



UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

Minutes of the Faculty Meeting

April 14 and 21, 2003

Prof. Michael Payne called the meeting to order at 5 PM.

Announcements by the President

President Rogers began by inviting the faculty to attend the Chrysalis Ball. He answered a submitted question about renovation of the Scullery into a new President's Dining Room. He confirmed that a donation for such purpose had been received but the project is not going forward. A future renovation should include making the Scullery kitchen functional to facilitate student cooking projects, such as meals by international students.

The President next addressed the concerns that had been voiced about selection of this year's Commencement speaker. The selection committee includes seniors, but he has not always approved their speaker selection. This year, he looked at Deborah Norville's résumé, saw that she had won Emmys, that she wasn't fired from her previous job for any scandals, and approved the selection on the basis of her résumé. He said he should have conducted more in-depth reviewing. In the future, the committee will be constituted by Provost Steve Bowen, and will include students, faculty, and administrators.

The next topic was a report on the financial state of the university. The 03-04 budget is now balanced. Some assumptions, such as a student body of 3350 students (up from 3250 in previous models) have not yet been approved by Trustees. The current model had to make other assumptions on inflation, the rate of return on endowment, and salary and wage increases. We still have a \$1.8 million deficit for 04-05. If we solve that, the budget will balance in 06-07. However, we will have no new money for 3 years, although in the fall of 06 we will launch a capital campaign. Bucknell's endowment has shrunk from its high of \$450 million. Because we use a 12-quarter rolling average to establish endowment spending rates, the last few down quarters will affect us for 3 years. Between 03 and 06 we need to reduce expenses by \$5.5 million. The President will try to increase the percentage of the budget devoted to instruction, but that will be at the expense of other things.

Announcements by the Chair of the Faculty

Prof. Payne began by calling for additional nominations for committees. Prof. George Exner, chair of COI, spoke to the need for volunteers for COI subcommittees.

The rest of the meeting was devoted to discussion and votes on the "consensus issues" prepared by the Faculty Council to send forward to Trustees. Prof. Payne prefaced the discussion by saying that he had asked committees to read through planning documents and pick out issues relevant to their charge. Faculty Council received responses from COI (attached to this Agenda) and Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee (ASCC), and a short report from the

Committee on International Education. We began discussion of Proposed Faculty Council Preliminary Consensus Items (Section A).

#1. Life of the Mind. Prof. Exner said that COI endorses this item, but COI wondered whether we all understand what our central academic mission is. COI disagrees with the Student Life and Culture Plan about the latter's inclusion of a whole spectrum of objectives in our mission. Explicit support of academic endeavors shows up as subpoints under other headings. VP Charlie Pollock [chair of this Task Force] replied that it was not the intent of his group to argue that a Bucknell education was primarily about a continuum of objectives; the academic mission is primary. However, explicit support of the academic mission is not the primary focus of the report. His division's goal is to support conditions to allow learning to occur and to promote student engagement. Other faculty wondered whether all student engagement supports the academic mission, and whether the "life of the mind" might sometimes promote disengagement from the world (not necessarily unproductively). Prof. Helen Morris-Keitel, chair of ASCC, said that her committee thought Item #1 underscored the need for a Library expansion. Provost Bowen thought it important to endorse Item #1 as a signal about our priorities. Item #1 was voted on and passed.

#2. Carnegie Designation. President Rogers stated that some Trustees have argued for increased enrollment in Engineering and Management; the Administration does not support this move. Director of Institutional Research Jerry Rackoff elaborated that if we begin to award over 50% of our degrees in professional programs, our classification will change from our current liberal arts baccalaureate designation to that of a regional comprehensive institution. Prof. Ben Marsh recommended that we need high-level planning to balance the programs in the future. Item #2 was voted on and passed.

#3. Five-Course Teaching Load. Prof. Payne reminded us that the faculty already has endorsed this initiative; the question now is planning for the transition. A number of comments and questions concerned implementation: where will the money come from for new positions? What will the impact be on small departments? What other adjustments will need to be made to enable the courseload reduction? Are we focusing too much on implementation vs. principle? VP Bob Kallin said that the next campaign would highlight the need for endowed chairs, and Provost Bowen added that there are some endowed funds currently available to support some new positions. We should not lose momentum on this issue. Prof. Exner said that COI endorses the five-course load, but wants to remind us that a one-course reduction will not solve all problems, and should not result in increased expectations for total amount of time spent on teaching or scholarship. Item #3 was voted on and passed.

#4. Teacher/Scholar Model: Prof. Exner pointed out that the COI report discussed faculty workload and balance. We need honest discussions about: 1. what is an appropriate balance of teaching and research and 2. what is a sustainable workload for faculty. Item #4 was voted on and passed.

#5. Student Culture. Several faculty members asked for information about whether our current student culture affects some students' decisions to transfer, or to not accept offers of admission in the first place. Dean Elaine Garrett conducts exit interviews with all transfers. She said that these interviews (and discussions with students considering transferring) indicate that the majority of transfers leave for student culture reasons, e. g. because of the perceived lack of nonGreek social life, or because of the prominence of drinking in social activities. VP Pollock said that Admissions sends out surveys asking why admitted students decline offers, and hopes to gather good information on this issue in the future.

