

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

**December 2, 2003
Small 113**

The meeting was called to order at 3:36 p.m. by Dean Barbara Watkinson.

I. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the November 4, 2003 meeting were approved as posted.

II. Nominations and Elections Committee

A. Replacement Elections for Educational Policy Committees

Area I James Armstrong (Music)
X Deborah Morse (English)

B. Replacement Elections for Faculty Affairs Committee

Area I X Terry Meyers (English)
Richard Palmer (Theatre, Speech and Dance)

Area II Kathleen Slevin (Sociology)
X Mary Voigt (Anthropology)

Area III—Faculty Affairs Committee and Faculty Assembly
X David Armstrong (Physics)
Robert Pike (Chemistry)

III. Report of Administrative Officers

A. Provost Geoffrey Feiss said that the State budget process is underway. The Senate projects an \$800 million shortfall, the Governor a 1.2 billion shortfall. The Governor has released his Tax Reform Plan and will issue his biennial budget on December 18, 2003. Until then, the university can't do detailed planning. Provost Feiss expressed guarded optimism that the Governor's budget will not cut funding for higher education and will begin to address the issue of "base adequacy"—the underfunding of WM and other schools. In the state's own assessment, the College budget should be increased \$21 million to bring it up to the level of peer institutions. The highest priority in every budget Provost Feiss has seen is increasing faculty salaries. The new budget should also have some funds for research initiatives.

Some campus parking will be by permit only on Saturday, Dec. 6, 2003, because of the Williamsburg Holiday Parade. Details are forthcoming on Faculty Digest.

Provost Feiss said that the administration is working with other schools in Virginia on a restructuring initiative to redefine the relationship between these schools and the state government. This work is in the early stages, and a bill will go to the General Assembly this year. The outcome may be a new category of "Charter University" which receives less funding from the state but has greater autonomy in purchasing, capital outlay, etc., along the lines of the University of Michigan. One possibility is that as Charter Universities, the College of W&M, the University of Virginia, and Virginia Tech may form a consortium. In response to a question, Provost Feiss said that under the proposed system, the Governor would still appoint the Board of Visitors.

Provost Feiss also announced that following a bill passed last year, the Virginia Retirement System, starting July 1, 2004, will restrict the choice of retirement plans to just three: the state plan, TIAA-CREF, and Fidelity. There may also be restrictions about the choice of plans within TIAA-CREF. Supplementary (403b) plans are not affected.

B. Gene Tracy, chair of the search committee for the Dean of Arts & Sciences, reported that from the more than 140 applications received, the committee had chosen ten semifinalists and might choose two more. From interviews with them in January and February, it will select three finalists to recommend to the Provost by March 1, 2004. That list of three will not be rank ordered.

Dean Barbara Watkinson announced a Holiday Party in the Dean's office on Wednesday, December 10, from 2 to 4 PM.

IV. Report from Faculty Assembly

Faculty who have not yet completed the Faculty Survey were encouraged to do so at <https://web.wm.edu/facultysurvey>. The survey will be open through Thursday, December 4. A second part of the survey will be conducted in February 2004. The opinions gathered will be especially important for the new Dean.

Among the issues being studied by the Faculty Assembly is the Post-Tenure Review process.

Faculty assembly has received two resolutions which had been sent to the Board of Visitors, proposing that the College divest itself of all investments in companies doing business in Burma.

The Executive Committee of Faculty Assembly meets monthly with the Provost. Any faculty wishing to have an issue aired should contact Chris Abelt (Chemistry), cjabel@wm.edu, 221-2551.

V. Reports of Committees

A. RPT Committee report available at <http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/rpt/20031202.pdf>

B. EPC Report. Jenny Taylor reported that the EPC has arranged for freshmen to take a test in computer literacy. Of 1388 freshmen students, 1319 took the test and 1310 passed. The committee is considering what to do with students who fail the test and students who refuse to take it.

Prof. Taylor brought back a tabled motion, a proposed revision to the description of GER 5 criteria:

A liberally educated person should possess knowledge of important literary or artistic achievements, and how those achievements should be understood in their cultural contexts. A course satisfies GER 5 in one of the following ways:

- 1) it would introduce students to at least two major forms, genres, eras, cultures, or movements; or
- 2) it would introduce students to at least two methods of analysis of art or literature.

All GER 5 courses will provide students with the vocabulary of the discipline and teach them to apply the appropriate methodologies for critical analysis.

http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/epc/reports/GER_5_Proposed_Revisions.pdf

Motion passed unanimously.

EPC has rejected a proposal from students for instituting a system of self-scheduled exams. Such a system, Prof. Taylor said, would be too onerous on faculty.

EPC has met with Profs. Talbot Taylor and Tamara Sonn regarding their request for flexibility in GER courses for students in the new College Scholars Program. An EPC vote on this request was deadlocked, so this request will come to FAS.

EPC approved changes in twelve courses last year.

C. Academic Status Report available at

<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/academicstatus/Annual%20Report%202002-2003.pdf>

D. FAC Report. Clyde Haulman thanked EPC for handling the proposal from students for self-scheduled exams. He then introduced two motions:

Motion 1: Student course evaluations are required by the College administration as a component of dossiers for faculty evaluations. Therefore, it is the strong opinion of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences that the Provost's Office must continue full financial support of student course evaluations, regardless of whether the evaluations are paper-based or on-line. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Motion 2: The Faculty of Arts and Sciences hereby reaffirms the long-standing policy that numerical scores for student evaluations of teaching shall not be compared across departments and/or programs. **Motion passed unanimously.**

In the absence of Old Business and New Business, Dean Watkinson adjourned the meeting at 4:20.

Respectfully submitted,

John Morreall
Professor of Religion