



UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

Minutes of the Faculty Meeting April 4 and 18, 2005

Prof. Martin Ligare called the meeting to order at 5PM.

Announcements by the President

President Mitchell, in the absence of VP for Enrollment Management Kurt Thiede, gave an enrollment update in light of the completed application review process by the Admissions and Financial Aid staffs. Resulting in higher selectivity, the application review was described as the most intensive in the University's history. President Mitchell also noted that many students and their families will be visiting the campus during the month of April, including during Open House, and underlined the importance of Faculty interaction in bringing in the very best class.

Then President Mitchell thanked the academic departments with which he had a chance to meet over lunch and discuss specific concerns related to the strategic planning process. All departments are invited to engage in such a dialogue.

On the topic of the Provost search, President Mitchell described the Provost as a Deputy President and he asked to be trusted in his ability to make the right decision. The President commended Prof. Charles Clapp and the Screening Committee, as well as the Chair of the Faculty Committee for their excellent work. But he expressed disappointment at the fact that no real coalescence emerged, meaning that whichever candidate is chosen about 1/3 of the faculty will feel discontent. The President also commented on the relatively low attendance of the faculty at the candidates' presentations. In the final decision, issues of consistency in answers given to various constituencies on campus, as well as performance in terms of record check will play an important role. The President emphasized the extraordinary nature of the decision that needs to be made and reiterated his request for our trust as he tries to make the best choice with the information in his possession. In terms of sequencing, the President will first meet with the Search Committee to explain his decision, he will then talk to the Faculty Council and the Deans and their staffs, before he finally releases a campus announcement. President Mitchell concluded his remarks by emphasizing how important it is to view the Provost with a sense of optimism in order to make it the success that the University needs.

Announcements by the Chair of the Faculty

Prof. Ligare announced that starting in the fall, the President will take a seat at the front table during Faculty meetings, and reports from his staff will be moved to the back of the agenda. Then Prof. Ligare called for nominations to faculty and university committees from the floor. Nominations were closed after no additional nominations were offered.

Old Business

Prof. John Peeler, for the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Governance, reminded the assembly that at the March meeting, action to approve the Immediate Recommendations on governance was completed by the faculty. Now the faculty needs to vote on four handbook amendment proposals, which should not be considered as amendments to the Handbook but rather a confirmation of the advice given to the Faculty Council. First, a motion to increase the quorum from 75 to 100 was made and seconded. The motion passed.

Second, a motion was made to create a standing committee on Information Resources and Instruction. The motion was seconded. Such a committee used to exist but disappeared with the move away from the senate model. After it was established that this committee would report to the larger ISR committee, the motion was voted on and passed. Then, a motion was made to create a similar standing committee on Admissions and Financial Aid. Prof. Ben Marsh argued against the motion, noting that Admissions and Financial Aid is presently a subcommittee. The motion was voted on and failed. Next, a motion was made to create a standing committee on Athletics. The motion was seconded. Prof. Marsh remarked on the importance of Athletics being a subcommittee. Prof. Rich Kosick observed that diversity (opinion, gender etc...) is easier to maintain at the subcommittee level than with university-wide elections. Prof. Gary Sojka responded that there are mechanisms in place to avoid such issues, and he pointed out that Bucknell is the only institution in the Patriot League not to have a standing committee on Athletics. The point was also made that a number of issues on the floor of the Faculty might be more easily addressed through direct communication. The motion was voted on and passed.

Finally, Prof. Peeler moved that the University Council be transformed into a Strategic Planning Council acting as a group that would meet regularly with permanent oversight of the university strategic plan. The motion was seconded. The question regarding the determination of membership was raised and Prof. Peeler responded that it would be addressed by a concrete proposal to amend the handbook. After it was confirmed that the Office of the President agreed with the spirit of the motion, the motion was voted on and carried. After the modification of the University Council, Prof. Peeler pointed out that it would also make sense to modify the Faculty Council, and he moved that the Faculty Council be given a clearer charge, including the monitoring of the government system. The motion was seconded, voted on and passed.

New Business

Prof. Pam Gorkin rose to the floor and on behalf of the Faculty Council introduced the following motion: *The Faculty Council moves that the meeting time for Faculty meetings be changed to 12:00-12:52 on the first and third Tuesdays of the month on a trial basis for the academic year 2005-2006.* Prof. Gorkin specified that class times could not be changed for the upcoming fall since students had already registered. The motion was voted on and passed with no opposition.

Then, Prof. Gary Steiner presented a report from the University Review Committee (see agenda). Given the great number of dossiers to be reviewed in the fall, the URC will employ specific review procedures during the 2005-2006 academic year. One of the key changes was identified as a move from all URC members reading the short file with a primary and secondary reader going through the entire dossier, to a subcommittee of three members now performing the task. Particular attention was drawn to *item #6* now requiring the tabulation of course evaluations. The compilation of the data makes it easier for the readers to navigate through the dossier; in absence of tabulation,

one of the readers usually makes the chart. Also #7, limiting the maximum length of personal statements to 12 pages, was discussed. Prof. Steiner insisted that this policy did not contradict any DRC guidelines since none of them mandate statements of at least 12 pages. Also, reviews this fall will start as early as October 1st. The URC will report on the efficacy of these procedures at the faculty meeting no later than April 2006. The ensuing discussion suggested that shorter, more succinct statements are more helpful to the candidate. Furthermore, these guidelines do not have to be approved by CAFT since they do not contradict DRC statements. As it seemed necessary for these changes to be agreed upon before May 1st, when the URC will present these guidelines to the candidates, Prof. Marsh moved that the faculty accepts the new URC guidelines for next year with the understanding that #6 and #7 be strong recommendations rather than mandated. The motion was voted on and passed.