Discussion next turned to the Greek system. Is it synonymous with all of "student culture"? How does our system compare to others at comparable institutions? Should we even

have a Greek system? Prof. Payne pointed out that the last vote by the Faculty on this matter was to abolish the Greek System [in 1989]. Dean Garrett offered the fact that currently, 55% of eligible students are in the Greek system. VP Pollock and President Rogers said that other institutions think we are doing a good job in this area, although some valuable initiatives are hard to implement successfully. Prof. Coralynn Davis thought that given that we already have alternatives to the Greek system, the wording of the second sentence of this item would be better as: *Measures need to be developed to decenter the Greek system from Bucknell student culture*, which she offered as an amendment. Several faculty members wondered if we knew what exactly was the appeal of the Greek system: the availability of alcohol, the use of private space, the need to be included in the social system? Is the current Greek system simply a reflection of other values, and not a cause of any negative behaviors or attitudes? VP Kurt Thiede pointed out that transfers occur among weak as well as strong students, although Prof. David Schoepf said that losing any good students due to student culture issues was a shame. The vote was taken on the amendment, which passed, and then on the main motion, which also passed.

#6. Plan for Diversity. The discussion began with some clarification about the difference between the terms “liberal” vs. “liberal arts education”. The assembly agreed to add the word “arts” before “education” in the last phrase of Item #6. The discussion then addressed whether a diversity plan needs to “explain” the need for diversity to anyone, or should we simply endorse a diversity plan per se.

At this point, we reached our adjournment time of 6:30 PM, and a continuation meeting was announced to be held in a week’s time.

On April 23, the continued meeting was called to order at 5PM.

President Rogers opened with a few remarks of reassurance that our financial situation was not dire; we anticipate no layoffs, unlike some other universities. The search for a new VPFA continues. On-campus interviews will occur in middle to late May. Finally, he dispelled rumors of an imminent departure from his post (packing materials seen at the President’s house are being used in a rearrangement of personal possessions).

Professor Payne returned to the discussion of consensus issues, suggesting that he present our list to the Board of Trustees at the upcoming meeting with the Steering Committee. He reminded us that all products from the entire Vision 2010 process are still in draft form and the Faculty will take a formal vote on the plan in the fall.

#6 Plan for Diversity. No further discussion on this matter occurred, and it was voted on and passed.

#7. Instructional Budget. Jerry Rackoff clarified that this item refers to all expenses for instruction, except for capital items. A discussion proceeded on whether asking for information on expenditures was really a strategic planning issue, vs. an implementational issue. Several people underlined the importance of making sure this was a visible effort, and Prof. Payne noted that this point came up at the faculty retreat in January. Prof. Katharina Vollmayr-Lee added that that we especially need to see budget figures from Athletics. It was also noted that not only the faculty but other parts of the university should have the opportunity to hear about these expenditures. At Prof. Marsh’s suggestion, both instances of the word “Faculty” were replaced by “university community” in Item #7. This item with its revised wording was then voted on and passed.

#8. Art Building. Prof. Janice Mann suggested that we consider this as an Arts Building, which could encompass other artistic enterprises such as the Poetry Center, Bucknell Press, and

the Art Gallery; this was acceptable to the faculty. Several people spoke to the necessity for additional general classroom space of high quality, in addition to specialized space for art classes in a new Arts building. An Art building was in fact a priority in our most recent capital campaign, as the current building appears to be in the process of de-constructing itself, but it was not funded. This item was then voted on and passed.

The next item of business was discussion of Items Recommended for Further Work (Section B).

#1. Other initiatives. Prof. Payne framed these items as ones that require continuing conversation without an implication of current support or lack thereof. He summarized the report from the Committee on International Education, echoed by committee member Dean Robert Midkiff, that our current screening of study abroad students is successful and it is in some students' best interest to stay on campus. Prof. Exner, as a private citizen, urged additional consideration of issues of grade inflation, and differential grading practices over departments. For instance, last semester half the Arts and Sciences students (but one-third of the Engineering students) were on the Dean's List. Also, we should monitor grades of any groups we may be interested in tracking. Because this list is open-ended, Prof. Mary Beth Gray suggested that this section add the word "include" as the last word in the header, which was accepted.

#2. Plan for Athletics. Prof. Payne noted that the Faculty Council was especially interested in encouraging completion of this document.

Prof. Exner, as COI chair, then spoke to the COI report on the Academic Affairs white paper, appended to the April agenda. He reviewed the six main points in the opening "Broad Issues" section. The final point about undersubscribed departments is now moot, because it does not appear in the current version of the white paper. Discussion turned to point I. 3 under Strategic Objectives. Prof. Exner explained that finding out "who speaks for students" meant looking to see how students who are advocated for by various staff members (coaches, professors) fare in the admissions process; Prof. Payne added that the Faculty Council was also interested in how athletic recruitment fits into an overall plan for Admissions. Prof. Jeff Evans wondered if this part of the report was inconsistent with Item A.7 in the Consensus list, as that item simply asks for information on athletic vs. other expenditures. Can we return to this in the fall? Prof. Payne said that we could take a more aggressive position in the future.

Prof. Exner then reiterated his concern that we have an unresolved dichotomy between the Student Life and Culture Plan and the COI vision of student culture and academics. He urged the faculty to speak firmly to the COI version. Prof. Marsh observed that integrating all the plans will pose a challenge.

At this point, Prof. Paul Susman asked for a quorum count. This count revealed that we did not have quorum in attendance, and thus we adjourned at 6PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Halpern
Secretary of the Faculty