

Faculty Assembly Meeting  
September 23, 2008  
Approved October 28, 2008

Present: Bruce Campbell, Mike DiPaola, Larry Evans, Alan Fuchs, Carl Hershner, Steve Kuehl, Katherine Kulick, Lisa Landino, John Lee, Rip McAdams, Alan Meese, Leisa Meyer, Todd Mooradian, Adam Potkay, Marc Sher, Carol Sheriff, Kate Slevin, Greg Smith, Barbette Spaeth, Gene Tracy, Tom White, Laurie Wolf.

Others in Attendance: Dean Strikwerda

Assembly president Tom White called the meeting to order at 15:32

1. Approval of minutes of April meetings:  
A motion to amend the minutes of the April 29 meeting to reflect the changes in committee assignments to reflect those currently listed currently on the Assembly's web site was approved unanimously.
2. Provost's Report – Provost Feiss emphasized the role of the faculty in the possible budget reduction scenarios demanded by the governor. Since they are working papers of the governor, details of any submitted plan cannot be divulged. He reported that to date there has been no tough talk from the governor concerning revenues (tuition increases, surcharges) as there was last year. Target numbers will not arrive earlier than October, but could be delayed until after the November elections. A 5% cut is equivalent to about 3 million dollars. The Provost reported on budget actions for this fiscal year. No cuts occurred from the priorities identified by the Priorities Committee. However, no significant gains have been made in their designated priority areas due to budget cuts. Tuition increase drove up need-based financial aid. The University's Development operation was moved to New Town and there was a significant increase in that budget, which was the president's priority. The goal to get the mean faculty salary to 60% of peer group continues to be an aspiration. He believes we are about at the 52% using IPEDS data. The formula used by the state requires that 60% of the money for salary increases come from tuition and only 40% from state. It is difficult to determine how much private money goes to faculty salaries, but his best estimate is 2.3 million dollars.
3. President Tom White referenced the announcement of the Provost's retirement thanked Geoff for his service and the outstanding relationship he has maintained with the Assembly during his tenure. Tom promised an appropriate celebration of the Provost's retirement in the spring.

Lisa Landino chair of the Faculty Affairs reported on her committee's meeting and discussion of the potential methods to collect data from the faculty so that the Assembly can accurately represent their sentiments in the university's strategic planning process. A lengthy discussion ensued. There was a request to clarify the role of the Assembly in providing faculty input to the process. The Provost reiterated that this is not intended to be a top down document. Comments

focused on the perception on the part of the faculty of a top down process. A suggestion was made that we “mine” existing data as well as collect some new data focused on the six to eight grand challenges as specified by the charge to the planning committee. The draft vision statement crafted during the past summer represents various perspectives and can be used as a springboard to engage the faculty in discussions. A suggestion was made that the Assembly embark on a process to collect input from the faculty-at-large, but not overburden members by having too many meetings/venues to collect input. The dialogue should be focused on a document that provides information from the draft vision statement as well as data gleaned from the most recent faculty surveys. A suggestion was made that faculty members be asked to consider 3 perspectives in responding to the survey: personal, programmatic, and university-wide. It was agreed that the Assembly will take the responsibility for a survey and individual units will be responsible for interactive dialogue as follow-up. We were offered technical assistance from the strategic planning committee’s staff to get the survey administered and analyzed. The Faculty Affairs committee was charged with getting the survey constructed. There was agreement that a draft survey would be distributed to the assembly membership for reactions within ten days of this meeting.

Meeting was adjourned 17:10 following a motion to adjourn that was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike DiPaola  
Secretary, Faculty Assembly