



## UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

### Minutes of the Faculty Meeting March 7, 2005

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

#### Announcements by the President

President Mitchell first announced the selection of a qualified Commencement speaker, but declined to comment further on the identity of the speaker until a signed contract has been received. He then thanked the Provost Search Committee for their work. The President also mentioned that he would be soon interviewing the two finalist firms for the development counsel associated with the comprehensive campaign.

Then President Mitchell gave the floor to Charles Pollock, VP for Student Affairs, who commented on the NCAA certification process. VP Pollock confirmed that an open forum will be organized after spring break (tentatively on March 29<sup>th</sup>) to answer any questions. A website with documentation about the process will be available. Also, the Committee on Complementary Activities will organize a focus group to address questions about Public Safety's role and the scope of its authority. Time and place to be announced.

President Mitchell thanked all those who worked on the Dining Services matter, including the student caucus that gathered 1777 signatures. The President also commended VP for Finance and Administration, David Surgala, and Dennis Swank for their fruitful dialogues with members of Dining Services. Finally, President Mitchell thanked everybody, including Student Government, for their thoughtful expressions of sympathy following the sudden passing of his brother-in-law.

Note from Faculty Secretary: due to faculty governance procedures, the reports from the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid and from the Committee on Athletics were not discussed at this meeting but will appear on the Agenda for the April meeting.

#### Announcements by the Chair of the Faculty

As stated in the agenda, Prof Ligare presented Jim Baish, Geoff Schneider, and Meenakshi Ponnuswami as members of the CAFT nominating committee. On the subject of Dining Services, Prof. Ligare expressed his confidence in the process, and the positive outcome for Dining Services workers after a Faculty Council meeting with VP Surgala last week to discuss some of the details of benefit packages. Then Prof. Ligare clarified the procedure for calling questions during Faculty meetings. Motions will be taken from the speaker who has the floor.

#### New Business

Prof. Ligare asked Prof. Erik Lofgren to step in and briefly chair the Faculty meeting while Prof. Ligare made the following motion on behalf of the Faculty Council concerning the revival of the Committee on Honorary Degrees:

1. *The faculty asks the Faculty Council to bring forward a slate of nominees for the Faculty Committee on Honorary Degrees.*
2. *The President of Bucknell is now a voting member of the Board of Trustees. The faculty asks the Committee on Faculty and Academic Personnel to consider changes to section II.C.3 of the Handbook (Committee on Honorary Degrees) that are appropriate given the change in the Presidents status, and report back to the Faculty in April 2005. The Committee is encouraged to consult with CAFT on issues of procedure and academic freedom.*

After a second to the motion, Prof. Ligare proceeded with a summary of the context for the issue (see March agenda). While highlighting an abbreviated chronology of the events leading to the dispute over the E.P. Thomson nomination, Prof. Ligare emphasized the length and depth of the division that it created. As an effort to move forward, the Faculty Council hopes to devise some guidelines that can be agreed upon by all. Some of the principles would include: full support from the Board of Trustees and the Faculty, as well as attention to issues of academic freedom. Although a universal agreement at the beginning is not to be expected, it is essential to have proper procedures in place to ensure that no nomination would be rejected for the wrong reasons. While there is no comprehensive agreement on the criteria for the granting of Honorary Degrees, the section in the Faculty Handbook referring to “consultation” between the Faculty Committee and the Committee on Honorary Degrees seems to provide most of the needed language. Prof. Ligare also discussed a tentative timeline designed to allow for potential disagreements to be resolved early in the process.

Then, Prof. Gary Sojka took the floor and provided additional background information about the issue, concluding that it would be very unlikely for such a chain of events to happen again, and that it was time to turn a page. He also reminded everyone that communication is critical, and that Bucknell medals also serve as tools for recognition of achievements; they can be awarded by the Faculty or Board of Trustees without any prior consent. President Mitchell supported the motion by saying that it was time indeed to move forward, but advocated caution as players change over time, and emphasized the importance of making sure that the process was carefully thought through so that the matter could be put to rest. Prof Michael Moohr, who did not wish to speak against the motion, noted however the possibilities of such issues to rise again given the cultural and political context. Prof Michael Payne spoke in favor of the motion and mentioned two brief ironies. First, he recalled that this issue was a relic of the cold war and that as head of the movement for disarmament at the time, Thompson’s policy has since become national policy. Second, during a subsequent visit on the Bucknell campus, it was discovered that Thompson never accepts Honorary Degrees. Prof Ben Marsh also spoke in favor of the motion remarking that it was timely and appropriate for the Faculty to move forward on this issue with a pragmatic model on how to interact with the Board. After some expressed concerns about possible ties between the Strategic Plan and Honorary Degrees, and their use as means of fund raising, Prof. Ligare commented that Honorary Degrees are given for a variety of reasons, and quoted President Mitchell saying that “Bucknell was not for sale.” In the ensuing discussion, the question of over-linkage between academic freedom and the granting of Honorary Degrees was raised, and it was noted that the conflict could be minimized with the help of transparent procedures. In the absence of any clear answer regarding whether Bucknell had stopped granting Honorary Degrees or not, Prof. Ligare reminded everyone that no action had to be taken at this point, and that the motion was simply designed to have a process ready, should the Personnel Committee come back with a report recommending a move forward. Any

discussion of the granting criteria would take place at that time. After a friendly amendment to strike the wording *given the change in the President's status*, the motion was voted on and passed.

The next item was a motion from the Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee brought by Geoff Schneider. In his overview of the proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook, Prof. Schneider highlighted the conflict over the status of severe sanctions, for which both CAFT and AAUP give a very vague definition. In an effort towards clarity, a severe sanction would be defined as a financial penalty greater than \$1000 or 1% of annual salary. Any smaller financial penalty would be considered a minor sanction, with rights of appeal. In the absence of questions, this motion will be discussed and voted on at the April meeting of the University Faculty.

Then Prof. Rich Kozick reported from the Committee on Instruction (see agenda). Given the current lack of procedure, forgery will be added to the university's policy on Academic Responsibility under fabrication. Prof. Deborah Abowitz approved of the report but spoke against the second section, noting that other instances of academic irresponsibility sometimes delay graduation. Penalties should be consistent and fair, and forgery should be no exception. Other comments included the use of pin numbers as electronic signatures on course registrations. In the interest of time, it was recommended that COI take these comments under consideration.

Prof. John Peeler next presented the report and recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Governance (see agenda), and moved that *faculty approve the Immediate Recommendations on governance*. After a second to that motion, Prof. Greg Krohn made the following motion: *The Faculty Council should propose an alternative meeting time for Faculty approval*. This motion was seconded, voted on and passed. Expressing his opinion that the body should be asked permission to change the order of the agenda, Prof. Paul Susman moved that we *follow Robert's Rules of Order in organizing agenda items*. Following a few comments on the various ways to achieve a rational agenda, the motion was voted on and failed. Going back to Prof. Peeler's original motion, Prof. Ben Marsh suggested that it be added that *mentoring and review process should emphasize the expectation of the participation in Faculty meetings*. The motion to extend the meeting for five minutes was made and passed. Concerning the question of the meeting time, the issue of having to rearrange the schedule entirely was raised. Associate Dean Midkiff pointed out that he had met with three members of the Faculty Council and gave appropriate suggestions. In response to a question whether the sitting of the President at the head of the table would alter his status, it was noted that this would be a symbolic way to recognize and reinvigorate the authority of the President's office. A motion to end the debate was made and passed. The original motion was then voted on and passed as well.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Philippe C. Dubois  
Secretary of the Faculty