

MINUTES OF THE FACULTY MEETING

October 2, 2007

With the customary motion to adjourn before 6:00 p.m. and a vote to affirm approval of the minutes with corrections, the meeting was convened at 4:03 p.m. Professor Colwill as chair of the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) addressed the rationale of Faculty Meetings, which, according to the charge, is to conduct faculty business. This includes informing faculty members about ongoing and upcoming FEC business, discussing and debating issues of faculty concern and making suggestions for FEC attention, and communicating the faculty's academic priorities and values to the Senior Administration. One on-going item before the FEC is the establishment of an electronic database of faculty committee and board memberships from the inception of the new governance system (AY03-04) to the present. The goal is to report on faculty composition in faculty governance, to examine for patterns over time, and to make recommendations.

Reporting upon the representation of protected groups in faculty governance, a concern which falls to the FEC in its charge, Professor Colwill shared preliminary findings that suggest that regardless of the pool used to establish representation of protected groups in the faculty at large, protected groups were underrepresented in the 196 committee and advisory board slots filled last year.

Other on-going items before FEC are to develop with the Academic Priorities Committee (APC) a procedure for renaming academic units; to review the Ombudsman's Office pilot program in part through preparing a faculty survey; to consider a scholarly leave policy for senior lecturers by gathering data to be forwarded to the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC); to receive a report from an ad hoc committee on scholarly leaves for '(research)' faculty; to review the new faculty governance structures, including Tenure, Promotion and Appointments Committee (TPAC), the Committee on the Status of Women, the Committee on Diversity in Hiring (CDH); and the Committee on Nominations.

At the request of Professor Colwill, Professor Gatsonis, as chair of the Committee on Nominations, announced a new initiative to honor the outstanding contributions of faculty to faculty governance. He reported that the President has established five annual Presidential Awards for Excellence in Faculty Governance, carrying research stipends of \$2,000. The Committee on Nominations will be responsible for the selection process. Professor Colwill called the attention of the Faculty to the Forum on Internationalization on Oct 18 and to the "Meet and greet" opportunity for faculty to gather with new and continuing members of the Senior Administration following the forum. She stated that the FEC continues to consider the overlapping charges of the FAC, the CDH, and the Committee on the Status of Women and that it will review and respond to AY06-07 reports and surveys submitted by the Committee on Grievance, the Computing Advisory Board, TPAC, the Committee on the Academic Code, the APC, the CDH, the Library Advisory Board, the Medical Faculty Advisory Board, and the FAC.

The FEC expects at the next meeting to propose a motion regarding the attendance of

administrators at University Faculty meetings. Prof. Colwill shared two extreme options currently under consideration by the FEC. One involves adding new senior administrative positions as they are created to the list of non-voting faculty; the other involves creating a new category called administrator participation modeled after that for student participation. She invited all those present to send her comments on this matter in time for the FEC's meeting the following week.

Other items under FEC consideration are the review of Brown's tenure and promotion practices such as flexibility in time to tenure review and the criteria for promotion to Full Professor; the consideration of initiatives for junior faculty, some of whom have reported being isolated (a lunch for junior faculty with FEC members, an FEC contact person for junior faculty); discussions with administrative committees and task forces (graduate and undergraduate); the establishment of a database for committee preferences; the use of an electronic database for a pool of one-semester committee replacements for those on leave.

Professor Colwill made a motion to re-elect for a two-year term seven outgoing members of the Faculty Committee on the Campaign. The motion passed without dissent. The members are:

Vern Henderson (Economics, Urban Studies), David Konstan (Classics), Diane Lipscombe (Neuroscience), Bob Pelcovits (Physics), David Rand (Ecology & Evolutionary Biology), Kenneth Sacks (History), William Simmons (Anthropology)

As her final item, Professor Colwill summarized how the concerns of the Faculty over academic priorities and values can be addressed through faculty governance. She reviewed which committees were responsible for matters such as the quality and diversity of the faculty (TPAC, CDH); equity with peers (FAC, Status of Women); the ownership of the undergraduate and graduate curricula (University Curriculum Council (UCC), College Curriculum Council (CCC), Graduate Council, etc); and the monitoring of these issues by the watchdog committees (FEC, APC, and University Resources Committee (URC)).

Discussion followed Professor Colwill's presentation with questions raised about firm limits of the terms of members of advisory boards; reducing the numbers of committees in order to make staffing easier; the appropriateness of rewarding service in faculty governance through awards, for which \$10,000 could be put to better use; the vesting of the award process in the Nominations Committee; the limitation of administrators in attendance at Faculty Meetings to a number to be determined by the FEC; the tying of compensation formally to faculty service in governance; and the general usefulness of the elaborate faculty governance process where committee work is sometimes lost in transmission and where the under attended Faculty Meeting never addresses matters of substance.

After brief discussion, a motion brought to the Faculty by Dean Bergeron on behalf of the Committee on Academic Standing carried without dissent:

SUMMARY: Motion by the Committee on Academic Standing to amend its charge, effective immediately, for the purpose of making the Deputy Dean of the College chair of the committee and for referring appeals to the Dean of the College.

MOTION: That the Faculty, in Part 1, Section 2.IV.E.2 of the Faculty Rules & Regulations on Academic Standing (CAS): Membership, delete the existing language (as struck-through below) and replace it with the proposed new language (underlined and in bold below), and add Section 2.IV.E.3, effective immediately.

Faculty Rules & Regulations

Part 1. Membership, Meetings, & Committees

Section 2. Committees: Faculty Members Elected by the Faculty

IV. Councils and Committees for the Curriculum

E. Academic Standing (CAS)

2. Membership There shall be four faculty members; and four administrators, ex-officio members. The administrators shall include the **Deputy** Dean of the College, the Registrar of the University, and two Associate Deans of the College. **The Deputy Dean** ~~one of whom~~ will be designated by the Dean of the College to act as Chair.

3. Appeals

The Dean of the College will preside over appeals.

RATIONALE:

In the recent past, the Committee on Academic Standing included four administrators: the Dean of the College, two Associate Deans of the College, and the Registrar. One of the two Associate Deans was designated Chair of the committee. The recent reorganization of the Office of the Dean of the College brought with it the creation of a new position of Deputy Dean of the College. We would like to amend the charge to reflect this change. The Deputy Dean would effectively replace the Dean of the College on the committee, while also serving as chair. The Dean of the College would then serve in the position of hearing appeals from students.

A motion brought by Professor Colwill on behalf of the FEC to amend the faculty rules on balloting also passed unanimously:

SUMMARY: Motion to amend the Faculty Rules, effective immediately, for the purpose of replacing mail balloting for the election of faculty committee members by electronic balloting.

MOTION: That the Faculty replace the phrase “a mail ballot” with the phrase “an electronic ballot” in all occurrences in Part 1, Section 2 and Part 4, Section 10 of the Faculty Rules & Regulations (thirteen occurrences in total), effective immediately.

RATIONALE: Last year, the Faculty moved to an on-line voting procedure for the ballot elections of new committee members. This procedure was implemented through MyCourses which ensured the same high level of security for casting votes as for submitting course grades. The number of voters was comparable to the number participating in recent mail ballots but the election results were available instantaneously. Given the advantages of an electronic voting system in saving resources, it makes sense to replace mail ballots with electronic ballots. The purpose of this motion is to amend the Faculty Rules and Regulations to reflect this new practice.

President Simmons thanked Professor Colwill for her extensive and engaging report, acknowledging as well the legitimate concern about the usefulness of the Faculty Meeting by suggesting that issues of merit and importance were before the Faculty today. She began her report by addressing the ritual question of whether the imperative to do much enables doing not much of merit and called for renewing the ongoing critique of what we are doing, the degree of effectiveness of the work, and the prospects for success if we continue on the current path. She has asked the Provost and the deans to work through their committees and advisory groups to pose and answer the questions of how well we have planned, of what has done less well than expected, of what opportunities we are missing and of what we need to wait and see about. While we can point to net additions to the faculty that should result in increased curricular diversity and offerings, reduced average class size and a more favorable student-faculty ratio, there is much more to improving the overall environment for teaching, research and learning, including space issues, student life facilities, competitive salaries and benefits, and an up to date physical plant. In regard to the need to focus investments the President called for an honest accounting of gains, risks, and errors in the Plan so far, and a report to the Corporation that will correct our course as needed. She stated that just as academic programs are periodically reviewed and overall institutional effectiveness, so must the assessment of administrative units, calculating their strengths and weaknesses and the actual support to the academic mission provided by any area of administrative growth. Such assessment, alongside the ongoing efforts to evaluate undergraduate and graduate education and the recent review of the Medical School should suggest how through institutional focus we might maximize resources (human, capital and otherwise) to have the desired impact on the excellence, effectiveness and impact of our mission. She raised the question of whether or not adequate support was being given to strong academic departments, and called for adjustments to be made as necessary through discussion with chairs, the administration, and such expected venues as: the APC, URC, and the Faculty Affairs Committee. She reported that she met with the URC to discuss their involvement in this process, that the Cabinet discussed these issues at a retreat in August, and that others will take up these questions in the course of their varied missions. She expects the budget proposed to the Corporation in February to reflect this work of reassessment and renewal and invited the faculty to share their thoughts.

Discussion followed concerning the revision of the list of needs, the gathering of information from the faculty and the retention and distribution of that information, and the motive for pressing these questions now, which President Simmons answered was

simply the promise of a report to the Corporation. At the request of Professor Savage the President will make her remarks today available in the NEASC process and to the Faculty as a whole through the FEC.

