



## MINUTES

The meeting of the Bucknell University Faculty was called to order on Tuesday, 5 September 2006 at 12:03 p.m. with Faculty Chair Marty Ligare presiding. University President Brian Mitchell welcomed everyone briefly. Faculty Chair Marty Ligare introduced interim Faculty Secretary Jamie Hendry, who will be serving as a replacement for Philippe DuBois for the 2006-2007 academic year.

### 1. Amendments to April 2006 minutes

No amendments were made to the April 2006 minutes.

### 2. Introductions of New Faculty

Acting Dean of Arts & Sciences Chris Zappe introduced 27 new faculty members; he noted that one additional faculty member will join us in Spring 2007.

Dean of Engineering Jim Orbison introduced two new faculty members; he noted that one additional faculty member will join us in Spring 2007.

President Brian Mitchell introduced new Vice President of Development Sam Lundquist, who previously worked on the University of Pennsylvania's campaign.

Vice President of Finance and Administration Dave Surgala provided a brief biography of new Director of Public Safety Jason Friedberg, who was unable to attend the meeting.

Marty introduced Bucknell Student Government President Adam Weinberg. He also noted that BSG is looking for a faculty advisor; this position would require attendance at some Sunday afternoon meetings.

### 3. Announcements and remarks by the Chair of the Faculty

Faculty Chair Ligare reported that Dee Casteel has agreed to be Parliamentarian for another year.

The Faculty will continue to have its meetings on Tuesdays at noon because there are no classes scheduled at that time; meetings will end promptly at 12:52, because many people have 1:00 classes. The official monthly meeting occurs on the first Tuesday of each month – September, October, November, December, February, March, and April – with another meeting on the third Tuesday if we are unable to complete our business during the first meeting time. Some changes may be required because of a) religious holidays in the Spring, and b) the University President's travel schedule.

As everyone knows, the strategic plan has been officially published, and we are now in the tactical phase. Progress has been made in this regard. Last semester, the faculty voted to give Faculty Council additional responsibilities regarding planning. Also last semester, the Chairs of Arts and Sciences proposed an academic planning committee. This body of 12 faculty, including

representation from the College of Engineering, was developed over the summer and approved by the provost. The committee will be chaired by the Deans of the two Colleges and will be coordinating academic planning efforts of the various departments and interdisciplinary programs. The Provost is finalizing the charge for the group, but much of its work will focus on the interdisciplinary parts of the strategic plan.

As Faculty Chair, Marty Ligare will be participating in the Tactics Team, which will have a role in approving tactics associated with the Strategic Plan. Other members of the Team include Provost Mary DeCredico, Vice President for Finance and Administration Dave Surgala, and Director of the Office of Strategic Implementation Mark Dillard. Professor Ligare publicly declared that he's optimistic about the planning process.

Professor Ligare commented that one of the tasks of Faculty Council is to nominate people for ad hoc committees of the faculty and for replacement positions for faculty standing committees. He noted that the Faculty Council is an elected body of the faculty comprising the Faculty Chair (Marty Ligare), Faculty Secretary (Jamie Hendry), and representatives from engineering (Peter Stryker), social sciences (Tammy Hiller), natural sciences and mathematics (Pam Gorkin), humanities (Leslie Patrick), and an untenured faculty member (Molly Maguire). Faculty Council is also part of the University Council; thus members attend both types of meetings. Professor Ligare then went through the nominations, allowing time for nominations from the floor for each position:

- a. **Committee on Instruction: 2-year replacement from Social Sciences**
  - Chris Magee
  - Candice Stefanou
  - No additional nominations were made from the floor.
- b. **Committee on Staff Planning: 1-year replacement from Natural Sciences and Mathematics**
  - Don Dearborn
  - Jack Gallimore
  - No additional nominations were made from the floor.
- c. **Search Committee – Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences**

Prior to announcing the names of the candidates for the Search Committee positions, Professor Ligare pointed out that the Provost had already appointed Warren "Abe" Abrahamson and John Rickard as co-Chairs of the Dean's Search Committee. In addition, she appointed Jim Rice as an administrative representative to the committee. Faculty Council will make an additional at-large appointment.

