

Faculty Assembly Meeting

Minutes for November 15, 2011

Present: Debbie Bebout, Tracy L. Cross, Emmett Duffy, Nancy Gray, Rick Gressard, Susan Grover, Trotter Hardy, Will Hausman, Gina L. Hoatson, Scott McCoy, Alan Meese, Terry Meyers, Todd Mooradian, J.C. Poutsma, Suzanne Raitt, Ron Rapaport

Absent: Todd Averett, Michael Deschenes, Carl Hershner, Gul Ozyegin, Jenny Taylor

Others in Attendance: Michael Halleran

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

1. Approval of the October 25, 2011 minutes

Approved as amended

2. Provost's Report: postponed until the arrival of the Provost

3. Standing Committee Reports:

A. Faculty Affairs Committee

Debbie Bebout, Chair of FAC, passed round a draft version of the new NTE policy (Faculty Handbook, IIIB.b; attached). She explained that the NTE Task Force at a recent meeting discussed some disagreements over the wording of IIIB.b.1.2 and proposed the following new version: "The tenure-track faculty of each school shall develop procedures for the creation and duration of NTE faculty positions. Procedures must specify the level of faculty and administrator involvement in position creation." The proposed procedures for each school would need to be approved by the Personnel Policy Committee and the Procedural Review Committee, which have already approved the wording of the rest of the new NTE policy. There are disadvantages to increasing the number of NTE faculty on campus, and many academic units would prefer to maintain or increase the size of TE faculty, but it was pointed out that since we already employ a significant number of NTE and part-time faculty (35% of credit hours, roughly 65% of which are delivered by continuing NTEs), it is important that practice across campus be consistent within the distinct mission of each school. There are some advantages to a multi-tiered faculty making a variety of different contributions. After some confusion was expressed by members of the Faculty Assembly about the views of the business and law faculties on this issue, Todd Mooradian presented the results of a recent survey in the Business School in which TTE faculty were asked their opinion on how involved faculty should be in the initiation of a new NTE position. Four people (10%) agreed with the statement: "The establishment of a net new clinical faculty position is the decision of the dean"; fourteen people (35%) agreed that: "The establishment of a net new clinical faculty position is the decision of the dean with formal faculty consultation (e.g., a formal recommendation or non-binding vote)"; sixteen people (40%) agreed that: "The establishment of a net new faculty position should be based on a strategic plan that explicitly addresses the faculty mix and is jointly agreed upon by the faculty and the dean"; nine people (23%) agreed that: "The establishment of a net new clinical faculty position requires the agreement of the faculty with regard to each position"; and two people (5%) checked "Other." Todd Mooradian noted that the survey indicates that faculty opinion is fairly evenly split on the question of whether the dean should have the authority to establish a new NTE position without the formal agreement of the faculty (45% in favor/63% against).

Alan Meese asked whether the new policy would apply to part-time and to adjunct faculty. As it is currently written, part-time faculty (and thus presumably adjuncts) are included at least in some sections, and there was some discussion of whether or not this is appropriate (particularly in IIB.b.3.C and IIB.b.3.D). Some members also raised the issue of who should be involved in the evaluation of NTEs. It was pointed out that the current draft is not yet ready for a vote and it was referred back to FAC for further discussion and possible revision.

2. Postponed Provost's Report

The Provost drew the Assembly's attention to the Creative Adaptation call for proposals which was recently circulated with a deadline of January 16 2012. He explained that the goal is to respond proactively to changes in the economic context of higher education, and especially to improve our academic programs in innovative ways while reallocating dollars to increase faculty compensation and support. The BOV is eager to see the College adopting cost-saving and revenue-generating initiatives, especially in the context of the Six Year Plan.

