

**MINUTES**  
**Faculty of Arts & Sciences Meeting**  
**November 10, 2020, 3:30 – 5:00 pm**  
**Via Zoom teleconference**

Arts & Sciences Dean Maria Donoghue Velleca called the meeting to order at 3:32, with 104 participants.

**I. Approval of minutes from meeting of faculty on October 6, 2020**

Because the Secretary had not yet finished editing the minutes of the previous meeting and they had not been distributed to A&S faculty, the approval of these minutes will be delayed to the December 1 meeting. The Secretary asked the indulgence of her colleagues as she had been coping with the death of emeritus English Professor Robert Maccubbin the previous week.

**II. Report from the Dean (Maria Donoghue Velleca)**

Dean Donoghue Velleca said that the national election the previous week had been divisive but that the campus nonetheless remained calm. She noted that the dean of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), Gas, stepped down. She said that the Faculty Assembly was working on Scheduled Semester Research Leaves (SSRLs) and that they are studying important issues such as what the research active designation means in terms of SSRLs. She noted that there was also an ad hoc group studying the issues facing Non Tenure Eligible (NTE) faculty, which would greatly affect A&S since 100 of the 150 NTE faculty are from A&S.

Dean Donoghue Velleca added that she had spent last night and today with the IGNITE program, which provides mentoring for Ph.D. candidates. Normally, this event is held in March, but it had been postponed due to pandemic. She noted that six remarkable, diverse Ph.D. candidates had presented their research.

Dean Donoghue Velleca commented that every single student had been tested for COVID-19 and testing turned up only one case in 3700. She added that more testing would be starting on Monday, November 16, as students prepare to go home for the holidays.

Dean Donoghue Velleca said that on October 29, the university had completed a bond sale and approximately \$20 million would go to improve dormitories, including funds to install air conditioning. Approximately \$70 million would be used for strategic initiatives, and about \$53 million would be used to restructure debt, which would extend debt payment for ten years but would offer W&M relief for the present. She said that even with the successful bond sale, the university faced a huge financial uncertainty, including a \$32 million operating budget shortfall if nothing changes. She added that whether or not that figure remains stable depends on student residency changes, and the \$32 million figure was a reasonable guess. As a result, she said that financial measures and cost-cutting programs will remain in place, and that faculty, department chairs, and program directors must be prepared for this, as there was no change in the financial forecast.

Within Arts & Sciences, Dean Donoghue Velleca noted that the new committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion voted on by the faculty had met, and commended them as remarkable individuals. She noted that they would be serving as the anchor of a new search committee for the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, which she hoped would be a compelling position; she added that the search would be both internal and external and that this position was a joint faculty and professional staff position.

Dean Donoghue Velleca reported that students had requested that the administration reconsider Pass/Fail options as it had in the spring, which led to a discussion on the Educational Policy Committee (EPC). She said that she, the Provost, and the Registrar met with members of the Student Assembly, which had appreciated what A&S had done. She noted that she had spoken with the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) regarding concerns about students receiving passing grades in classes they had not yet mastered, a problem for courses taken in sequence. She said they had discussed best paths forward for students while protecting faculty teaching those courses and said that faculty would be hearing more from their chairs and program directors about these issues.

Dean Donoghue Velleca noted that Provost Peggy Agouris in her Five Things to Know e-mail the previous day had asked all faculty to consider teaching on campus and noted that the Board of Visitors believe on-campus courses are important and prefer them. She noted that individual faculty would be allowed to determine their course delivery methods for the spring as they had in the fall, and said that faculty know students, their course material, and themselves and would make the right choice. She suggested that faculty think about ways of weaving in-person experiences into their classes that feel safe and authentic. She said that dual or hybrid teaching, while motivated for the best reasons (such as needing a class to stay in a major or graduate on time) had not been great for everyone and was difficult for faculty teaching in this mode.

Dean Donoghue Velleca said that she had a discussion with the Council of Chairs and Program Directors about how administrative positions are compensated, which are generally with a stipend and teaching releases. She noted that she was starting to collect information about creating a sustainable curriculum so that departments would be able to staff courses without leave replacements and that it was a consultative, collaborative process. Regarding hiring, Dean Donoghue Velleca indicated that she expected that A&S would be authorized to hire only a small number of tenure eligible and NTE faculty next year.

Finally, the Dean said that she hoped that faculty had seen the message sent to students regarding the spring semester, which will start on January 27 but will begin remotely for all students, just as this semester had begun. She noted that there would be a gradual move-in with first year students and transfers moving in first. She said that the predictions regarding health circumstances for the coming winter were dire. She also noted with sorrow the death of emeritus faculty member Robert Maccubbin of the English Department.

Dean Donoghue Velleca welcomed questions from the faculty. Mike Jabbur (Art & Art History) said he understood that there was barely enough classroom space to teach in-person classes now with social distances and wondered whether W&M even had enough space to offer all classes in person. The Dean noted that there were tents up on campus and that alternative spaces were being used to host classes. Tom Payne (Music) asked in clarification whether by “on campus” teaching, the Dean meant face-to-face teaching; she said that was what she had meant.

Elena Prokhorova (Modern Languages and Russian Studies) noted that some students are not or will not be on campus and asked how it would be possible to avoid a dual mode, especially if the class was required. She added that it appeared that the solution to the unsatisfactory experience of the dual mode appeared to be the remote synchronous mode. Dean Donoghue Velleca replied that the dual mode would sometimes be needed, but if possible, in courses with multiple sections, one might be taught remotely and others face to face on campus.

Suzanne Hagedorn (English) asked whether the debt refinancing would include the debt on the football fieldhouse. Dean Donoghue Velleca asked for clarification. Professor Hagedorn explained that the alumni who had pledged money for the football fieldhouse but had not come through on those pledges so that the remaining cost of the building had been financed, with the net result that every W&M student currently pays a \$22 fee per semester to finance the debt on the football fieldhouse; if this debt had been refinanced at a lower rate, that student fee should go down. (Another faculty member noted that the football fieldhouse had opened in 2008 and had been renovated in 2016.) Dean Donoghue Velleca replied that she did not know the answer, but that both the Provost and Interim Athletics Director Jeremy Martin would be at the next A&S meeting and would be able to answer questions.

### **III. Nominations and Elections (Rani Mullen & Thomas Payne)**

Prof. Payne said that the Nominations & Elections committee now has a form that it has sent out to encourage faculty to volunteer for next year's committees; he thanked Pieter Peers (Computer Science) for creating the form. One faculty member asked about interdisciplinary faculty members and how they fit into the Area I (Arts & Humanities), Area II (Social Sciences), Area III (Science & Mathematics) scheme. Prof. Payne said that faculty should be guided by the designation of the department in which they have their tenure home. Alicia Andrzejewski (English) expressed interest in serving on the International Studies Advisory Committee but noted that there were concerns about workload for junior faculty and worried that her department chair would be unhappy with her for volunteering. Arthur Knight (English) assured her that he would not be. David Armstrong (Physics) said that the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) was very interested in having faculty volunteer for appointed committees as well as agree to run for elected committees. Christy Porter (Psychological Sciences) added that NTE faculty could serve on elected or appointed committees.

### **IV. Report from the Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS) (Virginia Torczon & Phillip Daileader)**

The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, Virginia Torczon, gave highlights from the 2019 COGS Annual Report, which can be found in full at:

<https://www.wm.edu/as/facultyresources/committees/graduatestudies/documents/cogs-annual-reports/2019-20-cogs-annual-report.pdf>

She noted that the committee had discussed various definitions of research. Graduate students who said they expected to finish their degrees in Spring 2020 by the February 15 filing deadline all did so. With regard to admissions, Dean Torczon said that departments had filled nearly every graduate cohort, though there were international students with visa problems that prevented them from studying in person in the fall. She was asked whether the GRE would be required for admission this year and said it would not be required.

### **2019-20 Ombuds Report**

Prof. Daileader then presented the 2019 Ombuds report, which can be found in full at:

<https://www.wm.edu/as/facultyresources/committees/graduatestudies/documents/ombuds-reports/2019-20-ombuds-annual-report.pdf>

He said that four matters had been brought to the Ombuds and attributed the quietness to the pandemic. He added that there had been a more robust institutional response to problems than in the past and noted that sexual harassment and consensual amorous relationships did not figure in

the problems brought to the Ombuds, which had related to norms of professional behavior, intellectual property, mental health, advisor/advisee relations, and demeaning treatment of graduate students. Prof. Daileader noted that the Graduate Ombuds had become a resource used by department chairs seeking advice. Graduate Dean Virginia Torczon extended a thank you to Prof. Daileader, who filled in as Ombuds when Peter Vishton (Psychological Sciences) was no longer able to continue in this role due to a new position at the National Science Foundation.

#### **V. Discussion with Anna Whiston, Interim Director of Student Accessibility Services**

Ms. Whiston noted that she was new to the position as the previous Director, Lesley Henderson, departed for a position as a school psychologist at the end of September. She noted that the Watson Lab was available for testing but was not being used much this year; during week 7 of the semester last fall, 113 students used the lab versus 3 this year. She said that 22 students had booked the lab during the entire examination period, compared to last year, when the lab had between 33 and 65 students on each day of exams.

Ms. Whiston noted that some students had expressed concerns about Honor Lock as not compatible with their needs. She said some students had expressed a preference to have their camera off during class, and there were not many students for SAS had approved that accommodation. She noted that there were students who needed a remote option for courses related to their disability and that immunocompromised students did need to take their courses remotely. Sarah Day (Mathematics) mentioned that SAS had proctored an exam for one of her students by Zoom and wondered about the scalability of that mode.

#### **VI. . Studio for Teaching & Learning Innovation (STLI) Presentation (Pablo Yanez & Mark Hofer)**

Pablo Yanez reported on behalf of the Studio for Teaching and Learning Innovation about its efforts for the semester, among them a fall 2020 faculty survey and a spring toolkit that the STLI would be unveiling soon. STLI has offered to help faculty by linking them with student partners. He encouraged faculty to participate in the survey, which was still ongoing, though more than 87 faculty had taken it. Mr. Yanez noted that overall, faculty felt more competent and proficient at online teaching. He encouraged faculty taking the survey to comment on what additional support and resources they needed. He noted the need to manage student anxiety and expectations with regard to remote learning. Arthur Knight (English) commented on the lack of success of the dual mode of teaching. Laurie Sanderson (Biology) noted that the availability of technology, especially document cameras and tablets, was one of the largest problems for faculty in her area. Michael Jabbur (Art & Art History) said that he had been hearing positive feedback regarding smaller seminar classes and frustration about student engagement in larger classes. Fred Corney (History) agreed with Prof. Jabbur and added that masked discussion in larger classrooms had been a challenge.

Mark Hofer (Education, STLI) said that STLI would be sharing resources from faculty teaching large classes who have found useful strategies. He said that STLI could do individual consultations and would be presenting a revised blended learning at W&M course, as it had over the summer, during the break between semesters. Prof. Hofer noted that new tools were becoming available, and that there were new features on Zoom. Prof. Jabbur noted the difficulties of teaching large classes in person, and that most of Art & Art History's larger classes were taught remotely. Jozef Dudek (Physics) said that for him, a \$20 webcam, an angle-

poise lamp, and duct tape had worked as a low-tech home solution to the document camera problem. Helen Murphy (Biology) asked whether there was a plan to survey students about their experiences. Prof. Hofer said that was in the works. Alicia Andrzejewski suggested that the faculty praised by students in the reports could be contacted as well. In closing, Prof. Hofer and Mr. Yanez encouraged faculty to take part in the “Zoom buddies” program and request a student partner to help them with online classes, and to take the faculty survey.

#### **VII. Report from the Faculty Assembly (David Armstrong)**

On behalf of Faculty Assembly, Prof. Armstrong said that the FA had discussed the President’s three-year pilot plan for diversity hiring. He noted that FA had discussed the continuing situation in the Athletics Department on October 13 and 20 and at the latter meeting had voted to create a FA led task force to assess the situation and provide input on moving forward. Prof. Armstrong said that FA was selecting that committee and that its meeting regarding athletics had been its largest meeting in recent memory, with over 65 guests. He said that at the November 17 meeting, last year’s Academic Affairs Committee would be reporting on innovative suggestions for ways of doing things differently with student course evaluations and encouraged faculty to contact him via email with suggestions.

#### **VIII. Report from the Faculty Affairs Committee (Josh Burk)**

On behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, Josh Burk (Psychological Sciences) said that FAC would be inviting the provost to the December A&S meeting to share her view on the past semester and discuss plans for the spring semester. The FAC has overseen committees and helped the administration draft a letter to students discussing what might happen with regard to the 2020 Presidential election.

#### **IX. Report from the Council of Chairs and Program Directors (Josh Gert & Rob Hinkle)**

On behalf of the CCPD, Josh Gert (Philosophy) explained that the body acts in an advisory role to the Dean and would soon be holding elections for new co-chairs. He said that Dean Janice Zeman would be reporting at the next CCPD on academic integrity issues relevant to how faculty conduct their final examinations.

#### **X. Adjourn**

As no faculty member brought forward any new business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at approximately 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Hagedorn (English), Secretary to the Faculty of Arts & Sciences