

Faculty Assembly Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2009

Present: Mike DiPaola, Alan Fuchs, Carl Hershner, Katherine Kulick, Lisa Landino, John Lee, Rip McAdams, Alan Meese, Adam Potkay, Marc Sher, Carol Sheriff, Barbette Spaeth, Gene Tracy, Tom White, Laurie Wolf.

Absent: Bruce Campbell, Larry Evans, Leisa Meyer, Todd Mooradian, Kate Slevin, Greg Smith.

Others in Attendance: Provost Feiss

Tom White called the meeting to order at 15:35

1. A motion to approve the minutes of the January 27 was approved unanimously.
2. Provost Feiss reported that there is no news yet on the state budget, although the budgets in conference committee contain some positive elements that were absent from the governor's budget. Three big searches (Law School Dean, Provost, and VP Student Affairs) are underway. Unfortunately, only two candidates remain in the search for Provost.
3. Executive Committee met and identified several candidates to serve as our rep to the W&M Campaign Planning Executive Committee. The committee selected Bob Archibald to represent the interests and priorities of the entire faculty on that committee.
4. Discussion on the discrimination language in the Faculty Handbook ensued. There has been a concern raised that transgender individuals are not protected in the language. The Statement of Rights and Responsibilities in the handbook has also been a concern in this area, particularly the interpretation of the language by former university presidents. The issue was referred to the FAFAC committee. The committee was charged with returning to the Assembly with specific recommendations.
5. Tom White contacted representatives of the staff and professional employees to discuss their interest in the tuition waiver program presented to the assembly in January. Both organizations are very interested in the proposal, particularly if it was reciprocal with other state universities. The members of the compensation board feel strongly about bringing the proposal forward and requested the endorsement of the Assembly. The discussion in January urged the compensation committee to consider other alternatives such as a cafeteria benefits plan or a 529-plan alternative. However, the assembly expressed great interest in the tuition waiver benefit. Cautions were expressed about putting any proposal forward that has such resource implications while Strategic Planning in progress. A suggestion was proposed to request that the faculty compensation board send the tuition waiver proposal to the Strategic Planning Committee for consideration, particularly in light of the time sensitive nature of the process. Additionally, the fall faculty survey will include items relative to these issues in order to gather more information from the faculty at large. A motion was made and seconded to request that the faculty compensation board submit the tuition waiver proposal to the university's Strategic Planning Committee for their consideration. The motion was approved unanimously.
6. President White provided the most recent details from two of the subcommittee reports of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. They specified goals, and objectives for those two grand challenges. Four of the five top priorities from the fall faculty survey were reflected in

the draft documents examined. A question was raised about the relationship between the strategic planning occurring in Arts and Sciences and the Professional Schools and the university's strategic planning committee. Tom explained that those individual unit plans will be considered by the university's Strategic Planning Steering Committee and will incorporate them as appropriate into the plan presented to the president on the 24th of March. The provost commented that some items may not appear in the overall plan, but that doesn't mean that day-to-day operational items will be neglected. A question was asked about how this process will continue in the future. If we are going to make this a continuous process, it must respect faculty time and other resources. One of the steering sub committees is charged to provide a specific plan to move forward. Specific questions addressing some of the specific objectives were raised. Assembly members who serve on the Strategic Planning Steering Committee attempted to respond to the questions. A question was asked about "service learning" being an integral component of the plan. It prompted a lively discussion. Core values and institutional culture have dramatic influence on how objectives are phrased and prioritized. A question was asked about junior faculty leaves not being included in the draft document. Committee members agreed to consider that issue as they continue their work. The planning document is a work in progress and attempts will be made to reduce the jargon and simplify and clarify the language. Priorities will be set and resource implications considered as to the feasibility of the time it will take to achieve objectives. The planning process must be institutionalized in order for the plan to be implemented. Thanks were expressed to those faculty members who have worked so hard during the process.

7. Committee Reports: Executive Committee report was distributed.
8. New Business: Work on the faculty survey will begin at the next FA meeting (March).

A motion to adjourn was approved at 16:50

Respectfully submitted,

Mike DiPaola
Secretary, Faculty Assembly