

Professionals and Professional Faculty Assembly MEETING MINUTES

Friday, March 6, 2009 8:30-10:00am

Location: Swem Library's Ford Classroom (ground floor)

PPFA Members Present: *Steve Cole, Judy Corello, Lee Foster, Vernon Hurte, Ilsa Kaattari, Elaine McBeth, Mary Molineux, Dot Osborne, Tom Rideout, Cory Springer, Wendy Webb-Robers, Jobila Williams, Randy Williams*

PPFA Members Absent: *Wayne Boy, Lisa Grimes, Wendy Livingston, Pamela Mason, Mane Pada, Carlane Pittman-Hampton, Bobby Reis, Stacy Richardson*

Guest: *W&M's Provost Geoff Feiss*

Visitors: *Susan Mongold – W&M Human Resources' new Director of Training and Development; Lynn Riggs, W&M Human Resources' Manager of Employment and Employee Relations; Kathryn Butuceanu, W&M School of Business' Director of Administration.*

Minutes

1. Provost Geoff Feiss: Provost Geoff Feiss joined us for the first portion of the meeting and addressed the following topics and questions:

- professionals vs. professional faculty definitions: these are being finalized by his office; professionals and professional faculty (PPF) will likely be notified of whether they are categorized as a professional or as professional faculty in the annual contract letters, due out April 15.
- all PPFs will continue to report through the Provost's Office; for efficiency, some personnel files for PPFs may move to Human Resources (HR) and some approvals may be streamlined, but contract/salary letters will continue to come from the Provost's Office.
- PPF Handbook project: having a complete "contents" compiled before he retires will be a good start.
- PPFA's opportunities and protocol vis-à-vis meeting with the W&M Board of Visitors (BOV), Faculty Assembly, Hourly and Classified Employees Association (HACE), President Reveley: the Provost encouraged the PPFA to schedule regular meetings with each and to keep his office apprised of those meetings.
ACTION: Molineux will begin scheduling regular meeting dates.
- University Planning Council: a new campus committee to oversee the ongoing strategic planning; members not yet appointed.
- Strategic planning: the campus Strategic Planning Committee will present its final draft to the College President by late March. It then goes to BOV members by April 1, and the BOV will review it at its April 16/17 meeting. **ACTION:** PPFA and all PPFs should continue to visit the W&M strategic planning website to be aware of developments and suggest ideas.

- W&M mission statement: there was discussion of the need for a shorter, “sound byte”-type mission statement or motto; Provost Feiss said that one was in the works.
- Searches for Law School Dean, Provost, and Vice President for Student Affairs: all in final stages. In the future, the College may opt for more “closed” searches because “open” searches sometimes prevent some good candidates from applying. Each finalist would still visit campus and meet with representatives from all relevant campus community members.

2. Policies: some new or revised policies affecting professionals and professional faculty (e.g., severance, contracts, termination, evaluations): Molineux reported that Provost Feiss, Vice President for Administration Anna Martin, Coordinator of Legal Affairs Kiersten Boyce were working on some of these policies and would meet to review them with the PPFA’s Executive Committee in the next few weeks. Then the policies will be presented to the whole PPFA for review and eventually all professionals and professional faculty. McBeth mentioned that some recently hired PPFs are concerned about the change in the new severance policy – to a much reduced severance period. **ACTION:** Molineux will alert the PPFA’s Executive Committee when Martin schedules this initial session.

3. PPF general orientation handout and webpage: there was discussion about how to help both existing and new PPFs better understand what PPFs are in terms of status, employment policies, etc. Although the forthcoming PPF Handbook will help with details, it was agreed that a basic orientation handout, with corresponding webpage, would be useful to clarify many issues. **ACTION:** Molineux will draft an initial handout and consult with the Foster of the Communications Committee and Riggs of HR, and bring it to the PPFA.

4. Committee Reports:

- *PPF Handbook Committee (ad hoc):* McBeth reported that this committee has divided into 2 subcommittees -- one looking at the actual structure of the handbook, the other writing the policy. McBeth explained that the committee is starting with our faculty handbook as a template, but is also assessing other colleges' handbook structures.
- *Policy and Administrative Issues Committee:* Osborne reported that she is participating in the Handbook committee. **ACTION:** It was suggested that the committee investigate developing charts that compare policies – among categories of W&M employees (e.g., faculty, PPFs, operating) and among other institutions (e.g., W&M, UVA, VT, VCU...) might help PPFAs best understand the policies that apply to PPFs.
- *Communications Committee (ad hoc):* Foster reported that the committee will meet on March 26 with a goal to have a communications plan by April 6. She has contacted the W&M News, which will write a story about the PPFA. Foster also mentioned that the committee suggests that the PPFA identify a representative in every W&M department who will share PPF news and recruit interest in the PPFA.

- *Elections Committee*: For Pada, Corello reported that the committee met and has begun by reviewing all the PPFA's Bylaws related to elections.
- *Strategic Plan Committee (ad hoc)*: Rideout thanked the PPFA members for their hard work on pulling the strategy suggestions together. He suggested that we get representatives from every department on campus to give us ongoing input. **ACTION**: Rideout will review membership for his committee and recruit new members as needed
- Note: the Technology Committee and Administrative Issues Committee did not report.

5. Committee goals and objectives: **ACTION**: Each committee will complete its draft goals and objectives by April 6 and post to Blackboard, in anticipation of the April 10 PPFA meeting.

6. General PPF meeting dates and locations, and how to get better attendance: members discussed how frequently to hold general PPF meetings and how to get better attendance. Suggestions included: more meetings, in part for establishing our organization; fewer meetings, in part because we're all busy and most might want to handle things electronically; having each PPFA member encourage more participation and attendance by PPF colleagues; alternating meeting times; having guest speakers and/or significant topics, such as personnel policies. Some specific examples included an opportunity to hear from the new Provost. **ACTION**: In the next two months, the PPFA will develop a survey of PPFs will include questions about meetings, including when and how often and what content would be of interest.

7. PPFA Goals and Objectives: due to a lack of time, detailed discussion was deferred to the April 10 meeting.

- Survey to gather PPF ideas and priorities: it was agreed to gather input after the PPFA completes a solid draft of its goals and objectives.

8. PPFA meeting dates and locations

- Proposed remaining PPFA regular meeting dates for 2009: there was consensus to keep the PPFA meetings on the second Friday of each month, including April 10 for the next meeting, and during the 8:30-10:00am time slot.
- PPFA meeting dates are now posted on the PPFA's webpage (www.wm.edu/proffaculty) so that visitors can better plan to attend.
- Locations of the PPFA meetings are still to be determined. **ACTION**: Molineux, Springer, and Reis (as Technology Committee chair) will consider a short PPFA survey to gather input on location preferences.

*Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Webb-Robers
March 19, 2009*

Approved at the PPFA's April 10, 2009, meeting