

**Minutes of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
The College of William and Mary
October 4, 2005
Millington 150**

The meeting was called to order at 3:37 p.m. by Dean Carl Strikwerda.

I. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the September 6, 2005 meeting were approved as posted:

<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/minutes/20050906.pdf>

II. Reports of Administrative Officers

- A. Provost Geoff Feiss. The Provost reported that the six-year academic plan required under the Higher Education Restructuring Act of 2005 had been submitted to the state. He also reported that a draft of the financial plan had been completed and that the College was waiting on the Governor's budget before finalizing and submitting it. He observed that the tuition models contained in the plan depended on state funding levels (e.g. a publicized 9.4% increase would be implemented only if there were no state funding) and therefore ought to be interpreted with caution. He also reported that the management agreements necessary for Level III status were being negotiated.

Response to a question from Jim Axtell (History) on the projected percentage of the new College budget earmarked for faculty salary increases: Provost Feiss summarized the projected increases over the next five years that would be undertaken in order to reach the stated goal of bringing the College up into the 60th percentile among peer institutions: 5% in 2006-07, and 4% each in 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09.

The Provost announced retiring U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's appointment as the next Chancellor of the College. He then reported on the NCAA-mandated self-study underway on the issue of the College's nickname.

- B. Dean Carl Strikwerda. The Dean reported that six new chairs had been appointed for the current academic year and that he was working on another six new chair appointments for next year. He also reported that 27 authorized faculty searches were to be conducted during the current academic year and that he was making plans for the creation of ten new tenure-track lines (primarily using lines freed up by retirements)—evenly balanced among the sciences (3), the social sciences (3), and the humanities (4).

III. Faculty Assembly Report by Alan Fuchs

FA representative Fuchs (Philosophy) reported that an FA committee, chaired by David Armstrong (Physics) and Alan Meese (Law School), had been formed to study proposed changes to the faculty research program. He also summarized a report to the FA from Vice President Bill Walker on a survey conducted among prospective new students. The report confirmed William and Mary's status as a "hot" college, but somewhat surprisingly revealed that a majority of those surveyed believed that class sizes were smaller and faculty-student contact was greater at the University of Virginia than at the College.

IV. Report by Carl Carlson, Chair, Committee on Retention, Promotion, and Tenure

RPT Chair Carlson (Physics) reported that the committee was currently considering 12 departmental tenure recommendations and summarized the 2004-05 committee report posted on the Web:

<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/rpt/20051004.pdf>

Response to a question from Jim Axtell (History) on the high rate (90%) of positive tenure decisions: RPT does not consider percentages, but decides cases on the basis of their individual merit. Dean Strikwerda added that the College's results were in line with the national average; both the Dean and Provost Feiss stressed that the College's average 80% positive tenure decision rate for a given TE cohort was a more significant figure.

Response to a question from Richard Palmer (Theatre, Speech, and Dance) on the new policy requiring that all student evaluations be sent forward in tenure cases: Carlson said that the change was more bureaucratic than substantive given that this was already standard practice in most cases.

V. Report by Terry Meyers, Chair, Faculty Affairs Committee

Meyers (English) summarized the committee's responsibilities and invited faculty to use a special e-mail address to contact the committee's six members about issues they would like the committee to take up: ASKFAC@wm.edu. He also reported on recent committee business. In June, Meyers and outgoing FAC Chair Lu Ann Holmza wrote a letter to President Sullivan asking why the faculty had not been consulted on the stadium lighting project. At the beginning of the current academic year, it advised the Dean on a 1993 memo on time in rank before promotion; reviewed A&S by-laws in preparation for their submission to the BOV; worked with the Chair of the Academic Status Committee on new language in the A&S Manual on Internet security and enforcement of the policy regarding the timely reporting of final grades by faculty; discussed the preliminary draft of the Provost's FRA proposal; discussed ways to handle possible conflicts of interest on the International Studies Committee and other committees; offered advice on possible changes to the format, required use, and availability of standard format CVs, and forwarded a model for the evaluation of adjunct and visiting faculty to the DAC.

Discussion of proposed new language on the handling of student complaints to be included in the Chairs and Dean's Handbooks and Faculty Manual, Paragraph B of the text posted on the Web:

[http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/other/studentcomplaints%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/other/studentcomplaints%20(1).pdf)

Barbara King (Anthropology) proposed an amendment changing the wording of the critical passage from "...the dean will first consider whether the complaint might be other than trivial. If it is, he or she will relay..." to "... the dean will first consider whether the complaint is trivial. If it is not, he or she will relay..." The amendment passed. There was discussion of the use of the term "trivial." A proposed amendment using different language did not pass. Paragraph B was approved as originally amended.

VI. Provost Geoff Feiss and Vice-Provost Dennis Manos, Proposed Revisions to the Faculty Research Leave Program

Provost Feiss explained that his proposal (see <http://www.wm.edu/facultyassembly/>) was designed to enhance research capability, make the research leave program more sustainable, improve leave quality and accountability, leverage an important College resource, and make leaves more predictable. He then used a series of pie charts to put faculty research funding at the College into financial perspective. He stressed that the current FRA program was financially untenable in the long run.