**Natural Sciences & Math:**

- Carl Kirby
- Ned Ladd
- Marie Pizzorno was nominated from the floor.

**Social Sciences:**

- Carl Milofsky
- Hilbourne Watson
- David Evans was nominated from the floor.

**Humanities:**

- Alice Poust
- Katie Faull
- No additional nominations were made from the floor.

**Untenured:**

- Lynn Breyfogle
- Jim Lavine
- No additional nominations were made from the floor.

**Engineering:**

- Xiannong Meng
- Peter Stryker
- No additional nominations were made from the floor.

Professor Ligare then reported on the Board meeting that occurred last Spring. In addition to Professor Ligare, three other faculty members attended the meeting, as they are elected representatives to Board Committees: Kevin Myers, Chair of the Faculty Committee on Instruction; Sue Ellen Henry, elected Faculty Representative to the Board Committee on Educational Policy; and Doug Allen, elected Faculty Representative to the Board Committee on Finance, who also serves as the “Super-Rep.”

Professor Ligare read his remarks regarding the Board meeting to the Faculty. The written report is included in the Appendix to these minutes.

Upon concluding his remarks, Professor Ligare requested that everyone hold questions and comments until after President Mitchell and Provost DeCredico commented.

**4. Announcements and remarks by the President**

At this point, University President Brian Mitchell read his remarks, which are also provided in the Appendix to these minutes.

**5. Announcements and remarks by the Provost**

Finally, Provost Mary DeCredico spoke briefly about her focus on the need to provide adequate resources for faculty to do their jobs and on her support for and dedication to the mission of the University.

**6. Unfinished business****a. Committee on Instruction**

- Composition Council: Tom Solomon

- 1) Report on Writing Program Review (continued from April 2006) – report available on E-Reserves

This report was begun in the April 2006 meeting and is being continued.

In April, the Faculty voted to make some changes to the writing program legislation, most of which focused on phrasing of the legislation and the means of administering the program. The Faculty also voted in April to change the way writing referrals are handled. Formerly, there was a “writing deficiency” check box on the mid-term and final grade reports. Instead, we will be using a more personal approach to referral, starting now. A letter to department assistants went out two weeks ago, and a letter to the faculty went out last week. The idea is for the faculty to

work with students needing additional assistance early in semester; faculty need to talk to those students and then refer them to the Writing Center. This will give students the motivation to seek this kind of help. Professor Solomon notes that this is a pilot program and that there will therefore be some bugs, so he asks that everyone please be patient. A primary concern is that, if the program works well, the Writing Center staff could be overwhelmed.

Last April, the Composition Council made several recommendations that had potential financial consequences. For example, they suggested that enrollment caps should be instituted for W classes. They also suggested that the Writing Center should be provided with additional resources. Subsequently, questions were raised about how this would be funded, especially since we are also attempting to move to a five-course load for faculty. The Composition Council would like to point out that they wanted to move forward with these recommendations so that they would be incorporated into the University's tactical planning; they have no expectation that these suggestions will be acted on immediately – these are longer term ideas, but they need to be included in the tactical plans.

The Writing Program legislation says that W courses should be reviewed every three years. The Composition Council has decided not to address this matter at this point; they want to gather some feedback before addressing this issue.

In its data and information gathering, the Composition Council found that the faculty feel that the Writing Center end-of-semester evaluation forms are far too long. The Composition Council will work on shortening them without losing important data.

This was the first review of the Writing Program in 20 years. The Composition Council hopes to do routine reviews of the Writing Program more frequently than this in the future.