Bob Scott and Colin Campbell met informally with selected groups of faculty two weeks ago to express their support for faculty priorities and also to convey their sense that for political and strategic reasons, it is important that faculty engage actively with the process of academic innovation and increasing the efficiency of the academic operation. The Creative Adaptation call for proposals encourages faculty to take control of these processes. Scott and Campbell outlined four possible approaches: 1. Convert to the "Dartmouth" quarter system in which students spend one quarter out of four off campus. This has now been rejected because transition costs would be high, implementation would be slow, and the revenue implications are uncertain. 2. Institute differential teaching loads across the TE faculty. 3. Change the blend of TE/NTE faculty on campus so that more courses are being delivered by NTE faculty, who typically have higher teaching loads. 4. Implement new forms of course delivery that save money while enhancing academic excellence. Scott and Campbell noted that of three possible ways to come up with a plan (solicit ideas from the faculty; create a super-committee composed of members of the Board of Visitors as well as other members of the William and Mary community; ask the Provost and Deans to lead the discussion), they favored giving the Provost and Deans full responsibility for the process. The Provost would like to have something to report at the December meeting of the BOV, and to that end he has already asked the Deans to start exploring different options. The BOV would like to see a concrete plan from both the academic and the administrative units at their April meeting.

The Provost also reported on efforts to gather data on faculty hours spent advising or mentoring undergraduates that are not captured accurately by the credit-hour system (eg. students working informally in faculty labs). It was noted that these informal hours have increased as formal teaching loads have declined over the years. The interim Dean of Arts and Sciences is gathering information from three representative departments. The Provost emphasized that this data is being sought in the context of an overall effort to improve faculty compensation and support. When asked if he was planning to implement a hiring freeze, the Provost says he is not in favor of freezes, but prefers a multi-pronged approach to cost-savings, including reducing the pace of hiring and/or increasing revenues from sources other than tuition.

4. Discussion of Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Research Facilities and Administrative Allocations (attached)

The Assembly then moved to discuss the F&A Report while the Provost was still present. It was noted that some of the changes proposed in the report (and/or any others) would have to be phased in slowly, especially the recommendation to fund the Scheduled Semester Research Leave program using revenues other than F&A. The report recommends finding alternative sources of funding for SSRLs. The Provost noted that changing the amount of F&A revenue allocated to the Deans, departments and PIs could happen more quickly. Members of the Assembly were invited to send specific comments on the report to Todd Mooradian or Michael Halleran. The Provost then left the meeting to attend a meeting of the BOV Executive Committee which was taking place across the hall, at which the committee was being updated on progress on the campaign, on the Six-Year Plan and on campus productivity.

5. Standing Committee Reports (continued):

B. Academic Affairs: JC Poutsma reported that Academic Affairs is working on a change to the guidelines for the SSRL program requested last year by Dean Strikwerda. Currently, Arts and Sciences requires SSRL leaves to be scheduled eighteen months in advance. Dean Strikwerda asked that this be changed to twelve months in advance to reflect actual practice and bring the A&S guidelines in line with guidelines at the other Schools. It was noted that although SSRL guidelines are part of the Faculty Handbook, they have not been incorporated into it but can be accessed via links from the main Handbook on the web. In addition to working on the SSRL guidelines, the Academic Affairs Committee will assess whether all links from the Handbook are live and up-to-date.

C. COPAR: Todd Averett reported that COPAR met recently to discuss the baseline Planning Budget Requests and passed its recommendations (endorse/defer/not endorse) on to the Faculty University Priorities Committee.

D. Executive Committee: Todd Mooradian reported on the Executive Committee's dinner with Bob Scott and Colin Campbell, at which many of the ideas reported on by the Provost in his report were discussed. He also noted that the Assembly recently held a special meeting at which Deans McLaughlin and Pulley reported on their recent visit to the Future of State Universities conference. Although the conference focused on online delivery of courses (and was sponsored by Academic Partnerships, a for-profit company which produces relevant software), it was emphasized that technological enhancements to pedagogy do not necessarily involve distance learning, and that the special meeting was only the beginning of a conversation about the role of educational technology on the W&M campus. It was also noted that the Curriculum Review Steering Committee has not yet discussed a possible switch to a student course-load of four four-credit courses per semester (although such a discussion is part of the Provost's charge to the committee).

6. Old business: No old business.

7. New business: Todd Mooradian has received a letter from the Procedural Review Committee requesting revision to the section of the Handbook governing appeals of negative tenure and promotion decisions. The PRC feels that the phrase "inadequate consideration" (p.37 and elsewhere) could be interpreted to refer to substantive as well as procedural issues and recommends that the wording be changed to "failure to follow procedures." The matter was referred to the Faculty Affairs Committee.

8. Announcements: No announcements.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm