

Minutes
Faculty of Arts & Sciences
April 13, 2021, 3:30 – 5:00 pm
Via Zoom teleconference

Dean Maria Donoghue Velleca called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m., with 96 faculty present; later in the meeting, there were up to 146 faculty members present.

I. Approval of minutes from meeting of faculty on March 2, 2021

<https://www.wm.edu/as/facultyresources/fas/minutes/20210302.pdf>

David Armstrong (Physics) moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting; Rob Hinkle (Chemistry) seconded, and they were approved by unanimous consent.

II. Discussion about Overloads and the Tuition Formula

(Henry Broaddus, Maria Donoghue Velleca, Sallie Marchello, Marjorie Thomas, Janice Zeman)

Dean Janice Zeman shared her computer screen and made a PowerPoint presentation regarding credit overloads and undergraduate tuition charges; she said the administration is considering applying a per-credit hour rate at a threshold beyond the standard course load, with no change to current academic policy. Currently, an overload is defined as 19+ credit hours; a full-time degree seeking student must register for 12-18 credits, with an average load of 15 credits. Since 2016, between 240 and 280 students per academic year have requested overloads from the Committee on Academic Status. Dean Zeman noted that there has been a linear trend in students graduating early over the past five years, as it has increased from approximately 6% ten years ago to 9-10% in recent years.

Dean Zeman said that faculty should be concerned because of the effect of these overloads on student wellbeing, the depth in which students are able to go in learning material and the pressures on course enrollments that overloads cause. She also noted the pressure that overrides put on faculty, adding to their workload. She said that if William & Mary were to charge for course overloads, the university would be joining peer institutions who do so, including George Mason, the University of Virginia and Old Dominion University. She noted that the current course catalog defines a normal course load as 12 to 18 credits and that one possibility might be to change this statement to 12 to 16 credits. She noted that one tuition model might be to charge students per credit; another would be to charge them for credits over a certain threshold, which might begin at 16, 17, or 18 credits. She said that the Dean's Office had been in conversation with the Committee on Academic Status and the Council of Chairs and Program Directors and may recommend a tuition model for the Provost and Chief Operating Officer to consider. She added that at CCPD, she had discussed the threshold for charging for credits to begin at 17 credits. She asked for questions to be directed to her and others present.

Pieter Peers (Computer Science) expressed the concern that students would perceive this change as being nickel and dimed by fees. Sallie Marchello, the University Registrar noted that it could also be seen as an equity issue for students who would rather take 15 to 16 credits and not subsidize students who currently take overloads. Dean Donoghue Velleca noted that this is a sensitive topic. Mark Sher (Physics) asked in the chat window whether a new model would be phased in with a new class. Dean Zeman said that it would start the year after next. David Feldman (Economics) asked how many students are currently taking 16, 17, and 18 credits. Ms. Marchello said that she would run the data and provide that to the Dean and Provost, to be shared more broadly. Tuska Benes (History) asked how this change would affect current summer school classes. Ms. Marchello said that her understanding was that the current plan was to

correct the current per-credit-hour charge, and that the per-credit charge for summer courses has not changed in several years and has stayed at \$425 for in-state students. It would change to 1/15th of the in-state or out-of-state tuition charge; going forward, summer tuition would change annually as a fraction of tuition.

Anya Hogoboom (English, Linguistics) noted that the revised policy would still allow overloads, but at a price, and asked whether that would actually solve the student stress problem. Dean Zeman noted that by charging students for overloads, W&M would eliminate the incentive for many students to take them. Dean Donoghue Velleca noted that there was currently a culture among students to think of overloads as normal. Prof. Sher noted in the chat that the CAS would welcome the reduction in overload requests. Elena Prokhorova (Modern Languages & Literatures) said that her department has many students who take 1 credit courses to enhance research and language skills and expressed the concern that this new policy would penalize students. Dean Zeman replied that these opportunities need not all be for credit and noted that the point of the policy was to get students to slow down to get more depth. Prof. Prokhorova expressed the concern that the new policy took choices away from students. Dean Zeman responded that her view was that the policy would not take away choices but would ask students to make choices and not do everything at once.

