

**Faculty Assembly Meeting
Minutes for August 31, 2017
3:30-5:00 pm
Blow Hall Board Room**

Officers Present: Cathy Forestell (President), Jack Martin (Vice President), Chris Abelt (Secretary) and Eric Chason (Faculty Representative to the Board of Visitors)

Other Members Present: Lynda Butler, Tim Costelloe, Mark Forsyth, Carl Friedrichs, Steve Holliday, Jenny Kahn, Rowan Lockwood, Michael Luchs, Alan Meese, Christy Porter and Ron Schechter

Members Absent: Mark Brush, Ron Hess, Rex Kincaid, Megan Tschannen-Moran, Sophia Serghi and Tom Ward

Others in Attendance: Michael Halleran (Provost), Ann Marie Stock (Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs), Terry Meyers (Parliamentarian)

1. Call to order

Ms. Forestell called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm.

2. Approval of Minutes for May 11, 2017

Ms. Forestell asked for a correction to the minutes. The minutes were approved as amended by unanimous consent.

3. Provost's Report

The Provost talked about a few items for the upcoming academic year. The College is celebrating the 50th year milestone of the first three African-Americans who were admitted as students in residence. Plans are in motion for the College to take over administration of the ORP plan. The BOV in its long range planning for 2026 is considering what form the Promise will take. One possible approach is for modest enrollment increases to target a higher percentage of out-of-state students. The current 65/35 ratio was established in a 2004 appropriations act. With respect to the events in Charlottesville the Provost emphasized three principles: safety, inclusion and speech. Other institutions have used safety as a reason to turn down speakers. The Office of Diversity and Inclusion sponsored a dialog on August 24th as an immediate response. More are planned. The Provost pointed out that universities should be champions of protecting speech, but it is always a balancing act.

4. Election of Committees

Committee and committee chair assignments were approved unanimously.

5. Assembly response to recent events in Charlottesville

Faculty discussed possible FA actions to events in Charlottesville. As pointed out in the Provost's report, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion has already sponsored a dialog session. The FA can consider co-sponsoring a future session; for example with the day-long session planned by the ODI on October 14 or with Prof. Cheryl Dickter who conducts workshops for WMSURE. Ms. Lockwood supported the idea of collaborating with the ODI and reaching out to Ms. Dickter. Ms. Porter argued against just sending out a statement that is just read once. One concern with the ODI events is that they are sometimes not well attended. Co-sponsorship might help. Mr. Meese expressed his hope that any discussions on race and race relations would include perspectives different from the perspective endorsed by the College administration and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

6. Update on Faculty Handbook revisions

Ms. Forestell reported that the ad hoc committee (Ms. Forestell, Mr. Meese, Mr. Abelt) looking at Handbook changes was close to finishing a new section III.G. on interim suspension. She reported that the College is intending to change the leave policy to allow both parents who are also College employees to take separate, non-concurrent leave for the birth of a child. Also, a new Family Medical Leave Act policy has been published for comment. The ad hoc committee will tackle section III. H., termination for medical reasons, next. Mr. Chason noted that recent revisions to the Handbook were prompted by Title IX compliance. They allowed for streamlining future changes to the policy, which would take place outside the Handbook, but with a requirement that such changes would have to be brought to the FA. Several noted the tendency that some policies generated by the College administration might not be in accord with the Handbook. Mr. Meese pointed out that the Handbook is approved by the BOV, and therefore should take precedence over new administration policies. Ms. Butler noted that the administration's approach to creating policies erodes the collective voice of the faculty. Several pointed out the need for the FA to review proposed policies for consistency with the Handbook and for their impact on the College in general and the faculty in particular.

7. Faculty survey planning

Ms. Forestell pointed out that the next Faculty Survey would be in the fall of 2018. Planning for this task should begin now. Planning should be done by the Faculty Affairs subcommittee or by an appointed task force. The survey takes a great deal of time to administer and to create a report. The last survey was conducted at the same time as the climate survey by HR. The faculty survey used some of the HR data survey and deliberately removed the overlapping climate-related questions. One possibility is to out-source the survey and to incorporate it within the HR survey. Costs would be split between HR and FA, but the FA would retain complete control of the questions. This would also make the reporting less burdensome. The FA has been frugal with expenditures recently making such a collaboration feasible, but it would depend on the cost.

8. Update on the Presidential Search

Mr. Chason gave an update on the search. The search committee has met a number of times and has had nearly one hundred listening events. A search firm was employed this summer, but the

search committee is doing the work, not the firm. The search itself is characterized as being confidential as opposed to closed. Identities of candidates will be held in confidence. Meetings of the search committee are open to the public unless they move into a closed session. It is hoped that candidates will want to meet some faculty, e.g. members of the FA, during future on-site visits. Any such meetings will require confidentiality agreements. An advertisement for the position has been posted. The search committee is preparing a leadership profile. It is not clear if that profile will be made public. Listening sessions revealed a range of desired traits for the next president. As with previous searches the next president should be a great campaigner, Virginia politician and financial manager. It is also not known if the position guarantees academic tenure for those without an academic background.

9. Reports from standing committees

Liaison Committee – Jack Martin

Mr. Martin reported that the first faculty presentation to the BOV will be on AidData led by Prof. Mike Tierney. Upcoming possible presentations include one on international studies and the Lemon project.

10. Old Business

Ms. Forestell reported on her progress in making FA meeting available by remote access. IT suggested a platform called “Zoom Room.” The upfront costs would be ~\$1000 with a \$300 yearly fee. It is hoped that the BOV might cost share the expense since they could use the system as well. Some asked about the need for such accommodations. Ms. Forestell explained that there is at least one faculty member who finds it difficult to attend due to health. Mr. Friedrichs noted that this could be helpful for faculty that travel. FA bylaws state that “a faculty member who will be absent from a meeting may appoint as an alternate member for that meeting any person from his or her constituency who recently has served on the Assembly. Such alternate members shall have the same debating and voting privileges as the regular members they replace.”

11. Adjourn

Ms. Forestell adjourned the meeting at 4:55.

Prepared by Chris Abelt