Provost Kertzer reported that he expected a report on the implementation of the new sabbatical plan to be released in a few weeks. Because of recent misinformation in the press about campus planning and building, he summarized major projects currently underway. The “Walk” connecting the Pembroke Campus to the main green is now visible. Two new buildings are being planned to face the Walk at the site of the former Shell station and Peter Green, and there are two potential sites for future construction. After a dramatic move, Peter Green now stands at the corner of Brown and Angell. One of the new buildings planned is a Creative Arts Center, a collaborative high-tech space for collaboration among eight primary user groups and other members of the university community. It will include a 250-seat recital hall. Diller Scofidio and Renfro have been selected as the architects. A site for a new Mind Brain Behavior building has been chosen, between the Walk and J. Walter Wilson. This building, larger than the one originally proposed, will house Cognitive and Linguistic Sciences, Psychology, and the Brain Sciences Program. The renovation of Pembroke Hall for use by the Cogut and Pembroke Centers is expected to be completed in August 2008. Anmahion Winton has been selected for the renovation of Rhode Island Hall for the Joukowsky Institute for Archeology and the Ancient World with the goal of bringing light into the building, restoring its historic character, and creating a mezzanine “island” research lab. The Nelson Fitness Center, larger than originally planned, will pull together the separate buildings of the site, inserting a pleasant green space in the center. A new swimming pool adjacent to it will house a 56-meter pool. Robert Stern is the architect for both projects. The renovation of Faunce House to house the Stephen Robert Campus Center and the redesign of J. Walter Wilson as a central location for student services are intended to create a student precinct on campus. A new entrance to J. Walter Wilson and a new Brown Street exterior will tie the two buildings together. To a certain extent the timing of several of these projects is linked. The Office of International Programs, for example, must be relocated before the renovation of Rhode Island Hall can begin. Another important item in planning and construction is classroom renewal and upgrading.

Questions were raised about the loss of the squash courts in the Smith Swimming Center (Vice President Carey suggested this loss would be offset by the availability of courts in Pizzatola), about how a department can be put on the list for renovation or construction (ongoing communication with committees and administrators, proposal), about the maze-like unsuitability of J. Walter Wilson for the proposed use (total redesign with the new entrance and mailroom intended to draw students in). President Simmons stated that departments are scrupulously consulted and that the APC gives consideration to every project, and that while the will of a donor only occasionally creates a priority, most construction projects are funded otherwise (bonds, etc.).

Professor Gatsonis presented a slate of nominations on behalf of the Nominations Committee. The nominations were approved unanimously.

NOMINATIONS RECOMMENDED TO THE FACULTY FOR COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS TO BE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY IN HIRING (CDH)

Leslie Bostrom (Visual Art) replacing Claire Kenyon (Computer Science) for the fall semester to 12/31/07

COLLEGE CURRICULUM COUNCIL (CCC)

Sharon Swartz (Ecology & Evolutionary Biology) replacing Sally Zierler (Community Health) to 6/30/08

GRADUATE COUNCIL

Robert Lee (American Civilization) replacing Michael Vorenberg (History) to 6/30/10

Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg (Comparative Literature) replacing Tamar Katz (English) to 6/30/08

Allan Feldman (Economics) replacing Marida Hollos (Anthropology) to 6/30/08

Joseph Hogan (Community Health) replacing Jeffrey Morgan (Molecular Pharmacology, Physiology and Biotechnology) for the fall semester to 12/31/07

TENURE, PROMOTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE (TPAC)

Andrew Campbell (Molecular Biology, Microbiology and Immunology) replacing Kate Lapane (Community Health) for the fall semester to 12/31/07

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY RETIREMENT

Bruno Harris (Mathematics) to 6/30/09

Lewis Lipsitt (Psychology) to 6/30/10

Joan Lusk (Chemistry) to 6/30/08

Lois Monteiro (Community Health) to 6/30/09

Steve Rabson (East Asian Studies) to 6/30/10

Newell Stultz (Political Science) to 6/30/08

Vice-President Spies, on behalf of Professor Hamburg, spoke to the April report of the Campus Planning Advisory Board, stressing the importance of the Board in the planning process, acknowledging that while the process can be frustrating as outside factors change, the role of the Board in critiquing, developing, and encouraging ideas is essential. He also noted that as of this semester, Associate Provost Pamela O'Neil will chair the advisory board with Professor Hamburg serving as vice-chair of the board.

Professor Hurt presented comments on the report of the Research Advisory Board, noting the membership rotation. He mentioned two topics that the Board was considering this year, the impact of changes in research policies of the Institutional Review Board and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the seed grants dispensed by the Office of the Vice-President for Research.

There being no Old Business or New Business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Merriam Foley
Secretary of the Faculty