



UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

Minutes of the Faculty Meeting November 3, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM. The Secretary announced one amendment to the October minutes. In remarks by Provost Bowen, the link between the Vision 2010 process and the Middle States Self Study was made more explicit.

Announcements by the President

President Rogers commented on the Campus Benefits Advisory Group. The Board has asked us to study benefits as a percentage of salary. We are approaching the point of benefits being 40% of salary, which the Trustees view informally as a cap to begin in 2006. We need to try to reduce benefit costs and the CBAG is studying ways to do this. Trading off salary and benefit increases is one thing to consider.

VP David Surgala next addressed the series of questions on last year's salary increase for faculty and staff. He noted that with a (12 quarter rolling) average Consumer Price Index of 2.13% and a salary pool increase of 2.5% available for faculty, some people would of necessity receive increases below the CPI. He presented data showing this outcome, with a few faculty, mostly at the higher salary range, receiving raises below 2.13% (in most cases this amounted to about \$100/year below the CPI figure). If the CPI decreases, the larger salary pool now envisioned for the future should reduce this problem. With regard to senior administrator salary increases, he stated that indeed some individuals received increases below the CPI. The staff salary pool increase was divided into 2% merit and 1/2% equity. Among administrators, 125 of 268 received increases of less than 2.13%. Among support staff, 390 of 500 received less than 2.13% increases for the merit portion only; figures for the equity portion were not available.

VP Surgala continued with some details of the Campus Benefits Advisory Group. He presented data documenting recent large increases in the cost per employee for health benefits. The CBAG includes members from all employee groups. They will gather data on current offerings and what other schools are doing to contain costs as well as perhaps improving the benefits. His timeline showed Spring of 2004 for sharing proposed benefits changes. All proposals will go to appropriate campus committees. Trustees are also offering their expertise on this matter. Fiscal '06 will be a "budget crunch" time and we need to contain costs by then.

Announcements by the Chair of the Faculty

Prof. Payne said that recent public criticisms of faculty governance suggest a self-study is in order, which we will attend to before the end of the academic year. The Steering Committee is still working on a text about core issues for the Middle States Review and a statement on academic freedom. The Faculty Council recommends that the December faculty meeting be devoted to discussion of key issues. The presidential search is moving forward. The campus will receive the Bucknell profile statement soon. The statement benefited from input from the Faculty Advisory Committee and the faculty representatives to the main search committee. Prof.

Marty Ligare (chair of the FAC) said his committee recommended making the search as open as possible.

Prof. Allen Schweinsberg presented the report from the Committee on Academic and Faculty Personnel on last year's faculty raises. The committee discovered that a disproportionate number of faculty reviewed in the most recent cycle received raises below CPI, due to factors such as promotion patterns. Thus the CAFP recommended that \$138 be added to the base salary of each person in the recent cohort, which was accepted by the administration. This means that 38 faculty will now have raises below the CPI, down from 46 before the adjustment. Prof. Schweinsberg said he was not worried about a one-time occurrence of so many people with raises below the CPI but is concerned that we do not fall into such a pattern over the long term.

Prof. Paul Susman responded to this report by noting that any raise less than the CPI is a real cut. Thus, he moved the following: *In a timely fashion Personnel should bring to the faculty for its decision a set of options for how to address CPI issue.* After the motion was seconded, Prof. Schweinsberg said his committee intends to examine the next CPI figure to see if the problem will recur, in the spirit of the motion. One possibility is asking that merit be awarded by percentage, and not dollar amount. The motion was then voted on and was passed.

The motion on the agenda about benefits, submitted by Prof. Matt Silberman, was presented by Prof. Susman and seconded. VP Surgala answered questions about how benefits are decided upon currently. Small adjustments are made on an annual basis. The CBAG is conducting more of an overall assessment. Prof. Payne added that any recommendations from CBAG will come to the Personnel Committee although Prof. Schweinsberg evinced some skepticism that the overview will be completed this year. The motion was then voted on and was passed.

The final item of business was the motion by Prof. John Peeler asking the Committee on Staff Planning to continue work on the five-course load. After the motion was seconded, he introduced the topic by reminiscing that when he became Chair of the Faculty in 1996, we had already begun working on this. We are in a temporary budget crunch and implementation will not be easy, but if faculty are not willing to keep pushing, it won't happen at all. We have succeeded in convincing the administration and trustees of the necessity of a five-course load. Several faculty members engaged in conversation about how scholarship should be considered in a five-course plan. Should we state that a reduced teaching load will leave more time for scholarship or should we explicitly emphasize the positive impact on teaching of having more time to devote to our courses? Provost Steve Bowen thought that the Educational Policy Committee of the Board was aware that both teaching and scholarship would benefit from a reduced load.

Further discussion included the history and implementation of such a plan. Prof. Dee Casteel commented that the motion on the floor did not present the courseload proposal itself but was an internal referral to committee. Prof. Payne pointed out that the CSP already presented a fine report on the five-course load last year so groundwork has been laid. Dean Genie Gerdes and Prof. Tony Massoud (chair of CSP) noted that implementation details are complex. The vote was then taken and the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Halpern
Secretary of the Faculty