The Writing Program Review included a great deal of discussion in about the role of remedial writing courses. Strong opinions were expressed on both sides of this issue regarding whether such courses should be offered at Bucknell or not. The Composition Council decided that this will require further discussion and is making no recommendations at this point.

The Composition Council has also decided not to make a recommendation at this time regarding the possibility of separating credit for the W from credit for the course. The Composition Council may discuss further in the future.

A number of questions were raised about the process by which the Composition Council approves writing courses. Some people wanted a bigger role for departments. In fact, the legislation as already written includes role for departments:

The Composition Council will approve courses to be designated 'W' according to the criteria developed by the Council. Faculty members, departments, or programs may propose individual courses for approval. The intention of the Council will be to help all courses meet the criteria. The Council will consult with instructors, departments, and programs as needed to interpret the criteria and to assure that 'W' designations have essentially common meaning across the University. No course may be designated 'W' without approval.

Because this already provides a role for departments, the Composition Council does not feel a recommendation is needed at this time.

At the end of Professor Solomon's remarks, Professor Ben Marsh asked Professor Solomon to clarify whether the Faculty's acceptance of the Writing Program Report is the same as endorsing the specifics of the Report or not. Professor Solomon said that approving the Report was *not* the same as endorsing the specifics of the Report.

Professor Ligare said that the meeting would be continued beginning at 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 19 September 2006. The meeting was temporarily adjourned at 12:47 p.m. on Tuesday, 5 September.

The meeting was called back into order at 12:02 p.m. on 19 September 2006 with Faculty Chair Marty Ligare presiding.

Acting Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences Chris Zappe made three additional introductions of faculty members who had joined us in January 2006.

## **7. Announcements and remarks by members of the President's staff**

Faculty Chair and Professor Marty Ligare said that he was going to allow Vice President for Enrollment Management Kurt Thiede to make his remarks now, as VP Thiede had another engagement.

VP Thiede reported that Bucknell had 318 families on campus this past Saturday for the Admissions Open House. He thanked everyone for participating.

This year, Bucknell handled 9021 applications, and admitted 33% of that applicant pool; he noted that only 6% of colleges and universities nationwide admit 40% or fewer of applicants. 923 students matriculated as the Class of 2010. They were joined by 30 transfer students. Four of these transfer students were from Garrett College in western Maryland, one of the five community college partners Bucknell has through the Jack Kent Cooke program – one of the ways in which we are seeking to increase the diversity of our campus. VP Thiede said that the academic quality of our incoming classes continues to rise. He noted that fewer than 50% of students had a class rank, as high schools are eliminating that measure; still, using SAT averages and class rank for those students for whom the measures are available, we have moved upward. In terms of geographical diversity, 9% of the incoming class is from Western states, and 15% of the class are self-disclosed racial minorities.

Part of the new Admissions program aims at working with particular departments to target potential incoming students who may be offered special scholarships; Admissions is trying to attract a few “stars” each year.

VP Thiede announced that some staff changes have been made in order to handle the new admissions paradigm. Mark Davies is Assistant Vice President Enrollment Management and has taken responsibility for much of the routine admissions process. VP Thiede has moved from Marts Hall to Freas Hall. Admissions has added five new staff members, three of whom are currently visiting high schools and making connections: Lindsay Buntman, Ben Kavanaugh, and Jarrett Warshaw. With us today are David O'Brien is Associate Director for International Student Recruitment. David duKor-Jackson is now the Associate Dean of Admissions.

## **8. New business**

Chair Ligare asked if there were any objections to moving the remainder of the report on the writing program to the end of the agenda as some of the other reports we have on the agenda are of a more time sensitive nature. Upon hearing no objections, Professor Ligare asked Professor Tom Solomon to report for the Committee on Planning and Budget.

