



UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

Minutes of the Faculty Meeting

November 5, 2001

The meeting was called to order at 5PM by Prof. Michael Payne. The Secretary announced that a revised version of the October, 2001 minutes were now posted on E-Reserve.

Announcements by the President and his staff

Dean Robert Midkiff reported on last spring's campus-wide survey on diversity. Surveys were received from 1076 students, faculty, and staff. A 4-pp summary is on E-Reserve under Bucknell 700 (password CLIMATE). The survey found that significant improvements have been made in the climate for different kinds of minority individuals and women, but that the campus still needs work in this area. Dean Midkiff cited a few statistics, including the fact that more than 30% of respondents had heard disparaging remarks about LGBT people (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered) or women at least 6 times in the previous year. Many people were uncomfortable interacting with persons living with HIV/AIDS, and 8% of respondents had experienced assaults. Many people felt the Greek system was an impediment to improving the campus climate. A separate survey of LGBT people on campus is also in progress.

President Rogers noted that discussion of the campus climate will be included in the Vision 2110 planning process and that he hopes this will result in actions to help us move forward in this area. In other remarks, President Rogers clarified that the Alcohol Awareness Week proclamation signed by fraternities and sororities goes beyond giving up alcohol for one week. They pledged to address issues of binge drinking and drinking games. This is relevant because so far this year the campus has had 9 incidents of students with alcohol poisoning. This, along with a quiet Halloween, hopefully signals the beginning of a change in campus culture.

The President went on to report that the planning process has started with two meetings of the University Council. They are working on a "white paper" that will be released to governance committees for assignments. Pres. Rogers noted that Bucknell is an exceptional university and one of his goals is to provide the best undergraduate experience in the country. He said that graduate programs will not be neglected in the plan, but that they are already well nurtured within departments.

With respect to searches, Pres. Rogers reported that the Vice-President for Enrollment Management pool now had 6 finalists and that for the General Counsel had 3. Searches for the Dean of Engineering and Chief Marketing Officer are proceeding more slowly, in part to hear input from visiting trustees. On another issue, the question of whether to offer merit aid will be examined thoroughly by the entire community, including a Trustees subcommittee that will report to the Long Range Planning Committee of the Board in April. Finally, Pres. Rogers observed that Trustees at the upcoming Board meeting will face an uneasy financial situation. Our aggressive financial plan may have to be modified due to current conditions, including the unstable performance of our endowment. We should not expect to see million dollar surpluses in

the future. Professor Payne added that there will be a faculty forum on the budget after Thanksgiving.

Announcements from the Chair of the Faculty

Prof. Payne reminded us that the aforementioned planning white paper is a draft only. The University Council will begin the process and then pass issues to committees. He also noted that the topic of assessment will be examined by the Committee on Instruction. Updating of the Faculty Handbook will involve review by the Personnel Committee, as well as by CAFT and the URC for parts related to their charges. Finally, he reported two faculty vacancies on the Committee on Complementary Activities. Professor Katherine Faull has filled one and a volunteer is needed for the other.

Old Business

COI Report. Prof. George Exner continued with the COI report in progress last month when we adjourned (see October 2001 minutes and November 2001 agendas for complete text). One recommendation was a change in procedure for academic misconduct hearings between semesters. Another recommendation was a change in time period for students to request a change in a course grade. The final recommendation was to purge student records of minor academic misconduct at graduation, or after a year for seniors.

Ensuing discussion between several faculty members and Prof. Exner and Dean Midkiff clarified the meaning of a minor offense (one resulting in a penalty less than suspension or F in the course) and that other entities requesting information about misconduct by students whose record has been purged will be told that we have no information about such offenses.

Prof. Exner then spoke to COI's charge to review assessment "templates". COI is considering how advising should be evaluated and who should review assessment plans and outcomes of student learning. COI will hold a faculty forum to receive input. Prof. Ben Marsh said he would appreciate direction from COI about how to prepare assessment documents. President Rogers reminded us that the impetus for an assessment plan was coming from Middle States. Prof. Paul McGuire recommended coordination between the two colleges on this matter.

Finance Committee Report. Prof. Michael Moohr reported as the faculty representative to the May meeting of the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees. For several years prior to this past May, plans had been presented to the Compensation Committee to bring faculty salaries up to a previously approved target of approximately the 50th percentile of a group of comparison schools. However, the Compensation Committee routinely had rejected campus proposals to reach that goal, citing reasons such as having inappropriate comparison schools or requesting changes in the type of information presented in the proposals. The latest such proposal was presented at an informal meeting involving himself, Compensation Committee chair Susan Baird, Interim VPAA Genie Gerdes, Controller Dennis Swank, and Prof. David Jensen, chair of the University Planning and Budget Committee. This proposal, too, was rejected, leading Prof. Moohr to speculate that the Trustees were simply not interested in moving toward the salary goal. In the upcoming Trustee meeting, a new plan will be presented to raise faculty salaries, especially in the upper ranks where we are furthest behind our goal. Other current issues include a living wage policy, and the 3-2 teaching load. Prof. Moohr asserted that these needs can be met with an appropriate pricing policy.

In response to several questions, Prof. Moohr noted that some trustees favor a business approach that inclines them to keeping compensation as low as possible, although Prof. Payne thought that some trustees were sensitive to the differences between the business world and

academe. Prof. Moohr ended by observing that many trustees believe that holding fee increases down makes Bucknell more affordable to the middle class, although the full fees are paid mostly by higher-income students, and that he was not aware of evidence that our modest price increases have helped Bucknell's recruitment.

Personnel Committee (CFAP) Report. Prof. Kim Daubman continued her report from last month (see October 2001 minutes for full text). She reported that the committee was withdrawing Point 4 about differential weighting of categories for department chairs, given a lack of support for this among chairs.

At this point, Prof. John Peeler moved his amendment to the Personnel Committee report, which would reduce the number of scale points in each category from 5 to 3 (see November 2001 agenda); the motion was seconded. Discussion included a clarification from Prof. Peeler that his motion was similar to our old system in having a 3-pt scale, but maintained the current separate rating of teaching, scholarship, and service. He added that he saw the current system as causing unnecessary arguments between faculty and deans, and as not providing motivation to do our best work, given that most of us are self motivated.

Prof. Daubman responded that the CFAP was charged with making changes to the current system. From the survey data presented last month, CFAP concluded that faculty do not see the system as a motivator but as a reward for accomplishment. The majority of respondents did not say a 5-pt scale was too fine. Other proposed changes in language addressed concerns that there were quotas for each rating. Discounting reduces the monetary advantage of each scale point as one moves from lower to higher ratings.

Prof. Glyne Griffith observed that even though we are all self motivated, failure to reach the overall faculty salary goal is a problem. Prof. John Miller was sympathetic to the argument a 5-pt scale is too fine and believed faculty receiving low ratings should be dealt with by other means. But he opposed the motion because excellent teaching should compensate for merely adequate levels of research. Prof. Peeler reminded him that the final outcome depends on a higher weighting given to teaching, so this compensation would still be maintained. Interim Deans Mark Padilla and Jim Orbison spoke against the motion. Dean Padilla liked some aspects of the motion but would prefer another 3 years to fine tune the system, and also noted that the old system engendered many complaints. Dean Orbison, equipped with visual aids, emphasized an earlier point by Prof. Daubman that the proposed changes would eliminate quotas for any scale point.

Prof. Payne intervened at this point to remind the assembly that we were nearly out of time. He hoped the concerns raised at this meeting would be conveyed to the Board to show that we are still discussing the issue. The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Halpern
Secretary of the Faculty