

Minutes
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Tuesday, April 7, 2009
3:30 p.m.
Millington 150

Dean Carl Strikwerda called the meeting to order at 3:36 pm.

I. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on March 3, 2009, were approved as posted:

<http://www.wm.edu/as/dean/fas/minutes/20090303.pdf>

II. Report of Administrative Officers

Provost Geoffrey Feiss was not in attendance due to a schedule conflict. Dean Carl Strikwerda reported first on personnel issues: 15 new faculty have been hired. In three cases offers have been made and we are awaiting the candidates' responses. One search has been held over to next year. In next year's job searches those that were cancelled or unfilled this year will have top priority. All pre-tenure reviews have now been passed on to the provost, as have all recommendations for promotion to full professor.

Regarding financial matters, the faculty has remitted a \$152,000 base donation to the administration to address the College's budget deficit in the past year and is planning for a \$316,000 payment in the coming year. At this point these figures do not represent a base cut but could do so later. Dean Strikwerda has been in contact with new provost-designee Michael Halleran, and has discussed with him some of the issues facing the faculty, including positions, funding startup costs, graduate stipends, the ISC, and the financial situation.

On strategic planning the dean noted that the documents prepared by the faculty have been passed on for consideration on the campus-wide level and that the BOV will be making some decisions on the issues soon.

On the proposed joint-degree program being developed with St Andrews University in Scotland (discussed at the last meeting), the dean reported that deliberations were continuing and that there may be a proposal to consider on the issue at the next FAS meeting.

In response to a question from Bill Cooke (Physics) the dean attempted to explain the administration's position that the core budget of A&S had so far been relatively insulated in the budget cutting process.

III. Nominations and Elections, A&S Committee Elections

Julie Galambush (Religious Studies) presented the slate of candidates for openings on various committees. Prof. Galambush explained that a change in rules by the Faculty Assembly has created a number of new slots on the Faculty Hearing Committee that need to be filled.

In discussion Gary De Fotis (Chemistry) urged the committee to do what it can to see that the process of filling spaces on the Faculty Hearing Committee not be bottlenecked in the provost's office or elsewhere.

With no further nominations from the floor, nominations were closed, and Prof. Galambush announced that on-line voting would commence later that evening.

Posted list of nominees:

<http://web.wm.edu/as.committees/nominations/reports/20090407.pdf>

[Results, as reported after the meeting by Prof. Galambush:

Faculty Compensation Board, Area I:
Jacquelyn McLendon

Committee on Degrees, Area II:
Andrew Fisher

Faculty Priorities, Area II:
Jennifer Mellor

Faculty Hearing Board, full term, Area III:
Heather Macdonald

Faculty Hearing Board, full term, area undesignated:
Colleen Kennedy

Faculty Hearing Board, alternate, area undesignated:
Ron Rapoport

Faculty Assembly, Area III:
Todd Averett

Chair of Educational Policy Committee:
Phil Kearns]

IV. Report from the Committee for Honors and Interdisciplinary Studies

Dean Joel Schwartz reported on highlights of the committee's posted report (URL below), including the evaluation of Monroe Scholar and May Seminar proposals and the discussion of a proposed interdisciplinary program in Community Studies. One topic that the committee will be returning to next year is the question of whether single-level honors should be made the norm in all programs, eliminating the graduated levels that students can earn in some programs. In discussion those faculty members who addressed the issue supported the notion of single-level honors.

Posted report:

http://web.wm.edu/as/committees/honors/documents/annualreport_mar2009.pdf

V. Report of the Faculty Affairs Committee

Margaret Saha (Biology) reported that the current business of the committee included the filling open committee assignments (an e-mail would be sent soon calling for volunteers for various committee positions); how to attract interest in faculty governance, getting new blood and junior faculty involved in governance, perhaps reserving certain seats for junior faculty members; improving some glitches in the bylaws.

In discussion the following issues were brought up: whether junior faculty were, in fact, underrepresented; how to avoid appointing to multi-year posts people who are going on leave before their term is up; whether the need for extra-departmental service for tenure (and an increase for promotion beyond associate) is being communicated to junior faculty; whether we should perhaps have an "office of faculty governance" to coordinate the recruitment and filling of committee positions.

VI. Report from the Faculty Assembly

Gene Tracy (Physics/Applied Science) reported that the FA is busying itself in the following areas: working on a faculty priority survey to be launched early in the fall (ideas for the survey can be forwarded to Prof. Tracy, to Katherine Kulick (Modern Languages), or to other FA members); adding language regarding gender identity and expression to the non-discrimination statement in the faculty handbook; changing the statement on rights and responsibilities in the handbook in preference to having the president issue a letter explaining his understanding of the statement; considering Grand Challenges 1 and 4. On the subject of strategic planning, Prof. Tracy noted that the FA was committed to ensuring and improving the level of faculty input as the process went forward.

Via. Reminder from the Dean

Dean Strikwerda reminded those present that question sessions for the candidates for Vice President of Student Affairs were coming up soon. He also impressed upon the faculty the importance of the choice of a new VP in this area.

VII. Discussion and Vote on the Merger of African Studies and Black Studies into Africana Studies

A proposal was presented as a motion from the Educational Policy Committee to merge the African Studies and Black Studies programs into a new Africana Studies program.

The posted proposal:

<http://web.wm.edu/as/dean/fas/documents/africanastudies2010.pdf>

Dean Kim Philips (Dean of Educational Policy), speaking on behalf of the EPC, reported that the proposal had the unanimous backing of the committee, and that for the time being the new program would be administered under the Charles Center as an interdisciplinary program.

Discussion of the proposal elicited some concerns: some departments and programs were not consulted before having their courses listed for the new program. In response to the statement that the program aims eventually to evolve into a stand-alone department, a question was raised as to how that decision had been made. Dean Strikwerda clarified that it had not been made yet – that it was merely a possibility at this point. In response to a question about the number of concentrators the new program might have, Berhanu Abegaz (Economics) responded that African Studies and Black Studies currently have about 21-22 majors, and under the new program that number may rise to around 25 – 30. Dean Strikwerda noted that the change would involve moving African Studies out of the administrative framework of Global Studies into Interdisciplinary Studies where Black Studies already reside. Students currently in the program would be grandfathered so as not to be disadvantaged by the change.

Following this discussion the proposal was **passed** unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:31 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

William Hutton, Secretary
Associate Professor of Classical Studies
wehutt@wm.edu