### **a. Committee on Planning and Budget: Tom Solomon**

- Written report available in E-Reserves

In addition to the information in the written report, Professor Solomon reported that Planning and Budget is discussing a potential increase in the comprehensive fee as well as compensation

increases. The Committee hopes to have a report on that for the October meeting. Professor Solomon explained that because the budget must be balanced, the Committee will have to find a combination of ways for doing so. One potential way is to make some budget cuts and implement some hiring freezes, but there are many others. In response to a faculty member's inquiry regarding details about such potential cuts or freezes, Professor Solomon noted that the Committee has not had this discussion yet, so he could not provide any further information at this point.

**b. Committee on Faculty and Academic Personnel: Geoff Schneider**

- Written report available in E-Reserves

In addition to the written report included in E-Reserves, Professor Schneider noted that the timeliness of this report may provide some of us with information that can help us make our upcoming benefits decisions.

**c. Committee on Honorary Degrees: Greg Krohn**

- Written report available in E-Reserves

In addition to the written report accompanying these minutes on E-Reserves, Professor Krohn reported that the working relationship between two committees has been good so far. He also noted that the Faculty Committee was charged by the Faculty with determining whether any further changes are needed; the Committee doesn't feel that any changes are necessary at this point.

The Faculty Committee and the Trustee Subcommittee met on Friday, September 15. They began to narrow a list of 23 nominees; this task will continue throughout the Fall semester.

**2) Report on Assessing Student Writing: Tom Solomon**

- Written report available in E-Reserves

Professor Tom Solomon continued his discussion of the Composition Council's review of the writing program. He noted that the previous discussion had not yet addressed whether the program is working or not – whether it is meeting its goals. The Council felt that most faculty supported the writing program and its goals, yet they held differing opinions about whether it has been effective or not. Figuring out how to determine the program's effectiveness is challenging.

The Writing Program was voted on 23 years ago; Professor Solomon read a portion of the program's charge, included in the written report. Part of this charge called for assessing the program's effectiveness, but this has never been done. Currently, largely because of Middle States and ABET requirements, every department on campus is working on assessment methods. The Committee on Instruction charged the Composition Council with assessing whether measuring the effectiveness of the writing program is desirable, and the CC decided that it is.

As the Composition Council began to struggle with determining appropriate means of assessing writing program effectiveness, they noted the following requirements: 1) The assessment process must not be overly burdensome on faculty and staff. 2) Assessment should also be tailored specifically to address the goals of Bucknell's writing program. 3) Because of the disciplinary nature of writing and the variety of types of writing, assessment must be considered

in the context of an assigned task 4) Must have a mechanism for looking at assessment results. 5) Assessment must be sufficient to satisfy Middle States and ABET.

The Composition Council looked at three different broadly-defined methods for assessment. First, they considered what might be called the “No college student left behind” approach, which would consist of tests given to students at the beginning and at the end. This approach was rejected for three reasons: 1) This approach does not provide opportunities for feedback or revision, which places it in opposition to the focus of the writing program; 2) Good writing doesn’t happen under a time limit; 3) It would be unduly burdensome on faculty.

The second approach considered was that of student portfolios. Some Bucknell departments are using the method in their own assessment plans, which means that some of the groundwork for this approach may have already been accomplished. On the other hand, a couple of other schools have tried this as a means of addressing a university-wide writing program, and it has not worked well. It also poses a significant burden on faculty and staff.

The third approach involves the development of a pilot program consisting of rubrics to be completed by faculty members. The pilot program will use the two main learning goals from the original writing program legislation as a starting point: 1) develop expository skills, 2) use writing as an instrument for thinking. It will also consider the several objectives also associated with these goals. At present, the pilot program could not begin until Fall 2007 at the earliest and will run for a couple of years. Professor Solomon cautioned that it would not be perfect; the goal is just to try the program out and then to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses. The Composition Committee estimates that completing the rubrics should add about 1-3 hours of work per faculty member per semester. (This is part of why the Council has recommended that course sizes for W1s and W2s be capped.) Immediately after completing the review of a particular student paper, the faculty member will fill out a rubric based on a writing assignment they are already using in course, scoring each item in the rubric on 1-5 Likert scale. Data will be entered and analyzed online; ISR will be working with the Council to design and coordinate this effort. The Council has not yet developed the exact rubric yet, so no details are available.