Faculty questions and comments centered on three main aspects of the Provost's proposal: 1) the provision requiring faculty to apply to the Dean for a full-year leave; 2) departmental responsibility for assessing faculty eligibility for automatic leaves; and 3) the absence of guaranteed money for replacing faculty on leave.

Barbara King (Anthropology) asked how research leaves would be made more predictable if full-year leaves were subject to the Dean's approval of a special proposal.

Barbette Spaeth (Classical Studies) asked why responsibility for approval of full-year leaves had been moved from a faculty committee to the Dean's office. Provost Feiss responded that the more important point was that there would no longer be an approval process for semester research leaves.

Will Hausman (Economics) argued that the proposal discouraged full-year leaves by taking the decision about this option out of the hands of individuals and also remarked that the difference in the cost to the College of a year at 80% of full salary and a year at 75% was statistically insignificant. Provost Feiss responded that there was only enough money to replace faculty for a semester. Dean Strikwerda added that the full-year leave at 80% was too generous. He also said that the unpredictability of the current system made it harder to use the faculty research leave program as a recruiting tool.

Joel Schwartz (Government) remarked that the proposal would make replacing faculty on leave and staffing certain important courses much less predictable without guaranteed replacements. Provost Feiss responded that the proposal's vagueness with respect to faculty replacements was dictated by the fluidity of budgets and urged the faculty to trust his office not to short-change the faculty.

Barbara Watkinson (Art and Art History) warned that non-guaranteed replacements for even semester leaves could have a harmful impact on small departments and programs. Provost Feiss responded that it might be possible to negotiate guarantees for small programs.

Eric Jensen (Economics) asked why 40 senior SRGs were included in the plan if the budget situation was so difficult. Provost Feiss responded that his consultations with the faculty led him to believe that this was what the faculty wanted.

Sarah Stafford (Economics) asked why there was no extra money for full-year leaves salaries, but money for travel, which is not something that all departments need for research.

Suzanne Raitt (Women's Studies) asked how one could be certain that the faculty wanted senior SRGs and she wanted to know what had been made of the recent faculty survey that indicated faculty wanted to maintain full-year leaves. She suggested that more polling could be done on these issues.

Debbie Bebout (Chemistry) remarked that shifting teaching loads to people not on leave would make it harder for *them* to do research.

Chris Howard (Government) stated that even big programs would have cause for concern about who would be teaching their students while key faculty were on leave and added that one would probably have to increase the size of the faculty to cover teaching needs.

Rob Leventhal (Modern Languages) took issue with the proposal's language on faculty eligibility for automatic leaves as well as its references to faculty who might choose to emphasize teaching and service instead of an active research agenda. He argued that faculty who invested more time in teaching and mentoring were those who most needed FRAs. Dean Strikwerda responded that some faculty members simply did not have the track record to qualify for an FRA and said that disqualified faculty could reapply.

Colleen Kennedy (English/LCST) disputed the implication that raising questions about replacement funding meant that the faculty did not trust the Provost and suggested that making full-year leaves more difficult to obtain would have a negative impact on recruitment. Provost Feiss and Vice-Provost Manos reiterated that a guaranteed leave every six years under current conditions would be financially impossible.

Bob Archibald (Economics) suggested that disqualifying certain individuals at the department level would be too controversial.

Barbara King (Anthropology) urged greater sensitivity to faculty concerns about the full-year option.

Will Hausman (Economics) recalled the results of the recent faculty survey, in which salary, FRAs (with the option of a full year at 80% normal salary), and junior leaves emerged as high priorities.

Heather Macdonald (Geology) stated that the faculty should appreciate the positive intent of the Provost's proposal and suggested that the Faculty Assembly should give a clear indication of the kind of language it would like to see regarding issues like the full-year option and the replacement of faculty on leave.

Terry Meyers (English) asked if the proposal expanded the FRA program for people who didn't deserve it. He also suggested that we should show greater clarity and resolve regarding faculty research support as a budgetary priority. In his response, Dean Strikwerda suggested that one could consider building in a non-TE line in each department to cover the courses of faculty on leave, but he acknowledged that this could present a problem of equity in teaching loads.

Paul Heideman (Biology) maintained that the proposal would shift inequities to departments and create pressure to declare everyone eligible. Dean Strikwerda responded that an eligibility review mechanism should be built into the new system.

Connie Pilkington (Psychology) suggested that one should focus more attention on the needs of different groups of departments and programs rather than implement a one-size-fits-all approach.

Keith Griffioen (Physics) suggested that 10% faculty growth would meet additional staffing needs created by the guaranteed semester leaves and said that it should be possible to use adjuncts to cover courses of faculty on full-year leave at reduced pay. Provost Feiss responded that faculty growth would be hard.

Dale Hoak (History) reiterated that guaranteed leaves should be the essence of any changes to the faculty research leave policy.

Provost Feiss concluded the discussion by stressing that he had no vested interest in the proposal and said that he was looking forward to going back to the Faculty Assembly for further discussion of it. He also stressed that he would make his final decision in consultation with the deans.

Dean Strikwerda adjourned the meeting at 5:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Leruth
Associate Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures