

**Minutes of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
The College of William and Mary
December 11, 2007
Millington 150**

Dean Carl Strikwerda called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

I. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the November meeting were approved as posted.

<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/minutes/20071106.pdf>

II. Remarks by Dean Carl Strikwerda

Dean Strikwerda reported on searches underway and progress in the naming of new department chairs. He noted that he had seen few signs of current faculty going on the job market, which he considered a good sign, attributable to recent salary increases. He then reported that a gift of \$250,000 for the student-faculty research initiative was nearly finalized. He also reported that the A & S budget priorities had been submitted to the Faculty University Priorities Committee: increased funding for M & O, graduate stipends, and research start-up packages; and special funding for three positions (Sharpe Program director and instructors in Arabic, Japanese, and Chinese). He said that RPT had completed its work on fifteen tenure cases for which he was in the process of drafting his letters. He then turned his attention to more good news about outside funding: the \$1.5 million grant from the Mellon Foundation, an endowment for the post-doctoral program in Environmental Science and Policy, and a matching funds challenge grant for the Geographic Information System (GIS) stipulating that the College must raise 2 to 1 money in order to qualify.

III. Report of Administrative Officer: Provost Geoff Feiss

Provost Feiss reported that the current year's \$3 million budgets cuts would be continued as base budget cuts into at least the first year of the next budget biennium. He also reported that a general obligation bond for higher education would be placed on the ballot in 2008 and remarked the timing during a presidential election should be a good thing for us. He went on to say that the College could continue to count on strong support in the Legislature from Senator Tommy Norment and Delegate Phil Hamilton. He then reported that student input was being sought on the web redesign project and noted that 70% of all hits went to Admissions. He qualified progress on the Faculty Handbook revisions—including the sections on grievances and allegations of misconduct—as “huge.”

David Lutzer (Math) asked for more information on the current budget cuts and any feeling the Provost had from the BOV regarding how the College might offset further cuts next year. The Provost responded that no additional cuts were foreseen for the current year and noted that a modified hiring freeze on administrative positions had been instituted. He indicated that tuition increases were likely in the future and said that he would be surprised if they could be kept under double digits if the College intended to stay on target for some of its long-range goals (reaching the 60th percentile for faculty salaries, the new Human Resources system, etc.) but that he could not predict how far the College could go in terms of the political ramifications and fallout from large tuition hikes.

IV. Faculty Affairs Committee Report, Margaret Saha

Saha (Biology) reported that the FAC continued to advise the Dean on a number of issues including courseloads, private funding for honors research, and committee relief during junior leaves. She also reported on meetings with the Affirmative Action Committee, the A & S members of the Faculty University Priorities Committee, and Dean Kim Phillips on the Undergraduate Research Initiative database and improvements to the research reporting form for faculty. In response to a question from David Lutzer about criticisms of the Biased Reporting System, Saha noted that the report from the Diversity Committee scheduled for the December 2007 meeting had been postponed until the February 2008 meeting to allow more time for discussion, gathering information on new developments, and an awaited Faculty Assembly report on the matter.

V. Nominations and Elections Committee Report, Steve Knudson

Filling in for Elizabeth Wiley (Theatre, Speech, and Dance), Knudson (Chemistry) presented the slate of candidates for the December elections to the Faculty Affairs Committee:

<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/nominationelection/20071211.pdf>

Election to the Faculty Affairs Committee:

Area I, 3-year term, 2008-2011, joint position with Faculty Assembly, vote for one

Barbette Spaeth (Classical Studies)

Marc Lee Raphael (Religious Studies)

Area II, 3-year term, 2008-2011, joint position with Faculty Assembly, vote for one

Sarah Stafford (Economics)

Timmons Roberts (Sociology)

There were no nominations from the floor; nominations were closed.

VI. Discussion and Vote on Proposed Amendments to the A & S Bylaws

Prior to the discussion and vote, Bill Cooke (Physics) raised the issue of the appropriateness of a vote without a quorum. Dean Strikwerda acknowledged that there have been past proposals to conduct A & S business in a different type of body, such as a general assembly of the faculty, but he stressed the fact there was an established tradition of conducting business without a quorum provided that there were no objections from the floor. The discussion then proceeded with Margaret Saha and Dean Strikwerda reviewing the proposed amendments:

<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/facultyaffairs/Bylawsdraft20071125.pdf>

The major changes concerned the procedures for electronic voting, the beginning of terms for faculty committees, the reorganization of the Dean's office and the respective responsibilities of the Dean of Educational Policy and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Committee on Honors and Interdisciplinary Studies oversight of interdisciplinary majors and minors, and the curricular and other duties of the Study Abroad Committee. Dean Kim Phillips reported an additional change to be made involving the Dean for Educational Policy's responsibility for the Committee on Degrees.

The proposed amendments passed by a unanimous voice vote.

