennial budget is determined, Arts & Sciences also has to watch faculty hiring. This year 24 searches were authorized. On November 6, 2002, Dean Feiss will authorize certain department chairs to proceed with 9 of those searches. Three searches have been suspended; the other 12 are in limbo, awaiting the new state budget.

Dean Feiss then took questions. Asked whether funding for Faculty Research Assignments will be cut next year, the Dean said that this issue has not been decided. Right now, review of applications for FRAs is suspended, pending future budget determinations. To the question whether the policy on personal leaves will change, the Dean said that has not been discussed.

IV. Report by the Committee on Degrees

Report available at <http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/committeondegrees/COD%20Academic%20Year%20Report%202001-2002.pdf>.

V. Report by the Academic Status Committee

Report available at (<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/academicstatus/Annual%20Report%202001-2002.pdf>)

VI. Report of the Faculty Affairs Committee

Rex Kincaid led a discussion of the question: **Should we be concerned that W&M has experienced a 13% increase in the average undergraduate GPA over the last 15 years, even though this increase is partly explained by an accompanying increase in student quality?**

In the spirited discussion, faculty members made many points and raised many questions. Several said that “student quality” has *not* increased in the last 15 years. Many suggested factors that might explain the increased average GPA, such as improved teaching and changed policies allowing students to drop courses later in the semester. Some asked about possible mechanisms to lower the average GPA across the College and whether they might do more harm than good. Some pointed out that average GPAs at W&M are low compared with peer institutions, so that our students are at a disadvantage upon graduation. Several suggested monitoring grade distributions within departments and across the College. Some pointed out that data on grade distribution within departments used to be provided by the Registrar’s Office to department chairs, and data on all departments used to be public information. Several chairs said that the Registrar should at least provide data to department chairs who request it for their departments, since some departments use such data for RPT decisions. After the 30-minute time limit was reached, this discussion was ended.

VI. Old Business

None.

VII. New Business

John Gilmour presented a motion regarding the university’s plans to build a new parking deck at the cost of \$10.8 million. In the discussion, all faculty who spoke favored the spirit of the resolution. An amendment passed unanimously, adding the following at the end of the proposed resolution: “The Faculty further urges the College to reconsider whether a parking deck is needed at all.”

The resolution as amended was approved unanimously, and will be sent to the President, the Provost, the Vice President for Administration, and the President of the Faculty Assembly. The resolution reads:

Whereas, The College is planning to build a parking deck at a cost of \$10.8 million, and this deck will be paid for out of parking fees from students, faculty, and staff;

Whereas the “reconfiguration” of the Zable parking lot will cost \$600,000, be paid for out of parking fees, and eliminate 100 parking spaces;

Whereas construction of the new business school will reduce parking by 318 spaces, without making any provision for replacing them or paying for their replacement;

Whereas the new parking deck will provide a net increase of only 82 parking spaces, which will cost \$132,000 each;

Whereas the Administration of the College have not provided a compelling justification of why the faculty, staff, and students should, through their parking fees, subsidize the construction of the new Business School, pay for the beautification of Zable parking lot, and build a new police station:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of the College of William and Mary,

- (1) The faculty urges the College to defer plans to build the proposed parking deck until arrangements can be made for the Business School to pay for a share of parking spaces in the new parking deck sufficient to offset the number of parking spaces business school construction will eliminate.
- (2) The faculty urges the College to abandon its plans to “reconfigure” the Zable lot and eliminate parking spaces. It is wholly inappropriate for the college to engage in a costly beautification project of this kind at a time of financial crisis, and equally inappropriate to pay for such a project through parking fees.
- (3) The faculty urges the College to adopt a policy of requiring construction projects that eliminate parking spaces either to provide replacement parking or to pay for the real cost of replacing those spaces.
- (4) The faculty further urges the College to reconsider whether a parking deck is needed at all.

Dean Feiss adjourned the meeting at 4:42.

Respectfully submitted,

John Morreall
Professor of Religion