The rubric in the pilot program is intended to assess the program’s effectiveness in developing expository skills, the first of the two program goals. The second goal is to use writing as an instrument of thinking. At present, the Council believes this can be fairly easily assessed by asking the students themselves what techniques they use when they are writing for a course. The Council envisions using some surveys and some focus groups for this effort.

At this point, Committee on Instruction Chair Steve Guattery read a proposed motion by the Committee on Instruction:

#### **Motion by Committee on Instruction**

*The Committee on instructions moves The Faculty approves of the pilot program proposed by the Composition Council. The Composition Council is charged with implementing the program and reporting to COI and the Faculty when initial results are available.*

The motion was seconded. Carl Milofsky asked for clarification of what we are voting on, as he wanted to be sure he understood what it would mean if the faculty did not agree to this motion. Tom Solomon explained that Composition Council has been considering the writing program and its assessment for three years; this pilot program is the best they have been able to come up with. Georgia Newlin asked whether we might think about tabling the motion until the specific rubrics have been designed, as there is no way to know whether a particular faculty

member would feel comfortable trying to implement the pilot program in his/her particular class or not. Faculty Chair Marty Ligare pointed out that the question can be revisited by the faculty at any time, so the body is not stuck with the decision to move forward with design of the pilot program. Tom Solomon also noted that an entire department could opt out of the rubric and develop their own assessment tool. Jerry Rackoff pointed out that we should expect Middle States to be somewhat strict about assessing the effectiveness of the writing program when they return to campus, so he doesn't think that moving forward with this is an option. Ben Marsh asked if this vote would oblige all faculty teaching W1 and W2 courses to assess all students taking those courses; Tom Solomon said that the Council intends to ask for volunteers rather than going university-wide initially; several faculty have already indicated an interest in participating. Dean of the College of Engineering Jim Orbison asked what the Council thinks is the timeframe for rolling out the pilot program; Tom Solomon estimated that the first pilot attempts would be in Fall 2007; thus the first meaningful results the faculty could expect to hear would be Fall 2008. The question was called, and the motion carried unanimously.

The September 2006 meeting of the Bucknell University Faculty was adjourned at 12:48 p.m.



**APPENDICES**  
**to the Minutes of the September 2006 Faculty Meetings**

**Remarks by Faculty Chair Marty Ligare regarding the Spring 2006 Board of Trustees Meeting, September 2006**

President Mitchell has already given a summary of Board activities in his campus-wide email last May. I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of some of the items of particular interest to the Faculty:

1. Board unanimously approved “The Plan for Bucknell” that was endorsed by this body and by BSG earlier in the Spring.
2. Board members voiced continuing support for the transition to a five-course teaching load, both in statements in public meetings (including the Committee on Educational Policy) and in private conversations. [Some board members even admitted to having been “doubters” in the past, but expressed how they have come to understand that this transition is essential to Bucknell’s future.]
3. Committee on Finance approved the budget as put together by Committee on Planning and Budget, FY 07, under the leadership of Dave Surgala and with the unceasing labor of Dennis Swank. There is continuing discussion of our pricing relative to our frame-of-reference institutions, and of our compensation levels relative to these schools.
4. Friday evening of the Board meeting saw the initiation of a new tradition: a reception and dinner in honor of those officially granted tenure by the action of the Board. This was a wonderful celebration of our colleagues’ achievements, and a fun evening.

I now turn to a report on the meeting of the Board Committee on Education Policy (on behalf of Sue Ellen Henry, Doug Allen, Kevin Myers, and myself). This meeting has been the subject of considerable discussion since April.

