

Faculty Assembly Special Meeting
March 30, 2010
Approved Minutes

Present: Todd Averett, Debbie Bebout, Katie Bragdon, Bruce Campbell, Mike Di Paola, Alan Fuchs, Will Hausman, Carl Hershner, Katherine Kulick, John Lee, Rick Gressard, Alan Meese, Leisa Meyer, Terry Meyers, Todd Mooradian, Adam Potkay, Kate Slevin, Barbette Spaeth, Gene Tracy, Tom White

Absent: Steve Kuehl, Lisa Landino,
Others in Attendance: Provost Halleran

Gene Tracy called the meeting to order at 15:30

Provost made opening remarks on the current draft statement. A question was raised about a curriculum review in the next academic year. He responded that the faculty control the curriculum and possible revisions but the provost has the prerogative to request such a review. The document is designed to guide, rather than set policy. The issue of governance doesn't seem to be reflected in the document. Although we enjoy being "scholar teachers", we all have a substantial role in governance. The issue hasn't been raised in prior conversations. There was a suggestion that the faculty's role should be woven into the document. What is the value of a liberal arts education? The draft doesn't make a case for the value of a liberal arts education. We need to defend the higher value of a liberal arts education. The Provost emphasized that he did not intend to provide an instrumentalist view, but believes the broad skill sets that result from such an education is valuable. Should we consider adding the value added to life in general, as opposed to an occupation. The Provost agreed to consider this issue in the next revision. A question was raised about how service fits into the discussion. Service learning seems to be highlighted as a key feature of our liberal arts education. Why aren't other pedagogies highlighted as well? The Provost explained that we attempt to really link service and learning. Because we can meld service and learning, it gives us a competitive advantage. It is a characteristic of the "liberal arts" tradition of helping students learn what it is to be human. Does it really give us a competitive advantage? The faculty generally has not generated great interest in the service component. Is it just a reflection of the current interests of our students? Does this reflect what we collectively think? We need to be cognizant of the impact of this document on resource allocation. The service area is a tension, but there really never has been a broad-based discussion about its role in the frame of a liberal arts education. One of our distinctive features is the intensity of the intellectual engagement between students and faculty and the small number of our graduate programs. Therefore, more of the energy of the faculty can be devoted to undergraduates. Although the core values of a liberal education are discussed on page five, the connection of them to the professional school remains vague. Clarifying how inquiry-based learning and intellectual rigor apply across the university may be an improvement. A point was made that "programs" are not consistently mentioned as opposed to departments and schools. The balance of teaching and research as discussed seems to imply that programs without grad programs aren't as interested in research (p. 8). The issue of faculty and student research isn't clarified. There seems to be more emphasis on student research. The purpose of research is to advance knowledge and the faculty role in that endeavor should be highlighted. The role of

undergraduate research in the curriculum must be discussed. Research-based learning has been injected into the overall discussion. What are the implications of pursuing research as more central to an undergraduate education? Faculty research provides opportunities for students to be involved. When will broad-based discussions occur on defining undergraduate research and service learning? Resource allocations must be forthcoming to support undergraduate research at the level that would make us distinctive.

A final question was raised about the statement that W&M will be more successful by increasing the diversity of the college.

Meeting was adjourned at 17:00

Respectfully submitted,

Mike DiPaola

Secretary, Faculty Assembly