Jim Deverick (Computer Science) asked whether there would be accommodations for one credit courses like orchestra for students who were taking five 3-credit academic courses or if students would be charged. Dean Zeman said this might be a reason to have charges for overloads begin after 16 or even 17 credits. Prof. Deverick expressed a preference for the overload charge to begin after 17 credits. Josh Erlich (Physics) asked whether financial aid would apply to overloads; Ms. Marchello said that she had been assured by Henry Broaddus that it did. Leah Shaw (Mathematics) noted that in advising, we often encourage students to take closer to 12 credits at first and that in later years students might take 17 to average 15 per semester and wondered whether this policy would provide freshmen with a financial incentive to ignore this advice. Ms. Marchello noted that 75% of incoming freshmen come in with some credits already. Prof. Shaw expressed her concern about equity and noted that disadvantaged students would not come in with credits. Dean Zeman said financial aid would cover overloads or summer study. Prof. Armstrong commented in the chat that 17 credits seemed an appropriate threshold. Shannon White (Center for Geospatial Analysis) expressed her agreement in the chat and wondered if there were data on how many students take an overload and later drop or withdraw from classes. Her question was referred to the registrar for follow-up.

III. Report from the Dean (Maria Donoghue Velleca)

The Dean noted that the One Tribe, One Day fundraiser was going on, and asked Gerald Bullock, A&S Development Officer, to report on the For the Bold Campaign. Mr. Bullock shared his screen and said that the campaign had raised \$108 million dollars for A&S, with \$71 million given in outright gifts and \$37 million in deferred gifts. Nearly \$26 million in gifts was donated to support faculty, and \$24.6 million was given to support research; another \$17 million in unrestricted funds was given to programs and departments. Mr. Bullock proceeded to list some named professorships and endowments that had been created by funds raised by the campaign and noted that more than 30 current or former faculty members had been honored in this way. He thanked the contact deans in A&S for their help, as well as former and current A&S deans.

Dean Donoghue Velleca announced student faculty research presentation later in the evening linked to the One Tribe One Day fundraiser. She noted the challenges of this point in the semester, saying that it “felt like running into a brick wall,” and that both faculty and students

felt exhaustion and fatigue, particularly due to the isolation of the pandemic. She said that she now had a student advisory group from the Student Assembly and had enjoyed spending time with Pre-Major Advising. With regard to NTE faculty waiting for contracts, she said that she had been able to move a few faculty from the “don’t know” list onto contracts. She said she had been meeting with candidates in faculty searches and that the Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion had completed its search for the new dean position and had forwarded her an unranked list of candidates.

Dean Donoghue Velleca emphasized the struggles that students are experiencing. She said she hoped to move all NTE faculty currently waiting to hear about contracts onto contracts. She noted that she had recently been in challenging conversations regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion issues and that there was much work to be done. In other news, she said that the COVID spike after St. Patrick’s Day has quieted and there were fewer students in isolation. She encouraged faculty and staff to report their vaccination status on Banner.

Dean Donoghue Velleca said that the Board of Visitors would be coming on April 22nd and 23rd and would be setting tuition, which would be important for A&S budgeting. They would be discussing merit increases, 40% of which will be funded by the state, and 60% by W&M. With regard to Commencement, she said there would be six in-person de-densified ceremonies held over Commencement weekend, four of them for A&S students; all department and program ceremonies must be virtual; there would be spending restrictions on departments and programs to ensure equity in celebrations.

Dean Donoghue Velleca reminded faculty that as part of the reorganization of the A&S Dean’s office, she was seeking three vice deans and two assistant deans and encouraged faculty to apply, emphasizing the teamwork in the office, and its role in shared governance and collaboration. She said that W&M was undergoing a time of great challenge, but that this was a time to set priorities and join resources with aspirations. The dean asked for questions; there were none

IV. Nominations and Elections (Rani Mullen & Thomas Payne)

The committee posted the results of the March elections in the chat window:

Results of March Elections:

- Retention, Promotion & Tenure (RPT): Area I: Suzanne Raitt (English)
- Retention, Promotion & Tenure (RPT): Area II: Robin Loof-Wilson (Kinesiology and Health Sciences)
- Education Policy Committee (EPC): Area I: Annie Blazer (Religious Studies)
- Education Policy Committee (EPC): Area II: M. Brennan Harris (Kinesiology and Health Sciences)
- Education Policy Committee (EPC): Area III: Jim Deverick (Computer Science)
- Committee on Academic Status (CAS): Area II: Alexandra Joosse (Public Policy)
- Committee on Academic Status (CAS): Open Area: Richard Marcus (Music)

Prof. Mullen announced candidates for election to committee positions open in the 2021-2022 academic year, asking for additional nominations from the floor:

- **Committee on Degrees** (4-year term), Any Area (vote for one)
Steve Holliday (Theatre, Speech, and Dance – Area I)
Regina Root (Hispanic Studies – Area I)
Tyler Meldrum (Chemistry– Area III)

- **Faculty Compensation Board** (4-year term)

