

Minutes of the September of the University Faculty September 11, 2000

Professor Michael Payne, Chair of the Faculty, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the LC Forum. He welcomed the new members of the Faculty to the shared endeavor of making a positive difference in the lives of students and carrying out our various disciplines. Professor Payne also urged the Faculty as a whole to adopt an attitude of patience, compassion and generosity with the administration of the university's new president. He mused that being new often allows one to begin anew and try new things. He then invited the Faculty to communicate to him their concerns and convictions, as well as their willingness to serve beyond teaching and scholarship. Having completed his prefatory statements, he introduced the university's new president, Steffen H. Rogers.

Remarks by the President and members of his staff

President Steffen Rogers expressed his pleasure at being at Bucknell and his commitment to developing a strong working relationship to the Faculty. Stating that that as trust must be earned and not given blindly, he announced that he would make a consistent effort to win the trust of the Faculty. He said that he believed in full disclosure when possible, and in open communication with the various university constituencies.

President Rogers announced his desire to establish a Faculty Advisory Committee, to be made up of the members of the Faculty Council plus a few additional members. He invited questions from the Faculty through e-mail or by telephone.

Turning to the upcoming search for a Vice President for Academic Affairs, President Rogers informed the Faculty that he planned to modify the title of that position to that of VPAA-Provost. He believed that the title of Provost reflected the preeminence that the appropriate to the academic sector of the university. He also thought that this more prestigious title would make the position more appealing to potential candidates. He announced that other searches for Vice Presidents would be getting under way in the near future.

President Rogers informed the Faculty about some upcoming issues in the Patriot League. He thought it likely that the Patriot League would vote in December to initiate more permissive kinds of merit scholarships for athletes. In its November meeting Bucknell's Board of Trustees will have to vote to decide how President Rogers will vote in the Patriot League's December meeting. The first vote would be whether to have more permissive merit scholarships for athletes. If merit scholarships are approved, then there will be additional options on which member institutions must vote: whether these merit scholarships should be limited, and how; or whether to have no limits on merit scholarships for athletes, except for football; other proposals might be to market marquee sports or to let American University retain its present policy regarding merit scholarships for athletes in exchange for its remaining in the Patriot League.

President Rogers explained that Bucknell currently gives preferential scholarships to athletes, to students who excel academically and to minority students; but the university does not exceed need for any of these. The university's policy is also to target students who have the potential to meet the academic challenges of the university and graduate. Only Colgate and Bucknell do not give merit scholarships in any form. He assured the Faculty that there would be a campus discussion before a decision would be made about changes in Bucknell's policy regarding merit scholarships.

President Rogers announced that he would be starting a series of informal conversations he called "Coffee with the President." These informal conversations would not have an agenda. He also expressed a desire to invite members of the Faculty to the newly remodeled President's House. He then opened the floor to questions. Hearing none, he concluded his remarks by communicating his pleasure at being at Bucknell, thanking the Faculty for the opportunity to address the assembly on this occasion.

Interim Vice President for Student Affairs Charles Pollock introduced two new members of the campus community: Rabbi Serena Fujita, the new Jewish Chaplain, and Dean of Students Richard Ferraro. Vice President for Information Services Ray Metz then introduced Jacob Carlson, Librarian/Information Specialist for Social Science and Government Information, to the Faculty.

Next, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs Eugenia Gerdes called on James Orbison, Interim Dean of the College of Engineering and Mark Padilla, Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, who proceeded to introduce the new members of the Faculty in their colleges, seven in Engineering and forty-three in Arts and Sciences (see attachment).

Announcements by the Chair of the Faculty

Professor Payne called on Director of Athletics and Recreation John Hardt, who then introduced three new members of his staff: Doug Birdsong, the new Radio/TV Coordinator and Voice of the Bison, Janelle Breneman, Head Softball Coach, and Tim Pavlechko, Associate Athletic Director/Sport Management Administrator and Bucknell graduate. Mr. Hardt also reported some restructuring in Athletics, with Terrie Grieb becoming Associate Athletic Director/Business, Team Services, Rose Ewan becoming Associate Athletic Director/Recreational Services, Heather Lewis, now Associate Athletic Director, Senior Women's Administrator, and Head Field Hockey Coach and Kevin Jamison the new Head Women's Golf Coach, Tim Wittman, Interim Wrestling Coach and John Zeigler becoming Head Water Polo Coach for the men's and women's teams.

Professor Payne began his remarks with an invitation to the members of the Faculty to join him in expressing appreciation to Professor John Peeler for his work throughout his recently-completed four-year term as Chair of the Faculty. The Faculty joined him in a round of applause for Professor Peeler's contribution.

Addressing the matter of the search committee for the Provost-VPAA search, Professor Payne reported that the same structure as for the last VPAA search would be used. He explained that faculty members who wished to nominate someone for the committee should send the name to the Secretary of the Faculty, after securing the permission of the nominee. Professor Payne announced that there would be a change in the operation of the Faculty Listserv. The Faculty Listserv would differ from the V-Forum, a vehicle for open conversation among faculty members, in that its function would relate more the dissemination of information. He also thought it important that members of the Faculty know that the Faculty Listserv would now be unmoderated, which implied that Faculty members would need to use their own restraint and good judgement in posting messages.

Professor Payne spoke of the progress that had been made regarding child care during meetings of the University Faculty, announcing that Professors Ghislaine McDayter and John Hunter would take charge of coordinating such child care. Faculty members who need child care for the next meeting should contact Professors McDayter or Hunter.

Then Professor Payne turned to his recent meeting with President Rogers and Chairman of the Board of Trustees Jim Shubauer. He was convinced that the Chairman of the Board wants open communication with the Faculty. Professor Payne had communicated to Mr. Shubauer the need for the Board to know the Faculty as a governing body, and also as a professional body. He emphasized that President Rogers wants to facilitate the communication between the Faculty and the Trustees.

Professor Ben Marsh asked if he might ask a question of the Committee on Faculty and Academic Personnel. He thought that as this was the third year of the new merit system, after which all tenured members of the Faculty would have been reviewed, this would be the logical time for changes in the system to be considered. President Rogers responded that he would like to have a discussion of Bucknell's merit system. Professor Peeler recalled that the Faculty had approved two three-year cycles of the merit system before scheduling a review. He noted that Professor Marsh was in agreement with the Board of Trustees in favoring an earlier review of the merit system. Professor Payne agreed that the Board of Trustees was concerned about the merit system. Professor Marsh asked that the Personnel Committee address the following question, if possible, at the next faculty meeting: "Does the Personnel Committee intend to ask whether our merit system is fulfilling the goals we have for it [whatever they may be], and whether it is as constructive as we might wish?"

With the business of the meeting concluded, Professor Payne adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice J. Poust