

Minutes
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Tuesday, March 1, 2011
3:30 p.m.
Andrews 101

Dean Carl Strikwerda called the meeting to order at 3:33 pm.

Attendance at the start of the meeting: 34

I. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on February 1, 2011, were approved as posted:
<http://www.wm.edu/as/facultyresources/fas/minutes/20110201.pdf>

II. Report of Administrative Officers

Provost Michael Halleran reported the following:

- The five finalists for the new post of Vice Provost for International Affairs have now visited campus. A decision is expected shortly.
- Two of the four candidates for the position of Dean of Libraries are currently on campus. The other two are expected soon.
- SACS has enthusiastically endorsed our joint degree initiative with St. Andrews University in Scotland; SCHEV is still deliberating on it.
- Regarding actions in the General Assembly relating to the budget:
- The effects of the new Higher Education bill will be substantial, but are difficult to forecast. A lot depends on how it is implemented.
- On pensions: the current bill before the legislature calls for those enrolled in VRS to pay a mandatory of 5% of salary, offset by a 5% salary increase. This will have the positive effect of increasing the highest-three-years level used to calculate pension benefits. Those enrolled in ORP would see no change either in contributions or salary.
- The budget does make some new funds available to the College: \$410,000 for STEM-related programs, \$148,839 in financial aid, and \$340,000 in money for higher enrollment, for a total of about \$900,000.
- The legislative threat to impose a 75/25 in-state/out-of-state mandate is no longer on the table; President Reveley averted this threat in part by agreeing to accept a 150 more in-state students over the next four years
- On the less positive side the College is still facing a \$6.8 million cut as a result of the absence of federal stimulus funds, and there is still an unallocated statewide \$10,000,000 cut looming of which the College's share may be about 300,000 – 400,000 dollars.
- There is no new money in the budget earmarked for salaries, but no prohibition against salary increases, and no explicit caps on tuition.
- The administration is still committed to salary raises this year.

In response to questions the provost said that it was unclear whether the state would fully fund the 5% raise necessary to offset the contribution to VRS, and that the raise may well produce some equity and salary compression issues. He also clarified that the new VRS measures only applies to those hired before July 2010, which has the potential of further complicating issues.

The provost also addressed questions about the tuition charged for the St. Andrews program. Due to our recent tuition rises and the exchange rate, the rate charged to St. Andrews students is now lower than out-of-state tuition. The provost said that the program should still generate income nevertheless, and it will not affect the in-state/out-of-state calculation. He agreed, though, that the program needs to be monitored so that it remains a financial asset rather than a liability.

Dean Carl Strikwerda reported the following:

- This year's job searches are going well: ten searches have been completed successfully so far; five or six others are expected to be soon.
- We competing again this year to bring ACLS/Mellon postdoctoral fellows to the College. Six offers have been made.
- The Productivity Team has finalized its report: a draft will be circulated shortly for faculty to comment on and suggest changes. The report will emphasize that A&S is already very efficient and productive.
- A search committee has been empanelled to look for Dean Sue Peterson's successor as Dean of Undergraduate Studies: Liz Allison (Biology), Susan Donaldson (English), David Feldman (Economics), Theresa Longo (Modern Languages, Dean for Educational Policy) and Margaret Fonner from the dean's office.

III. Report from the Faculty Assembly

There was no report from the Faculty Assembly

IV. Report from the Faculty Affairs Committee

Sophia Serghi (Music) reported that the Curriculum Review Steering Committee has been formed and that the FAC had made recommendations to the dean on the formation of the search committee for the position of Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

V. Report from the Nominations and Elections Committee

Debbie Bebout (Chemistry) presented the slate for this month's elections, with positions to be filled on the Faculty Assembly for Area III; Retention, Promotion and Tenure Committee for Areas I and III; Educational Policy Committee for

Areas I, II and III; Committee on Academic Status for Areas I and II; and for the Procedural Review Committee, Area II.

With no further nominations from the floor, nominations were closed, and Prof. Bebout announced that on-line balloting would begin after the meeting.

The posted ballot:

<http://goo.gl/SHmMJ>

VI. Report from the Committee on Graduate Studies

Laurie Sanderson (Biology) presented a power-point show with highlights from the committee's posted report, including remarks on the importance of graduate programs in the recruitment of faculty and in the generation of overhead income; an initiative to increase pay and benefits for graduate students; new awards for graduate students and faculty; and the activities of the Graduate Center.

The posted report:

<http://goo.gl/G10Gc>

VII. Report from the Graduate Ombudsperson

Standing in for Elizabeth Barnes (English/American Studies) Prof. Sanderson also presented highlights from the posted Ombudsperson report. There were ten cases handled by the ombudsperson in the past year. Prof. Sanderson reminded the faculty that the ombudsperson only takes action when students request it.

The posted report:

<http://goo.gl/bS2fe>

VIII. Discussion of Faculty Assembly Proposal on Specified-Term Appointments

Leisa Meyer (History/American Studies) and Will Hausman (Economics) came forward to lead a discussion of the FA's proposed revisions to the Faculty Handbook on the policy regarding non-tenure-eligible specified-term appointments. They emphasized that the posted revisions were only a draft and that the Assembly was still gathering input on the issue. They began by tracing the history of the issue -- the changes were first called for by the Law School and the other professional schools -- and they summarized the response they have gotten so far both for and against the changes: pro: NTE's need more job security, and programs need more stability; con: the danger of creating a 2-tiered

faculty, the danger that making NTE appointments easier may threaten tenure lines, the erosion of the sanctity of tenure.

In the discussion Dean Strikwerda made clear that currently A&S has no separate policy on this issue, but simply followed the policy in the Faculty Handbook.

The following are some of the other questions raised and opinions voiced in discussion:

- Shouldn't it be the responsibility of the dean rather than the provost to report annually on such appointments?
- Although the law school wants these changes, there's no sign that their accreditation is actually threatened by the current policy.
- For a number of valuable faculty members, a continuing NTE appointment makes the most sense; the current policy makes the continuation of their appointments burdensome.
- We are losing good candidates to other institutions that have more flexible and extendible appointments for NTE's
- Doesn't this give the administration an easy way to balance the budget by avoiding tenure-eligible commitments?
- Would these changes not start us on a slippery slope that will ultimately damage the institution of tenure?

<http://goo.gl/v4acZ> - The proposed (draft) revisions from the Faculty Assembly

<http://goo.gl/uKnfw> - The current faculty handbook language on this category

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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