VII. Discussion and Vote on Proposed Changes to the A & S Faculty Manual on Reporting Grades

<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/facultyaffairs/reportinggradesmemorev1.pdf>

Dean Strikwerda explained that the proposed changes arose from the switch to electronic grading and the need for a mechanism to make sure that instructors turned in their grades on time—a particularly pressing issue following the fall semester given the Committee on Academic Status' normally scheduled meeting a few days after the grade deadline to make decisions on academic probation and related matters. The Dean also cited the example of one faculty member who had turned in his grades late six semesters in a row. According to the proposed changes, the Dean's office, through the appropriate contact dean, will now get involved by first contacting department chairs to ask them to look into late grades and request their prompt completion, and provides for the eventual summoning of repeat offenders to a meeting with the Dean and their department chair or program director, as well as the possible initiation of prescribed procedures for sanctions.

The proposed changes were approved by a unanimous voice vote.

VIII. Educational Policy Committee Report

Filling in for J.C. Poutsma, Dean Phillips offered highlights of the EPC Annual Report for 2006-07:

<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/faculty/documents/epcreports/Annual%20Report%20May%202007.pdf>

Approval was granted for an increase in the maximum number of summer session credits from 7 to 8 per session, the university seminar, new undergraduate majors in Global Studies and Chinese, new undergraduate minors in Global Studies and Judaic Studies, study abroad registration changes, 83 new courses, 16 GER credit approvals for courses, and curricular changes in 10 departmental programs. EPC oversaw the completion of the assessments of GERs 5, 7, and the Freshman Seminar, and is currently overseeing the assessments of GERs 3 and 6.

IX. Faculty Assembly Report, Gene Tracy

Tracy (Physics) reported that the Faculty Survey was now posted on the FA website and said that the Faculty Handbook revisions were on track for a presentation to the BOV later in the year. He then reported on fruitful discussions with the Administration regarding the online Bias Reporting System. He said that there was shared concern over the original system's violation of College policy and possible effect on free speech and he noted that the website had been completely rewritten. He said that the FA was comfortable, but not yet completely satisfied, with the progress made thus far and promised that there would be further discussions, including an invitation to a representative of the Diversity Committee to explain how the website came about in the first place. Tracy then reported on efforts to push for divestment in Sudan in response to the Darfur crisis. After the FA passed a resolution urging both the College Administration and William & Mary Foundation to divest, the BOV passed a resolution in favor of divestment that went farther than the original FA proposal. He said that he was unsure whether the BOV action constituted policy or a simple recommendation. Tracy continued his report by previewing an upcoming meeting with President Nichol on the President's conception of W & M as a "liberal arts research university."

Tracy concluded his report by announcing that the President had asked the FA look into the advisability of his signing the Climate Statement that was sent to him. Tracy said that the Academic Affairs Committee of the FA would concentrate on the possible curricular ramifications of a presidential signature. David Lutzer asked exactly what the FA would be looking into given that jurisdiction over the curriculum belonged to faculty committees in the College's different academic divisions, such as A & S. Tracy explained that the Academic Affairs Committee would not discuss the particulars of curricular policy but would initially look into how other universities interpret the language of the statement, which some read as requiring all students to participate in learning experience about sustainability, while others see it as simply requiring that opportunities to learn about sustainability be provided. In the ensuing discussion, David Lutzer and Alan Fuchs (Philosophy) stressed that only faculty committees had the authority to discuss and make changes to academic policy and urged the FA to make this clear to the President; they also expressed concerns about the broader issue of presidential mandates over the curriculum. Bill Cooke observed that FA discussions of the issue focused on whether or not a curricular mandate was implicit in the language of the statement and that there was never any confusion about the fact that the actual implications of any mandate were the province of the faculty in each of the four schools of the College—in other words, no one ever considered the idea making curricular policy "at the top" in the FA. Tracy reminded the faculty that the FA hasn't yet recommended that the President sign the statement because of the need to fully discuss all the potential implications of his signature. He went on to say that it should be seen as a good sign that the President wanted faculty input on the issue. Terry Myers (English) invited those interested to attend the following week's FA meeting, at which they would have the opportunity to ask the President questions about this or any other issue of concern to them.

X. Additional Remarks by Dean Carl Strikwerda

Dean Strikwerda offered an update on the ongoing process of program reviews being conducted in interdisciplinary clusters: Philosophy, Classical Studies, and Religious Studies in 2006-07; Modern Languages and Literatures and Global Studies in 2007-08; and Applied Science, Computer Science, Physics, and Math in 2008-09. He maintained that the cluster approach would be both more efficient and more meaningful for the College. Bill Cooke asked about the feasibility of doing undergraduate and graduate program reviews at the same time. Dean Strikwerda explained that different members of the outside review team could be tasked with focusing on graduate and undergraduate programs in given departments and also pointed out that comparable institutions (strong undergraduate institutions also offering graduate programs) had proceeded in a similar fashion. He then said that the review process would become quite cumbersome if it had to be repeated for each degree.

Dean Strikwerda adjourned the meeting at 4:39 p.m.

Addendum: Election Results

On December 19, 2007, Elizabeth Wiley, Chair of the Committee on Nominations and Elections, formally notified the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of the following election results:

Faculty Affairs Committee, Area I

✓ Barbette Spaeth (Classical Studies)

Faculty Affairs Committee, Area II

✓ Timmons Roberts (Sociology)

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Leruth

Associate Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures