



## UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

### **Minutes of the Faculty Meeting September 13 and 20, 2004**

The meeting was called to order at 5PM by incoming Chair of the Faculty Prof. Martin Ligare. He introduced himself and the undersigned as the Officers of the Faculty, and thanked the previous Chair, Prof. Michael Payne, for his four years of service. All assembled joined in this sentiment with a warm round of applause. Prof. Ligare noted that the Agenda had an unusual order because of pressing business.

#### Announcements by the Chair of the Faculty

Prof. Ligare reported that the Faculty Council would henceforth fill vacancies on committees, caused by someone in an untenured slot who then receives tenure, by holding an election to fill the remainder of that term. If an untenured professor gets tenure, he or she will move into a tenured position if possible. The Faculty Council will hold elections to fill vacancies rather than appoint whenever possible.

Before proceeding to nominations for the vacancies on fall ballot, Prof. Ligare pointed out that we first had to change the composition of the Faculty Governance Review Committee to avoid losing an untenured slot. Prof. Mitch Chernin, who moved the current divisional composition last spring, moved that *we add an untenured slot to allow us to also keep divisional representation*. This was seconded and passed. Nominations from the floor were then solicited.

#### New Business 1

Prof. Tom Cassidy introduced the issue of the revision in the merit scholarship program on behalf of the Committee on Instruction and (its subcommittee) the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid. He noted the importance of this issue and the unfortunate rush to place this before the faculty because of an upcoming Board of Trustees meeting. Traditionally, financial aid at Bucknell was based on need, but the faculty approved a pilot plan for merit aid [November 2002] which provided for a ratio of 3 academic to 1 athletic scholarship. This plan has not operated as was foreseen and Prof. Cassidy introduced VP Kurt Thiede to explain a new proposal

VP Thiede thanked Prof. Ligare and members of CAFA and COI for prompt attention to this issue, noting that it arose during the summer when faculty input was hard to elicit. The Trustees are interested in faculty input, but wish to move quickly to affect this year's class. Financial aid decisions must now be driven by the market place; the old need-only model is not realistic. The primary goal is to bring better and better students to Bucknell, as good students want stimulating classmates. Only 2.1% of students in the US attend schools in Bucknell's price range. Comparisons show that institutions to whose ranks we aspire are giving no-need money to maintain market position.

The current program has had some success but largely in recruiting basketball players, due to our meeting fundraising goals for athletic but not nonathletic merit scholarships. We have not met the 3:1 ratio; it is currently 1:1. Potential donors may want to see internal funds committed to nonathletic scholarships before they will commit. The main thrust of the plan is to take some money from average quality students with high financial need and give it to high quality students with lower need. Specifically, in Year 1, a maximum of 7.5% of the institutional grant budget will be “repurposed” to these lower need students, raised to 15% by Year 4 (class of 2012). We will keep the current ratio of 45-55% of students getting aid and limit no-need students to 3% of students getting aid (~13 students per year). The plan also calls for a review process to make sure students are meeting our expectations for their talent or academic achievements. Results will be shared annually with the faculty via CAFA.

In response to several questions from faculty members, VP Thiede confirmed we need to make adjustments sooner rather than later. Prof. Jim Baish raised the question of whether our mission was to attract the best students or to best educate whatever students were here, and how we would assess educational success. VP Thiede said that one of the seven merit recipients did not return to Bucknell; the GPA of the group was about 3.3, but that we have data on only those seven students so far.

Prof. Cassidy returned to the floor to present the CAFA/COI response. They are concerned about the rushed timetable and are uneasy about taking money from needy students. The committees want continuing reviews of this program. At that point, Prof. Cassidy introduced a motion from COI, which is slightly changed from that in the Agenda: *CAFA and its parent committee COI will generate recommendations regarding the future of Merit scholarships to be considered by the Board of Trustees and will report on this to the faculty in the fall of 2005.* This was seconded.

Prof. Ben Marsh rose to amend the motion. He noted that he had endorsed the pilot program two years ago but the current plan is more complex. An inability to sell the present system to donors is a poor reason to change educational policy. We are moving away from our historical role in providing an education to those who can best benefit and toward providing one to those who can best pay. What should we be doing to retain our best students? Also, this issue is too important for this rushed judgment, and we have incomplete data on its success so far. He moved that the following language be inserted to precede the COI wording: *The Faculty requests additional time to consider the important educational implications of the proposed changes in the merit system before they take effect. We request recommendations for Faculty action on this matter from COI at the November faculty meeting.* The motion was seconded.

In ensuing discussion, the phased-in nature of the new proposal and its goal of providing merit aid to students selected for talent were noted positively. On the other hand, the failure to maintain the 3:1 ratio was seen as disturbing, and perhaps internal funds to basketball should be reduced to fund nonathletic merit aid, as fundraising for sports-related projects is more successful. Prof. Marsh noted that his motion did not speak to the value of the proposal itself but rather the haste of the discussion. VP Thiede reiterated that the pilot program was not working, and that attrition is actually very low here and comes equally from all GPA levels. Dean Genie Gerdes added that Bucknell does many things besides offering merit aid to attract good students. She also noted that if the average student is of higher ability than is the case currently, that will still mean that classrooms will have students with a range of abilities.

The amendment was then voted on and was carried. The question to vote on the whole motion as amended was then called and was passed, as was the vote on the motion itself.

#### Announcements by the President

Seeing the need to leave time for introduction of new faculty, President Brian Mitchell gave the company the briefest of greetings, and yielded the floor to Deans Gerdes and Orbison who carried out their task in the time remaining (see attached).

A motion to continue the meeting to September 20 was made, seconded, and passed, and the meeting was suspended at 6:25 PM.

The meeting resumed at 5PM on September 20, 2004. President Mitchell took the floor and expressed his pleasure at addressing the faculty and his hopes for frequent dialogues. After noting that earthquakes and floods accompanied the early days of his presidency in his previous and current job, he hoped such plagues would cease to follow him in the future. VP Charlie Pollock gave a brief report on flood damage from the former Hurricane Ivan, and both he and President Mitchell thanked students and staff for their extraordinary cooperation and helpfulness.

Reporting on the recent Trustee meeting, the President said he will send an analysis after every meeting to members of the faculty and Trustees. The revised Merit Scholarship program was approved, and although he was encouraged by the discussion he was not happy with the position this put him in. He appreciated the civility of a letter signed by a number of faculty on this matter, but he will need to shortly make a final decision on implementation (which is likely to be positive). He disagreed with how the pilot program was set up, in that fundraising is difficult for pilot programs. But some good points emerged from the attempt, in that we can foresee the next capital campaign concentrating on need-based aid. He reminded us that merit aid is given on top of need-based aid and directed to specific segments of the university. We are indeed beginning to slip in our enrollment numbers, relative to our peers. Finally, he hoped that the process in deciding such issues could be improved in the future.

Turning to the recent announcement of a policy change relaxing restrictions on political activities, the goal is to open up speaking opportunities to a range of people who can add to educational opportunities. This change will be in effect for one year. General Counsel Wayne Bromfield added that the current policy is mostly a restatement of what is in the Faculty Handbook. We must be mindful of our tax-exempt status, which limits our subsidizing of political activity but does allow student groups to invite speakers of their choice. For university-sponsored events, we still need to issue invitations to all major candidates in a race if one is invited, but this doesn't need to be done simultaneously. President Mitchell said that the university will from time to time partly subsidize speakers such as John Stossel, although he urged all scheduling offices to coordinate so that conflicts of events with major speakers can be minimized.

President Mitchell next addressed the in-limbo updated *Faculty Handbook*. He is willing to sign off on this update except that he wants to look again at sections tying our policies to external documents that do not have a specific reference.

VP Dave Surgala reported on the implementation of a Living Wage (or Wage Floor) policy. We are in 3<sup>rd</sup> year of implementation, with a current floor of \$9.19 for

people with four years of experience and satisfactory job ratings. Compared to the original Planning and Budget recommendation, wages have risen at more frequent intervals to reach this level. He also invited faculty to examine the Staff Compensation program.

Prof. Michael Moohr expressed concern about the apparent homogeneity in political orientation among our Trustees, especially if that will bear on a policy regulating political speakers here. President Mitchell said that he had expressed a firm opinion to Trustees that their political views should not affect university policies. Furthermore, the President is now a Trustee and as such he may be able to help change nomination processes.

Prof. Paul Susman initiated an exchange about the next step for the updated *Faculty Handbook*. What happens if President Mitchell disagrees with one provision? The faculty's motion was to accept the whole update, and there is no provision for a line-by-line veto. Counsel Bromfield gave his interpretation of the motion comprising a series of changes, each of which could be accepted or not, but Prof. Allen Schweinsberg, chair of Committee on Faculty and Academic Personnel disagreed, saying this issue is unresolved. The President reiterated his concern that reference to "AAUP Guidelines" in our Handbook, without reference to a specific document, may tie us to policies that could change in the future. Turning back to the Living Wage issue, Prof. Susman reminded us that the original motion from Planning and Budget did not refer to four years of service, and also asked how many people currently fall below the wage floor. VP Surgala said that 36 people fall into this category.

Prof. Ligare next introduced John Siwicki president of Bucknell Student Government. He hoped that student governance and faculty governance would be more closely tied and invited faculty to attend BSG meetings.

The reports on health benefits from Committees on Planning and Budget and Personnel followed. Prof. Marsh on behalf of Planning and Budget said that his committee only looked at whether the proposed institution of a deductible for Highmark Enhanced PPO was budgetarily appropriate. P&B will look at other benefits issues next semester because of continuing steep rises in the costs of benefits. Prof. Moohr asked about possible solutions involving revenue enhancements and requested some figures on such options, which Prof. Marsh said P&B had considered.

Prof. Allen Schweinsberg reported on behalf of Personnel and also the Campus Benefits Advisory Group (CBAG). CBAG has been working on benefits for over a year, and has representatives from all the personnel committees, P&B, Human Resources, Finance, and the University Counsel. They recommend a \$250/500 deductible for Highmark Enhanced PPO, and Personnel concurs. Our benefits are generous in comparison with a group of similar schools, which will still be the case with the deductible. A deductible partly mitigates the expected rate increase for this plan, and the deductible can be made with pretax dollars. Rates for the Geisinger HMO plan will be lower than the Highmark Enhanced PPO so that is an option as well. This is a modest, rational and inevitable response to the current situation, although the committees still have concerns about the long-term future of benefits.

In response to several questions, Prof. Schweinsberg said that although other benefits will be looked at for possible savings, health benefits dominate the financial picture. The deductible only applies to services that do not have a co-pay. Are the costs regressive? Prof. Schweinsberg said that he hears complaints to the contrary, that higher-

paid people are not sure why they should pay more for the same health benefit as lower-paid people.

Prof. Susman introduced a motion: *To instruct the Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee to look for alternatives to the deductible system, which is innately regressive and could have adverse health impacts.* This was seconded. Prof. Susman's rationale was that for some people the flexible (pre-tax) account is not suitable because the money disappears if unused by the end of the year and the employee has to set aside more money per month. Profs. Schweinsberg and Marsh spoke against the motion, as Personnel has considered other alternatives, and time is short to implement this. Evangelical Hospital now accepts the Geisinger Plan, and the local networks are now quite comparable to Highmark. Representatives from Human Resources added that people out of the area on leave for more than three months can still get emergency care under the Geisinger plan, but not routine care. Prof. Moohr saw the issue as more suitable for study by P&B rather than Personnel. The question was moved, that motion passed, but the vote on Prof. Susman's motion failed.

The final item was a second report from COI on health excuses for missed classes. Health Services is finding it impossible to provide notes to students for every absence. They will still provide a note for absences of more than three days, which would go to the office of the appropriate academic dean. Several professors expressed concern and frustration about documenting illness in the case of exam absences. Prof. Brian Williams moved that *COI also consider alternatives to prevent fraud on the part of students not taking exams due to claims of ill health.* This was seconded, but the motion failed on a vote shortly thereafter.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Halpern  
Secretary of the Faculty

## 2004 New Faculty Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Department/Program</u>
Carla G. Bellamy	Columbia University	Visiting Assistant Professor	Religion
Peter A. Brooksbank	University of Oregon	Assistant Professor	Mathematics
Robert E. Brown	University of Iowa	Visiting Assistant Professor	Religion
Christopher Camuto	University of Virginia	Assistant Professor	English
David W. Del Testa	University of California, Davis	Assistant Professor	History
T. Elizabeth Durden	University of Texas, Austin	Visiting Assistant Professor	Sociology and Anthropology
John P. Enyeart	University of Colorado, Boulder	Assistant Professor	History
Sara W. Fry	University of Wyoming	Assistant Professor	Education
Karen J. Gilmer	Boston University	Visiting Assistant Professor	Theatre and Dance
Ross M. Gosky	North Carolina State University	Assistant Professor	Mathematics
Gundolf Graml	University of Minnesota	Visiting Assistant Professor	German
Matthew B. Heintzelman	Yale University	Assistant Professor	Biology
Erin L. Jablonski	Iowa State University	Assistant Professor	Chemical Engineering
Robin D. Jacobson	University of Oregon	Assistant Professor	Political Science
Sarah K. Johnson	Temple University	Visiting Assistant Professor	Psychology
Michael E. Johnson-Cramer	Boston University	Assistant Professor	Management
Cynthia M. Liutkus	Rutgers University	Visiting Assistant Professor	Geology
Bruce R. Long	Pennsylvania State University	Assistant Professor	Electrical Engineering
Jeff Massey	Emory University	Visiting Assistant Professor	English
Asa S. Mittman	Stanford University	Visiting Assistant Professor	Art and Art History
Mala Sharma-Judd	Pennsylvania State University	Assistant Professor	Mechanical Engineering
Linda B. Smolka	Pennsylvania State University	Assistant Professor	Mathematics
Lori D. Smolleck	Pennsylvania State University	Assistant Professor	Education
Emily Stowe-Evans	University of Missouri	Assistant Professor	Biology
Janice M. Traflet	Columbia University	Visiting Assistant Professor	Management
Mariko N. Walter	Harvard University	Visiting Assistant Professor	Religion
Lea D. Wittie	Dartmouth College	Assistant Professor	Computer Science