Area II (vote for one)

Ayfer Karakaya-Stump (History)

Philip Roessler (Government)

- **Faculty Hearing Committee** (3-year active + 3-year alternate)

Area III (vote for one)

Chris Abelt – (Chemistry)

Denys Poshyvanyk (Computer Science)

Seeing no further nominations, Prof. Mullen said that the ballot would be distributed after the meeting

V. Educational Policy Committee motion to create a Minor in Integrative Conservation

(Josh Erlich for EPC and Erica Garrouette for IIC)

www.wm.edu/as/facultyresources/committees/educationalpolicy/about/documents/cons-minor-motion-4-21.pdf

www.wm.edu/as/facultyresources/committees/educationalpolicy/about/documents/cons-minor-ideas.pdf

(details)

Prof. Erlich introduced Erica Garrouette of the Institute for Integrative Conservation. He said that the Minor for Integrative Conservation would be the first degree program hosted by the Institute. Even though the IIC is independent of A&S, the degree program must be voted on by the Faculty of A&S. He presented the details of the minor as described in the documents circulated with the meeting agenda and noted that a number of departments will be contributing. Dean Donoghue Velleca noted that the program was unique in the sense that it did not come from a specific unit, Prof. Erlich said he believed the degree program was currently housed under Interdisciplinary Studies; Ms. Garrouette agreed. Annie Blazer (Religious Studies) asked about the choice to use five credits in each of the categories of the minor. Ms. Garrouette said that the intention was for students to take two courses in each category. Prof. Blazer wondered why this would not be six credits per category, since course are generally 3 credits. Ms. Garrouette said that the IIC wanted to have flexibility and that there may be two credit courses offered in the future. There were no further questions or debate; voting was conducted by Zoom poll. The motion passed. Of the participants voting, 76% voted yes 6% voted no and 18% abstained.

VI. Motion from the Dean of Arts & Sciences to create a Department of Data Science

www.wm.edu/as/facultyresources/committees/educationalpolicy/about/documents/data-science-dept-proposal_0421.pdf

Dean Donoghue Velleca asked Dean Zeman and Matthias Leu (Biology) to present the proposal to form a Data Science Department in A&S that had been distributed with the meeting agenda. Dean Zeman said that representatives of the Data Science Program had visited 14 departments and programs and had held information sessions to discuss the proposal, which had gone before the Institutional Change Committee and was now before the Provost.

Professor Leu said that the Program in Data Science had begun in the spring of 2017; the State Council on Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) had approved a B.S. program in

Spring 2020. In Fall 2020, Virginia selected W&M for funding to enhance the data science program; the program had sought input and feedback from various departments and programs and was in the process of hiring two new faculty members. He said that the B.S. program was highly successful and emphasized the need for a B.A. program. He said he hoped that the program could be turned into a department in Spring 2022. Right now, some students who major have a self-designed major; of 71 current student majors, 34 are double majors. He said that 71% of students pursuing a major in Data Science had a non-STEM focus and emphasized that W&M's Data Science program would not replicate what is available at George Mason or Virginia Tech, but would bring in the liberal arts. He noted that students with W&M Data Science degrees had gone on to graduate work at the University of Wisconsin, MIT, and Harvard.

Anthony Stefanidis (Computer Science) said that the present program drew expertise from a variety of disciplines, but as a department could develop a broader, standalone core curriculum and provide a tenure home to faculty. He said that the program was currently in discussions to develop a graduate certificate. He said that right now, there was an opportunity for a budget-neutral cluster hire, due to funds from the Commonwealth. He said W&M had an opportunity to establish an identity in Data Science and to infuse its program with ethics and social consciousness.

At this point, Dean Donoghue Velleca put forth the motion that the Faculty of Arts & Sciences endorse the creation of a Department of Data Science and asked for a second; Jamie Settle (Government) seconded. The Dean asked for questions.

Sarah Stafford (Economics) noted that both International Relations and Public Policy had been programs and not departments for a long time and wondered whether the Dean or Provost would support moving these programs to departmental status. If not, she asked why Data Science was special, and would this create a process by which other programs could transition to departments. The Dean replied she was not aware that International Relations or Public Policy wanted to do so, but that she had been approached by Africana Studies and American Studies. She said that some programs were happy being programs, but that others were welcome to explore the same process and noted the difficulties in recruiting data scientists without a separate department in the field. Prof. Stafford said that Public Policy has been interested in pursuing departmental status but has been prevented from doing so in the past; she expressed the hope that this move would create a process that other programs could pursue.

