

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

**November 4, 2003
Small 113**

The meeting was called to order at 3:38 p.m. by Dean Barbara Watkinson.

I. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the September 2, 2003 meeting were approved as posted.

II. Report of Administrative Officers

Dean Watkinson announced that Item IV on the agenda, the Report of the RPT Committee, was postponed to the December meeting. Item VI. B., the College Scholars Program GER's, was also postponed.

Gene Tracy, chair of the search committee for the Dean of Arts & Sciences, reported that 110 applications had been received, and that the committee would begin reviewing them immediately. Those on the first short list will be interviewed off-campus, to maintain confidentiality. From those interviews will come a shorter list for on-campus interviews of two full days in late January-early February. Then the committee will send four recommendations to the Provost by March 1. The target starting date for the new Dean is July 1, 2004.

III. Report on the College Scholars Program

Tamara Sonn and Talbot Taylor, co-directors of the new College Scholars Program, gave an overview of the program. Its goal is to attract the country's best undergraduate students to W&M. Four students will be chosen each year. The competition is stiff for attracting these students. The UNC Morehead Scholarship, e.g., includes full tuition, room, board, expenses, a laptop computer, and internships. The UVa Jefferson Scholarship includes a full ride plus five weeks of foreign travel. The W&M program will cover most of the tuition, \$6,000 of research support, integration into Monroe Scholars activities, and special cross-disciplinary freshman seminars. The benefits to the college include increased visibility, applications from outstanding students, higher yields on Admissions offers to outstanding students, and more Rhodes, Marshall, etc. Scholars.

IV. Report of the RPT Committee (postponed until December)

V. Report of the Committee on Degrees

Ed Pratt reported on the activities of the committee last year, when it was chaired by Barbara Watkinson. The committee took two kinds of actions. One kind included changing Major requirements and waiving the Senior Residency Requirement. Of those there were 122 in the Fall and 32 in the Spring. The other kind of action included substituting courses for courses required by Gen Ed requirements. The committee considered 68 of these and approved 50.

VI. Report of the Educational Policy Committee (<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/epcdocuments.php>)

Jennifer Taylor explained the committee's proposed changes to the criteria for GER 1, GER 3, and GER 5 courses. The changes for GER 1 and GER 3 courses, she said, were not substantive, but merely made the criteria clearer. The motion to approve those changes PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

As the faculty discussed the changes to the GER 5 criteria, however, it became clear that a substantive change was involved. The words "and/or" between two requirements had been changed to "and," making the requirements more stringent. Some faculty favored the new criteria, but others said that there would be problems with the courses which had qualified under the current criteria. A motion was made to return the

GER Proposed Revisions to EPC for further discussion and consultation with department chairs. That motion PASSED.

VII. Report of the Faculty Affairs Committee

Clyde Haulman said that students have proposed a system under which they could schedule their own final examinations. FAC has asked EPC for a recommendation on this proposal.

Prof. Haulman presented a motion and led a discussion on Electronic Course Evaluations.

Motion: The Faculty of Arts and Sciences supports allowing each department or program to select its method of student course evaluation, either the electronic or the paper method recently recommended by the Faculty Assembly.

In the discussion, Dean Watkinson pointed out that in her poll of department chairs, all agreed that each department should have a uniform method of conducting student course evaluations, but half wanted to use the electronic method and half the paper method. She also explained that departments using paper evaluations would have to pay for those evaluations.

Many faculty expressed concern about the effects which shifting to electronic evaluations will have on tenure and promotion evaluations, since in the experience of the English Department, students using the electronic method give lower numerical scores to faculty, and their written comments are shorter. At least some students appear to resent having to do the evaluations outside of class time.

Some faculty favored a moratorium on using the results of the electronic evaluations in promotion and tenure decisions, until the process was working well.

Some asked whether if a department chooses one method of evaluation, they would be allowed to switch back. It was agreed that they would.

Prof. Ventis said that the Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Assembly will consider the whole issue of changing to electronic evaluations.

After lengthy discussion, the question was called. Faculty voted by standing up. The motion passed, with about ten votes against it.

In the absence of Old Business and New Business, Dean Watkinson adjourned the meeting at 5:10.

Respectfully submitted,

John Morreall
Professor of Religion