Next on the agenda, was the report from the Committee on Planning and Budget (see agenda) presented by Prof. Marsh, who described Bucknell's healthcare for its retirees as fiscally reasonable and appropriate, with funds incorporated in its endowment in case of a university shut-down. Prof. Marsh commended CBAG for its good work and gave the floor to Prof. Geoff Schneider, who responded with a report from the Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee, stating that the situation now is significantly better than a few years ago. Also, even with health cost increase and inflation in that sector, the Bucknell coverage is still more generous than its frame of reference, with availability to faculty members facing high cost.

A motion to continue the meeting to April 18 was made, seconded and passed, and the meeting was suspended at 6:30 PM.

The meeting resumed at 5:30 PM on April 18, 2005.

Prof. Schneider introduced a motion from the Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee to adopt the changes to the Faculty Handbook. The version voted on is the revised Faculty Handbook including major changes such as the status of severe sanctions designed to strengthen faculty rights, and to bring clarity and consistency to previously ambiguous areas. The motion was seconded, and after a short exchange concerning editorial details to be addressed at a later time, the motion was voted on and passed unanimously. A spontaneous round of applause followed.

Next, Prof. Schneider presented a report from the Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee regarding honorary degrees and a motion to amend the Faculty Handbook at the first faculty meeting in the fall. Prof. Ligare stated that as President Mitchell is now a member of the Board of Trustees, he will get a small set of nominees accepted concurrently by both the Trustees and the Faculty, providing a check and balances process. The President can then negotiate with nominees. The ensuing discussion questioned the appropriateness behind the presence of the Provost or a Provost designate on the faculty committee. It was noted that the role of the Provost would be to activate the process; furthermore the Provost's involvement in that process would not be inconsistent with their signing the conferral of degrees every fall and spring. Prof. Paul Susman encouraged everyone between now and September to think about whether only faculty should be involved in the process. In the fall, the faculty will be voting on the exact number of nominees to be placed on the list. The committee members will work together with an open mind to define specific criteria. The committee will report back in September for an assessment of the process.

Next on the agenda, was the report from the Committee on Athletics made by Prof. Tom Kinnaman, concluding that athletic participation does not significantly affect cumulative in-major GPA. The entire report can be found on e-reserves. Prof. Rich Kozick on behalf of the Committee on Instruction responded to the report, commenting that while the analysis was sound, the set of data was rather narrowly tailored. Some of the missing information might include: breakdown by different sports, comparison of academic performance during in-season versus off-season semesters, and trends across several graduating classes. COI cautioned that it might be inappropriate to draw overly broad conclusions. Prof. Kinnaman responded that the study could indeed be repeated automatically every year, and noted that the study helps lift myths of underperformance or overachievement in a given sport. He noted also GPA variations depending on gender and ethnic background. It was suggested that variation could as well be the result of the recruiting of students who come in with lower preparation. The point was also made of a study that should be all inclusive adding groups such as sororities, fraternities, band, dance, etc. VP for Student Affairs, Charles Pollock, concluded that while this kind of study is not required by outside agencies as part of NCAA recertification, it is useful and attention needs to be drawn to it.

Then, Prof. Kozick reported for COI on the changes in the charge of the Committee on Assessment and in the composition of the committee, which was designed to represent faculty more heavily. COI approved the changes.

Next, COI brought up a change from its March report concerning forgery policy: *Forgery is handled as a disciplinary issue rather than a violation of academic responsibility*. Also discussed was the meaning of the signature as an acknowledgement that the faculty member met with the student and received advice. It was made clear that the advisor's signature is not authorizing registration. If the student makes a change, it is not necessary to go back to get the approval of the faculty member. In the absence of a motion to the contrary, this report becomes policy. No motion was made at this point.

The third item of the COI report concerned the dissemination of grade statistics, which was in place before the installation of BANNER in 1997 but did not occur since then. As the Registrar's Office remains willing to disseminate grading statistics in a format defined by the faculty, COI will continue its discussion with the intent of bringing a detailed motion to the faculty early in the fall.

Finally, Prof. Kozick reported for the Student Government on the Honor Code. He emphasized the steps taken to make the Honor Code visible and help students accept it, including ways faculty can help by presenting it as a statement of beliefs.

A motion to extend the meeting by five minutes was made, seconded and passed; and Prof. Tony Massoud presented a brief report on the five course load. After reviewing the information provided by all departments and taking into account the enrollment information obtained from the Registrar's Office, the committee feels confident that the number of new faculty members needed to go to a five course load successfully is thirty (30) +/- two (2). Providing support for such a request, details of the implementation will have to address issues of office space, lab space, as well as how to count credit for Honors Thesis and Independent Study.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Philippe C. Dubois
Secretary of the Faculty