Prof. Sher asked which area (I, II, or III) the new department would be classified in. Dean Donoghue Velleca indicated with the new vice deans coming in, all departments and programs would be asked where they fit. She said she had assigned it to Area III, but Area II might also be a possibility. Prof. Sher also asked about money, noting that his son received a starting salary of \$165,000 as a data scientist, and wondered whether the state would cover the full cost of the relatively high salaries of data scientists, or whether that would end up reducing other budgets. Prof. Stefanides indicated that the salaries proposed for new faculty were not as high as Prof. Sher had quoted, but probably higher than most faculty. Dean Donoghue Velleca indicated that the funds provided by the Commonwealth were not for short-term use but were base budget additions that would continue for the next twenty years.

Rex Kincaid (Mathematics) asked what current faculty would be in the new department. Prof. Leu indicated that a current NTE would join the department as well as new hires. Dean Donoghue Velleca said there would be a process by which faculty interested in affiliating with or having an appointment in the department could participate. Maurits Van der Veen (Government) asked why Data Science should be a department and not an institute. Dean Donoghue Velleca said that there was a public perception that W&M was strong in the arts and humanities, but not

as strong in data and computation, and the department should be in A&S because that was the home of W&M's undergraduate population.

Sarah Day (CAMS/Mathematics) noted that Prof. Leu had mentioned a National Science Foundation document that talks about Data Science curriculum, and that data science typically exists at the intersection of mathematics, applied mathematics, and computer science, but also focuses on ethics and privacy. She noted that the current W&M major did not fit into the NSF curriculum, and expressed concern about coordinating courses for the major across departments. She said she felt those conversations needed to be taken further before voting on whether Data Science should be a department. Prof Stefanides indicated that the Data Science curriculum would continue to be collaborative, and that these conversations would continue. He said that the present B.S. in Data Science did meet the NSF requirements. He expressed the view that Data Science could grow more effectively as a department than a program.

Greg Conradi Smith (Applied Science) indicated his agreement with Prof. Day's concerns, and said that in a time of strategic planning and financial concerns, he thought it would be better to structure Data Science as an institute or center; participating departments and programs would all benefit. He said W&M knows how to do interdisciplinary programs. He added that the biggest argument in favor of departmental status had to do with control of TE faculty lines and hiring, but that this was a concern right now when money was tight. He said that he felt it would be healthier for W&M as an institution to pursue a different direction. Dean Donoghue Velleca responded that when the Applied Science Department was created in 1995, faculty had expressed similar concerns; she added that the present search committee for data scientists had broad representation on it.

Prof. Settle spoke in favor of the motion, noting that the present ambitions and plans for Data Science were not compatible with its current status as a program, and that it was difficult to maintain core courses, let alone grow, if faculty do not have the incentive to participate as members of a department. She said she had a strong sense that people want Data Science to succeed, even though there is some disagreement about the way for it to be most successful.

Dean Donoghue Velleca announced that, with only a few minutes remaining in the meeting, it was time to vote on the motion. With 146 participants in the meeting, the vote was taken by Zoom Poll. The motion failed, with 38% of those responding voting in favor, 45% against and 17% abstaining.

VII. Report from the Faculty Assembly (David Armstrong)

Prof. Armstrong said that the Provost had expressed interest in reevaluating NTE faculty procedures and governance and in reexamining the SSRL program; the administration had also created a three-year pilot plan on hiring to improve diversity. The FA formed committees to look into all of these issues. There was a report on the hiring plan accepted by the FA; the Provost has set up a committee to respond to concerns raised by the report. Harmony Dalglish (Biology) presented a report on SSRLs, which was accepted by Faculty Assembly at their March meeting. Both reports are available on the Faculty Assembly website. The Provost is holding off on changes to the SSRL program in the immediate future. The Academic Affairs committee reported last year on teaching evaluations and is now looking at implementation of those recommendations. The Provost has created a new budget advisory group for changing how budget decisions are made at the university, and FA has membership on that committee. He welcomed faculty to contact him with questions and concerns.

Prof. Peers (Computer Science) asked for an update on the Consensual Amorous Relations Policy. Prof. Armstrong said that there had been debate and dialogue about this policy and the

university's Personnel and Procedures Committee had been working with the Faculty Assembly on this issue, but there has been no change in policy at this point.

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

Due to time constraints, the FAC did not report.

IX. Report from the Council of Chairs and Program Directors (Rowan Lockwood & Laurie Wolf)

Due to time constraints, the CCPD did not report.

X. Adjourn.

Prof. Armstrong moved to adjourn; Prof. Hinkle seconded. The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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