I apologize to the new members of this body for turning so quickly from a celebratory tone of welcome to the more contentious tone of political discourse, but we believe that, as Faculty representatives to the Board of Trustees, we have a responsibility to report to the Faculty, and the Faculty, as a whole, has the obligation to be at the center of discussions regarding the evaluation of our colleagues.

Let me say at the outset that the characterization of the presentation made by the Provost to the Committee on Educational Policy, that you are about to hear from your faculty representatives, differs from that which you will hear from the administration shortly.\* We acknowledge our differences with the administration with regard to the meeting; basically we have “agreed to disagree” on the particulars of the meeting in question. We also agree that any attempt at a reconstruction of specific remarks, now more than four months after the fact, will not be productive. Most important, we agree that this discussion should not get in the way of the momentum that should be building as we select a new Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, move to a five-course load, and begin implementing the strategic plan.

The Provost’s presentation to the Committee on Educational Policy began on a positive note, which several notable individual faculty achievements being highlighted for the Board. The presentation turned to a report on last year’s URC decisions and process, as well as a report on the 2006 merit reviews. It is in the context of this discussion that the Provost tendered opinions concerning faculty performance (particularly in the area of scholarship) and the processes for

evaluation of faculty. The Faculty representatives disagreed with some of these opinions especially those concerning perceived weaknesses in faculty scholarship.

So, what's the big deal—you might ask? The administration does have an obligation to give the Board its assessment of the strengths and weaknesses it sees in the University. The concern is threefold:

1. The assessment of faculty should be grounded in shared data and cognizant of the existing faculty resources at Bucknell.
2. The second concern is one of process. Our publication rate may be high, but that doesn't mean it's the right rate. It may very well be too low for our Mission or, it very well may be too high for our Mission. It might be too concentrated in a few individuals, but maybe it's not. These are legitimate concerns of the University, and especially of the Faculty. But it is only through widespread discussion that the Faculty can come to some consensus on how it should carry out its responsibilities to set standards for performance and evaluation of its members.
3. The third concern is one of consistency of communication. We recognize and acknowledge that the administration has communicated support for the faculty in several ways: in its actions to obtain more resources for the faculty, in public communications like the Provost's recent convocation address, and in private communications with departments and individuals.

We recognize that the transition to a five-course teaching load is made with the expectation that standards for faculty performance will evolve. (If we're not going to become, as a faculty, better teachers and scholars, then there isn't much point to making the transition!) But evolving standards for faculty performance call for a widespread and ongoing discussion in legitimate governance forums; the discussion informed by our Mission as a University, and informed by a realistic, date-driven, assessment of where we currently stand as teachers, scholars, and contributors to the greater life of the University.

As an elected faculty leader, I have the responsibility to help move us forward—acknowledging differences with the administration, but working with the administration as we, as a body, develop a better sense of how the new resources that are a part of “The Plan” can help us become better University faculty.

In closing, as one of the leaders of the University, along with President Mitchell and Provost DeCredico, I feel an obligation to put the emotions of this incident behind us and to move forward the implementation of the strategic plan, and to work to create a University that better fulfills our mission and goals.

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### **Remarks by University President Brian Mitchell regarding the Spring 2006 Board of Trustees Meeting, September 2006**

We, as the faculty and administrative leaders of this university, have a responsibility and obligation to move forward, implement The Plan for Bucknell, and create a lasting sense of momentum about Bucknell and its future. In my view, it is time to put this issue behind us. Let me repeat: it is time to put this issue behind us.

To do so, I am going to take a question graciously forwarded in advance by Mike Prince of the Engineering faculty. Mike writes: “I'd like to ask Brian to clarify where we are with respect

to the time table and resources for moving to the 3-2 load. The 5-course load does not seem to have been presented at the spring trustee meeting and the president's letter summarizing that meeting made only sparse mention of this, stating: "The Board encouraged the university to continue its efforts to prepare for the five-course load."

Mike is wrong and right. In April 2006, the University's Board of Trustees unanimously adopted The Plan for Bucknell which included approving the strategy of strengthening the academic core as a first priority. This Board, after a painful and profound reexamination of itself, recognized appropriately that good trustee boards have three core responsibilities: 1.) setting university-wide policy; 2.) passing operational, capital and comprehensive campaign budgets after rigorous review, and 3.) hiring and firing the president. When it passed The Plan, it passed the strategy to strengthen the academic core and left the implementation of the tactics to the administration.

Mary DeCredico has recommended to me that we move to a five-course load. I have agreed with this recommendation and believe it is critical. Everyone of my public and private statements is consistent on this fact. The issue is now before Planning & Budget. The Board will agree but will have a budget to review that will contain money for the 5-course load and must also be balanced. To this end, I am going to take an unusual step with Judge Crawford's blessing and will now read you a letter to be sent by me to trustees later this week in which the president speaks to the trustees on the issue of the five-course load:

"This year, we will undertake searches for 15 tenure track hires as we begin to implement the five-course load. The position allocations have come out of deliberations by the Committee on Staff Planning, with specific departmental posts for the new faculty chosen based on our study of FTEs, course offerings for majors, and the related survey circulated a year ago. The second wave of these hires will follow in FY09 with 15 more, allocated strategically in relation to The Plan. The final round of hires related to implementing the five-course load will occur in FY10, subject to the recommendations of the provost authorized by the president and provided, if at all reasonably possible, in annual operational budgets approved by the Board of Trustees in FY08, 09, and 10."

You now have a definitive statement.

This issue, and Mary's remarks to the EPC on which there is wide disagreement, have been discussed for quite some time in fora both real and virtual. At this point, it is unlikely that parties will change their opinions and positions based on what we discuss today. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to go into "he said, she said" details.

What is important is that we put this issue behind us and move on. The first step forward might entail a broader discussion about university governance; however, to reduce this more complex and multifaceted issue to the meeting last spring would be a mistake. In the future, there will be other fora, including the trustee retreat in the middle of September, to discuss the broader issues on which we must professionally and amicably reach agreement.

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### **Committee on Instruction, Report to the Faculty, September 2006**

The Report on the Writing Program Review and the Report on Assessing Student Writing are both available on E-Reserves in the folder for Academic Year 2006-2007.

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## **Committee on Planning and Budget, Report to the Faculty, September 2006**

FY '06 budget: It is currently expected that the university will have a one-time \$4 million surplus for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2006. Much of this surplus is due to lower than budgeted expenses for the retiree health care program and to a lower than expected need for contingency funds. These funds are expected to be placed in quasi-endowment to generate additional operating income for the future.

Health care increases for calendar year 2007: The university's overall health care costs for calendar year 2007 are expected to increase about 8.1% above calendar year 2006. While this increase is significant, it is somewhat less than previously forecasted and budgeted for FY 07.

Budgeting for FY '08: CPB has scheduled time this semester to concentrate on the significant budgetary implications of implementing the five course teaching load. It is expected that some combination of new revenue sources generated by the university's upcoming comprehensive campaign, budget re-balancing and expense reductions will be needed to balance the budget while implementing the five course teaching load.

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## **Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee (FAPC), Report to the Faculty, September 2006.**

Thanks to the work of Marty Ligare, the Campus Benefits Advisory Group, and Human Resources, the FAPC was able to get benefits information earlier than usual this year. Thus, we are able to give the faculty an early look at what the benefits changes will be during the Open Enrollment period in October. (For those of you who are new to Bucknell, in October, faculty choose the benefit options they want for the next calendar year. You will be receiving more information about your benefits choices in the mail.)

The benefits information this year is somewhat better than expected. Healthcare costs for next year are expected to increase by an average of 10.5%, which is less than anticipated. The cost of the prescription drug plan will actually decline slightly, due to the fact that patents will be expiring on a number of major prescription drugs this coming year. With the decline in prescription costs, the average net increase in healthcare costs is 8.1%. At this time, it appears there will be no changes in plan design, copays and deductibles. There will, however, be increases in premiums to reflect higher costs. Moreover, the premiums on both Highmark plans will be increasing by about 15%, while the premiums for the Geisinger HMO plan will only increase by about 4%.

In other benefits news, Bucknell will be adding a new, voluntary vision plan for active members of the faculty and staff (paid for by subscribers). An initial review seems to indicate that the plan will be an excellent value. Employees may continue to use the Outlook discount card if they prefer. In addition, voluntary dental rates will not be changing.

Geoff Schneider  
Chair, FAPC

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### **Committee on Honorary Degrees, Report to the Faculty, September 2006**

After many years of not participating in the awarding of honorary degrees, the faculty voted at its March 2005 meeting to reconstitute the Faculty Committee on Honorary Degrees and charged the Committee on Faculty and Academic Personnel to consider changes to the section of the Faculty Handbook pertaining to honorary degrees. At the April 2005 Faculty Meeting, the Personnel Committee proposed changes to section II.C.3 of the Faculty Handbook, which were adopted at the September 2005 Faculty Meeting, and charged the Faculty Committee on Honorary Degrees to report back to the faculty in September 2006 with an assessment of the process. This report fulfills that charge.

The adopted procedures require that nominations for honorary degrees “be evaluated by the [Faculty] Committee in consultation with the Trustee Sub-committee on Honorary Degrees. The list of candidates agreed on by both the Committee and the Trustee Sub-committee will be submitted to the President for review. The President’s recommendations from this list will be submitted to the Committee on Educational Policy of the Board of Trustees for its approval and recommendations to the Board.”

After nominations for honorary degrees were received in the fall of 2005, the Faculty Committee on Honorary Degrees and the Trustee Sub-committee on Honorary Degrees met on November 17. Many issues were discussed, including the annual timetable, nomination process, criteria for an honorary degree, voting procedures, and the multiyear status of nominees and agreed upon candidates. None of the issues was resolved at this first meeting, and no nominees were evaluated. It was later agreed to have a conference call to consider on an ad hoc basis one nominee of mutual interest to the two committees. This candidate was agreed on by both committees in a conference call meeting on December 14. The candidate, however, was unavailable for Bucknell University’s Commencement in May 2006, so no honorary degree was awarded.

The Faculty and Trustee committees met again in April 2006. At this meeting, agreement was reached concerning several issues:

- Annual timetable. Nominations received by August 15 will be considered at the September and November meetings of the combined committees.
- Nomination process. Nominations require a 1-2 page letter plus biographical information on the nominee. Letters of support and published articles about the nominee will also be accepted. Nominations can remain active for two academic years.
- Criteria. Language in the Faculty Handbook was accepted as criteria: “honorary degrees are awarded in order to recognize individuals whose work exemplifies the qualities of intellect, character, and creativity most cherished by the University. The Committee gives special consideration to those individuals whose distinguished contributions have

not yet been widely or formally recognized outside their own fields and to individuals who are part of the Bucknell community.” The Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee report accepted in April 2005 also charged the Faculty Committee on Honorary Degrees that “candidates should not be judged ineligible for an honorary degree based on characteristics such as gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation or on their religious or political views.”

- Voting procedures. The adopted procedures require a majority of both committees to approve of a nominee for the nominee’s name to be forwarded to the President, and allow up to eight candidates per year to be agreed upon.

The 2006-2007 academic year will be the first during which the agreed upon process will be implemented. The working relationship between the Faculty Committee on Honorary Degrees and the Trustee Sub-committee on Honorary Degrees has been constructive and cordial. At this point in time, no further changes to the Faculty Committee’s charge or to the process for granting honorary degrees are necessary.