

Faculty Assembly Meeting

Minutes for February 28, 2012

Present: Todd Averett, Debbie Bebout, Kathleen Bragdon, Michael Deschenes, Emmett Duffy, Nancy Gray, Rick Gressard, Susan Grover, Trotter Hardy, Will Hausman, Carl Hershner, Gina L. Hoatson, Scott McCoy, Alan Meese, Terry Meyers, Todd Mooradian, Gul Ozyegin, J.C. Poutsma, Suzanne Raitt

Absent: Tracy L. Cross, Jenny Taylor

Others in Attendance: Michael Halleran, Kim Smith (Business), Bill Stewart (Business), Jeanne Wilson (Business)

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm by Todd Mooradian.

1. Approval of the January 23, 2012 minutes [attached]. The minutes were approved.
2. Provost's Report. The Provost reported on the current situation with the state budget. The Senate is deadlocked on their budget plan, but the House has passed a budget and the Governor has also issued his budget. Negotiations on the budget are supposed to conclude on March 10th but this seems unlikely, and it is possible that it will be weeks or even months before a state budget is finally passed. The Provost noted that all three budgets phase out the Eminent Scholars program, with implications for the W&M budget; none of the budgets includes a cap on tuition or a new mandate on the proportion of in-state and out-of-state students; the Tyler renovation is included in the House bill but not in the Senate's. In one of the bills, there is a new cap on cost-of-living increases to pensions under the Virginia Retirement System, down from 5-6% to 2-3%. Either the House or the Senate bill would be preferable to the Governor's from the College's point of view. The Provost noted that it is unclear whether the Governor has the authority to extend a first-year budget to cover the second year of a biennium (which we are now in).

The Provost then presented two reports on specified term faculty [attached]. Will Hausman noted that Table 1 represents instructional faculty only, and drew attention to the fact that the number of TTE faculty has dropped from 510 in 2006 to 507 currently. Table 4 seems to include part-time and full-time faculty, since some faculty are listed as teaching only one course (although it was pointed out that these could be faculty who are primarily research appointments).

Will Hausman observed that the average number of courses taught by a faculty member (noted at the bottom of p.1 of the Powerpoint presentation) seemed surprisingly high (2.91 for tenured, 2.58 for tenure-eligible, 3.17 for tenure-ineligible, 2.75 overall). The calculations also do not correct for faculty on leave and not teaching, or for their replacements. The Provost said that these calculations could be done differently in the future to give a more accurate count.

A discussion followed about whether or not the moderate rise in student credit hours since 2007 is primarily due to increased teaching by NTEs (and a moderately increased

number of NTEs), and it was remarked that the increase in NTE teaching would probably be more marked if the graph went back further – especially in the last fifteen or twenty years. J.C. Poutsma observed that ending the Kinesiology requirement probably also affected these figures, since many of the courses that fulfilled that requirement were taught by NTEs (especially adjuncts).

Poutsma asked the Provost what changes the Board of Visitors would like to see in these figures five years from now. The Provost was not sure but he imagined that at least the percentages might stay about the same, with adjustments to teaching loads within the faculty as a whole. Comparative data for other HE institutions are hard to collect, partly because of the use of graduate student instructors in large lecture courses at other universities (so that a faculty member who appears to be handling 500 undergraduates single-handedly is in fact receiving the kind of teaching support that would be unavailable here). The Assembly speculated on who might have been in the category of tenured part-time that appears to have existed in 2007.

Gina Hoatson noted that the BOV would probably like to be reminded that close to 65% of our student credit hours are delivered by TTE faculty and the Provost reiterated that much undergraduate research and mentoring is not accounted for in these figures so that establishing across-the-board teaching loads is difficult, and increasing teaching loads would also be difficult to achieve in an equitable manner.

3. Standing Committee Reports

A. Faculty Affairs Committee: no report.

B. Academic Affairs: the Chair of the Committee, J.C. Poutsma, recently received a proposal to switch the entire College to electronic evaluations. The proposal came from a committee chaired by Kate Slevin (Vice Provost for Academic Affairs) and Gene Roche (Director of Academic Information Services). The report will be circulated to the committee and comments should be sent to Poutsma. There are no plans for the proposal to be formally presented to the Faculty Assembly because the professional schools have already adopted electronic evaluations. Slevin and Roche will present their proposal at the next Arts and Sciences faculty meeting and it will be adopted by acclamation rather than by formal vote.

C. COPAR: COPAR/FUPC met once to receive a budget update from Sam Jones (Vice President for Finance). It will meet again on Friday to receive another update. The Provost responded to a question about when the Planning Budget Requests will be acted on by saying that they need to be incorporated into the budget proposed at the April BOV meeting but until the state budget is finalized nothing can be resolved.

D. Executive Committee: The Executive Committee met to establish the agenda for this meeting and to receive an update on the state budget. Todd Mooradian noted that SB104, granting a partial (50%) tuition waiver for dependent children of faculty who have worked for seven years or more at a Virginia state college or university, recently passed the Senate unanimously. Mooradian called the office of Sen. John Edwards, co-sponsor of the Bill, and also spoke with Fran Bradford (Associate Vice President for

