



UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

Minutes of the Faculty Meeting

February 4, 2002

The meeting was called to order at 5PM by Prof. Michael Payne. He suggested reordering the published agenda to deal with all the issues arising from the January Board of Trustees meeting together. He also announced the nominating committee for CAFT: Profs. Jean Shackelford, Peter Stryker, and Hilbourne Watson, with Linden Lewis as an alternate. He alerted the faculty to a Faculty Forum on Merit Aid, 5PM on February 25 in the Gallery Theatre. He closed his preliminary remarks by noting that with the recent changes in leadership both on the Board and in our own administration, he felt a new openness in dealing with issues of mutual concern.

Announcements by the President

President Rogers said the recent Board meeting was very positive. He emphasized the issue of faculty compensation at the meeting. In 1996 we had a strategic financial plan, but faculty compensation goals had not been reached. He said it was notable that the comprehensive fee and compensation increases were accepted even though we are in a recession. He also noted that performance evaluation is a requirement in this day and age. The list of schools we now use for fee comparisons is determined by cross-applications. Our fee is currently at rank 10 in the current list of 13 comparison schools. Our new fee of \$33,584 (an 8% increase) keeps us at the same rank. The increase will finance many increased costs, including faculty compensation and health care.

The methodology for determining faculty salaries had not been accepted over the past few years. The Trustees wanted a simplified system; in their view, the current list of comparison schools for faculty salaries includes a sufficient number of institutions like Bucknell (note: see December 2001 Minutes for the list). In Fall 2000, Bucknell full professors ranked 8th out of 12 as did associate professors (although the dollar amount of the disparity was much larger for full than associates); assistant professors were just about on track for the target of rank 5. To bring all professorial ranks to the 5th position in the comparison list requires increases of 12.89%, 5.64%, and 4.09% across the board for full, associate, and assistant professors, respectively. The President also mentioned that these increases will take place next year (newly promoted people will receive the increase of their new rank), and that we need to work on a methodology for staff salary increases for next year.

Addressing the Trustee guidelines for performance reviews, the President suggested that we do not need an overwhelming system. Performance evaluations will occur annually (as do raises) and developmental evaluation will occur less frequently. The Trustees are requiring as many levels of evaluation as the system in place from 98-99 to 00-01. Pres. Rogers thinks it particularly important that a new system recognize a variety of faculty contributions as well as different criteria of scholarship in different

disciplines. He would ideally like annual reviews to take place “closer to the source” (i.e., department); periodic reviews could be less frequent at higher ranks.

Provost Steve Bowen added his observation that the salary decision was remarkable in the current economic climate, wherein other schools are cutting back expenses. The Trustees asked critical questions about characteristics of our faculty, such as time in rank, age of faculty, nonmarket disciplines and our salary goals, before approving the raises. The Trustees want to approve a new review system in November, 2002. He consulted with the Personnel Committee for how to proceed and it was decided to set up a task force consisting of the Council of Deans, 4 elected faculty, one from each division, and 1 representative each from Personnel and Faculty Development Committees. The Faculty Council will prepare the slate. Prof. Payne reminded us that VP Jo-Anne Lema and the Committee on Planning and Budget had presented information on the salary-setting process at previous meetings, although the actual amount of the proposed raise at each rank was generated more recently.

Several faculty expressed concerns about the annual review schedule, including the increased workload for deans and chairs, the narrower timeframe in which to complete projects between reviews, and the possibility that the more frequent reviews will lead us to defining good performance as merely numbers on course evaluations. How do the Trustees expect this system to improve our performance? How can reviews tied to salary increases be anything but comprehensive? Pres. Rogers said that the Trustees didn't talk about any problems with faculty performance, but rather saw a review system as rewarding superior achievement. Prof. Payne said that some of these ideas originated on campus, either via administrators or suggestions from the Personnel Committee. Prof. Jerry Mead reminded us that the Board rejected the Peeler motion, and Prof. Kim Daubman, chair of Personnel, made it clear that the suggestion for annual reviews did not come from her committee. In response to some questions about the current weighting of teaching, scholarship and service, Pres. Rogers said that in his opinion the current weightings are too restrictive and that we should be able to recognize large contributions in different areas.

Prof. Paul Susman added a concern about the large differences in salary increases between the highest and lowest paid employees on campus. Pres. Rogers noted that a methodology for determining staff salaries will be discussed in the coming year. Provost Bowen added that the Trustees have much experience in performance evaluation. Also, all but one of our frame of reference schools have review systems that fit into the Trustee parameters. He hopes a new system will reward cooperation and avoid fostering competition.

Report from the Representative to the Trustee Finance Committee: Michael Moohr

Prof. Moohr began by noting that several lists of comparison schools for salary purposes have been used by the Board in the past, but that agreement on the composition of the list breaks down when salary figures become too high. He also reported that the fund to service our debt of \$53 million is nearly exhausted, which will require an additional allocation to that fund by \$1 million per year by 2004-5. Reporting on our endowment, Prof. Moohr said that the endowment contributes 7% to our annual revenues, with a current spending rate of 5.5%. The endowment has lost 5-6% of its value since September 11, but our relatively small endowment protects us somewhat from loss in down markets. He finished by reminding us that the 8% fee increase for next year largely falls on parents of full-fee paying students, who have done well economically in recent years.

Report from the Committee on Planning and Budget: Ben Marsh

Prof. Marsh echoed earlier positive comments about the cooperation from the Board at the recent meeting, and complimented the presentation by VP Lema. In his opinion, the notable outcome was the agreement on the comprehensive fee. This represents a change in the Board's perspective about the cost of a Bucknell education, which includes many new expenses, such as buildings, that are values-added for the student. CPB will continue to examine pricing issues. Regarding faculty salaries, CPB used to present recommendations to the Board based on more complex models. The large range of raises in this simpler model reflects the fact that salaries offered incoming assistant professors have been moving up, leading to compression in other ranks. A complexity omitted from the model is the influence of more "market" salaries here than at some of the comparison institutions.

Prof. Dee Casteel asked how involved CPB was in generating the raise numbers; Prof. Marsh clarified that the committee received figures from VP Lema and reacted to them. Prof. Casteel expressed concern that in fact the Personnel Committee is charged with allocating pools of money to rank, and that CPB normally is involved in recommending the overall faculty increase. Prof. Marsh hoped that in subsequent years the allocation process will operate on campus as in the older system. Prof. Payne added that the salary increase was not accepted immediately by all the Trustees but was favored by its leadership.

Returning to the issue of the merit review task force, Prof. Marsh asked if this plan had been approved by the Faculty Council. Prof. Daubman said that both the Personnel Committee and Faculty Development Committee had approved it, and Prof. Payne added that the Faculty Council would propose the slate. Pres. Rogers also clarified in response to questions that the Trustees are committed to an annual review although not to a particular scheme of merit ratings, and that developmental reviews may or may not be tied to salary increases, depending on the system the task force develops.

Prof. Tom Greaves worried that the number of reviews will be very large, especially in large departments. This may lead us into the temptation of using easy indicators, which we should avoid. Other concerns voiced included the prospect of faculty members in one department deciding salary for each other, and the short period of time available to design a new system if it needs to be brought to the Board by November 2002. Also unresolved at the moment is how promotion increases will be factored into salaries for future promotions.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Halpern
Secretary of the Faculty