Government Relations at W&M), and he reported that the Bill will only become law if there is money appropriated for it. At present there are no plans to do so, nor is there a comparable tuition waiver Bill under discussion in the House. Mooradian noted that he has heard from some faculty that there is frustration that the Assembly has not been more active on this issue. He noted that it was discussed at the Assembly's August 2011 retreat but the Provost identified a statute dating from the 1960s that required new legislation before the College could take any action in the matter, so the Assembly took it off the agenda for this year. When SB104 passed, the officers of the Assembly judged that there was no real prospect that it would become law. It was also noted that because the proposed waiver did not extend to the children of staff, the benefit would have been taxable. Mooradian remarked that the officers have no easy access to a list-serve that includes all faculty. Debbie Bebout commented that SB104 is progress in the right direction. The Provost agreed and observed that if we had private funds to support the initiative, W&M could implement a tuition waiver without any change in the law. But it is not possible to use tuition dollars to fund a waiver. Trotter Hardy noted that not all faculty support this initiative. Some feel it unfairly favors a sub-group of the faculty, who would effectively receive a significant bonus. Mooradian noted that when this issue was discussed by the Assembly three years ago there was significant opposition to it and support for an alternative blend of benefits that could be tailored to meet the needs of individual faculty members. Alan Meese remembered that four or five years ago, the Assembly wrote to the Challenge 4 Sub-Committee laying out the range of opinion on the matter and asking them to consider the issue, which seems not to have happened.

4. Old Business: discussion of proposed new language for Faculty Handbook III.B [attached]. Mooradian reported that a small task force was recently formed to conclude work on this issue. Susan Grover worked hard to re-draft the language, and recent changes are highlighted in the paper copy that was passed round.

Mooradian noted that a major change is that under the proposed policy, anyone who is instructing a for-credit course or activity has to have an instructional faculty appointment (either TTE or NTE): thus, people who are appointed as professional faculty and who are teaching courses for credit would also need to hold an instructional appointment. It is hoped that this will improve integration and oversight of instruction at the College. Any adjustments to current appointments would happen at the School level and should be straightforward.

Will Hausman asked whether there was tautology in the wording at the bottom of p.2 (III.B.2.b.1), which stipulates that the dean establishes NTE positions "in consultation with the appropriate faculty body" and then "explains to the area faculty" what the processes of consultation were. Hausman wondered whether these two constituencies were in fact the same. Mooradian thought that they would not necessarily always be the same. He explained that this clause was intended as a check and balance on the dean's powers to establish positions, although he also noted that in some cases the dean will simply approve, rather than establish, a position, since some NTEs are post-docs supported by faculty's external grants. It was suggested that Section III.B should be called "Instructional and Research Faculty" to make clear that it governs both categories.

Later in the meeting, the Assembly returned to this issue and decided that on p.2, III.B.2.b.1 should be changed to read “faculty of the School” rather than “area faculty.”

Alan Meese asked if it is really the intention that all faculty should be involved in the evaluation of NTE faculty, even part-time visitors, and it was agreed that the language on pp.3-4 (III.B.2.b.2.i through v) should be amended to read “specify the roles of both” instead of “provide a role for both.” Later, he noted that changing the language in III.B.2.b.2.ii might allow Schools to develop policies which excluded faculty from the establishment of and recruitment for NTE positions, which the Assembly did not intend to do.

Nancy Gray suggested that on p.4, III.B.2.2.e should read “a report on NTE appointments” and not “specified-term appointments” since the intention is to report on all NTE appointments. Other suggestions included substituting “are not eligible” for “do not qualify” on p.1, III.B.1.b.

A discussion followed on whether or not NTEs whose title is Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor should be distinguished from TTE faculty by having a modifier such as “Visiting” as part of their title (p.3, IIIB.2.b.1, footnote). Opinions varied but the consensus was that a modifier or an entirely different title (Lecturer etc.) was appropriate. Suzanne Raitt pointed out that NTE faculty members who have been teaching here for many years should not be referred to as “Visiting” and this kind of anomaly was referred to the Provost for adjudication. It was agreed to substitute “TTE” (defined on p.1, III.B.1.a) for “tenure-track” throughout, since the intention is to refer to tenured as well as tenure-track faculty.

The Assembly then turned its attention to the question of what policies should govern these procedures during the time between the adoption of the new language for the Faculty Handbook, and the development of specific policies by each School (which have to be approved by the Personnel Policy Committee and the BOV). After a discussion, it was agreed to issue a “Sense of the Assembly Resolution” stating that pending the adoption of new School policies, the old policies govern these procedures. The Resolution will also mandate that new policies be in place at each School within one year of the adoption of the new language for the Faculty Handbook. Schools that do not comply with this requirement will be ineligible to hire any NTE faculty.

Suzanne Raitt suggested that in the interests of better integrating NTE faculty into the faculty community, they should have representation on the Assembly. Discussion of this idea was postponed to another meeting.

The Provost wondered whether having only two categories of full-time NTE (continuing and specified-term) excludes people who are on renewable contracts, but it was suggested that the language on p.1 (III.B.1.b.2) did not prevent the College from renewing a specified-term contract. There is some confusion on the Assembly over whether the language refers to appointments, positions, or people, and it was decided that III.B.1.3 refers to people.

It was suggested that “have no term limits” be deleted from III.B.1.b.1.

Todd Mooradian moved that the Assembly adopt the revised version of III.B, as amended during the discussion, for the Faculty Handbook. Susan Grover seconded. The Sense of the Assembly Resolution was read aloud. The motion passed with eighteen votes in favor, one against.

5. New Business: Liaison Committee: the proposed discussion of presentation at the April BOV meeting was postponed.
6. Announcements: the Executive Committee is meeting with Bob Scott and Colin Campbell on Thursday March 1.
7. Adjournment: the meeting adjourned at 5.20.

Attachments:

- Minutes of meeting of January 23, 2012
- Specified-Term Faculty Report (February 27, 2012)
- Specified-Term Faculty Powerpoint Presentation (February 27, 2012)
- Proposed New Language for Faculty Handbook III.B