



UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

Minutes of the Faculty Meeting

March 4, 2002

The meeting was called to order at 5PM by Prof. Michael Payne. The Secretary announced that an amended version of the February 2002 minutes was on reserve. Student Jennifer Butler made an announcement about the Chrysalis Ball on April 27, encouraging faculty to attend. Prof. Payne offered an encomium to the new administration and Trustee leadership in recent efforts to overcome past difficulties. He was hopeful of a favorable outcome of the current planning process, and urged the assembly to see the “big picture” in our discussions.

Announcements by the President

President Rogers introduced the new VP for Enrollment Management Kurt Thiede, who was welcomed by the faculty. Searches for the Dean of Engineering and the Associate Vice President for Information Services and Resources were in the candidate visit phase. The President announced a donation of \$3.7 million from Richard Emmitt to endow the William C. and Gertrude B. Emmitt Chair in Biomedical Engineering and the administration is trying to raise money for second chair in that discipline. He also hinted that an announcement about an even larger gift to the university will be forthcoming shortly. In Admissions news, we had 7750 applicants, down slightly from last year but still reflecting the 2nd largest number of applicants ever. We have 337 early decision students already (the enrollment goal is 910); the quality and diversity look good for the incoming class. We are having an excellent year in recruiting faculty, partly due to Bucknell’s reputation and also because state universities are not hiring as much this year.

The President reported that the O’Leary Center and Coleman renovation are on schedule. The Recreation and Athletic Center is on budget but approximately 1 month behind schedule. Alcohol infractions are down significantly. The Service Learning Task Force is moving ahead as is the Vision 2010 planning process. A draft revised mission statement is about to appear for comment. In the area of staff planning, President Rogers reported an upcoming survey of staff by an independent firm regarding benefits and other work environment issues. The staff salary methodology is being revised and a strategy is under development to provide benefits to all full-time employees.

Associate Dean Elaine Garrett reported on recent efforts to address bias and discrimination incidents on campus. In addition to a recent meeting for students (minutes on ERES, password = summit), a task force has been organized to develop protocols to handle bias-related harassment and violence. In addition, the Dean of Students is reconsidering how to report such incidents to the campus, and more education about bias will be offered during Orientation.

Prof. Peter Kresl questioned whether current workers, including those who may be handicapped, will be retained once benefits are increased. They will, according to VP Jo-Anne

Lema. Several faculty members also asked for clarification about how a revised mission statement will be brought to the faculty. It will be brought to the faculty for a vote after general circulation, following procedures to amend the Faculty Handbook, according to Prof. Payne and several administrators.

The President then turned to submitted questions from the March agenda. The first one asked about the charge to the task force on the merit system, to which the faculty recently elected four members. He offered the following charge:

The Task Force is charged with development of a plan for Faculty Performance Evaluation that is consistent with the guidelines given by the Board of Trustees at their January 25th, 2002 meeting, strikes an optimal balance between the time and energy required to administer it and the benefits it provides to the University, and is supported by the largest proportion of the faculty possible. The final form of the plan must be completed in time for presentation to the Trustees at their November, 2002, meeting. Important criteria to consider include the following:

- The system must be simple enough that it is readily understood by faculty, administrators and trustees. Although complex systems have potential for greater precision and accuracy, their complexity can also provide dark corners in which distrust can develop.
- The system must be efficient. We know that any such process, as it grows larger, will experience declining returns on the effort invested in it. We must anticipate that a high level of efficiency will be essential for faculty satisfaction.
- The system must make distinctions that the faculty consider to be meaningful, significant, and fair.

The Task Force's Plan should specify:

- Specific timetables for both annual evaluations and developmental reviews
- The sequence of steps in each evaluation / review
- Agents responsible for each step in the evaluation / review process
- The criteria to be used in assigning ratings, and the extent to which individual interpretations of the criteria are possible for disciplines, departments, divisions, or other organizational units.
- The specific form to be used for annual updates.

Prof. Jean Shackelford offered a motion to substitute the following charge, which was seconded (in the original motion, the first sentence read "The Faculty charge". This was later amended):

The Task Force is charged to design and propose implementation procedures for a Faculty Performance Evaluation System. The Task Force should reconsider the system already in place, possibly suggesting proposals for modifying this system. The Task Force should also consider the motions adopted by the Trustees at their January 2002 meeting.

Prof. Shackelford explained that she thought the task force should consider the issue broadly, including considering whether to keep the current system. She also thought the faculty should develop the charge, as the faculty approved the system currently in place.

The ensuing discussion ranged widely. One question was whether or not the charge should come from the President or the faculty, and if this was a "faculty committee". Prof. Payne said that although this task force would report to a Trustee committee, we could expect a report to the faculty by October, 2002. Some unclarity emerged about whether the Trustee guidelines on the merit system were firm or subject to discussion (this was raised particularly in regard to the annual reviews). On this point, President Rogers thought the Trustees were interested in annual reviews although the task force could ask for clarification early on in their deliberations on whether these were absolutely essential in any new system. Both Profs. Shackelford and Kim Daubman reminded the group that we do have a merit system in place that the Trustees apparently approve of, and perhaps improvements to this system could be considered more at

length rather than requiring a committee to come up with an entirely new system in just a few months. Prof. Greg Krohn was interested in the guideline regarding flexibility in weightings and thought that was something the task force should consider.

The question was finally called, and the motion (as amended) passed without opposition.

Turning to Question 2 about classroom space, President Rogers noted that he would like classrooms to be fully equipped with technology as soon as possible. Space utilization in general will be considered in the Vision 2010 process, according to VP Lema. The President added that no new classroom buildings are being planned, except for the Art Building. Prof. Ben Marsh noted that most new buildings have been designed to provide laboratory space, which may not be suitable for other classes. Prof. George Exner pointed out that some classroom problems are just too small, rather than having equipment problems. He also reminded us that last spring, COI presented a report urging faculty to utilize all available teaching hours more evenly than is now the case. Dean Garrett asked that Associate Dean Robert Midkiff be recruited to serve on any space utilization committees, as he has the difficult task of matching classes to classrooms. This recruitment was immediately effected by VP Lema.

Question 3 was about the procedure for setting next year's salaries. In answering part a about the information used in this decision, President Rogers noted that when he arrived at Bucknell, he supported the attempt to get salaries to certain levels. Several different methodologies were offered to the Trustees that were not accepted. A new list of comparative schools, and a simple methodology was acceptable, and resulted in a one-time adjustment. Time in rank did not make a difference; other information referred to in Question 3a was not available from other schools. He went on to say that he would not have attempted to ask for a 7.3% across-the-board raise; the adjustment had to be seen as attempt to keep salary promises made in 1996. Without this context, the President predicted the total raise would have been closer to 4.1%. He also observed that even with next year's raise, full professors will still not catch up to salaries in peer institutions. Salary raises associated with promotions must be examined to make sure we don't create a compression problem again. This issue should be discussed by the Personnel Committee. Prof. Daubman, chair of Personnel, said that the normal process was not followed this year in that her committee did not set raises for each rank. They might have considered different increases for market vs. nonmarket fields.

Question 3b was in fact about the role of the Personnel Committee in this year's salary process, a concern echoed by several faculty members. President Rogers said there was never any intent to bypass the committee; in fact he was not fully aware of the usual procedure, which will be followed in the future. He feels very strongly that equity needed to be addressed to justify the large raise. Prof. Payne recommended that the decision making process needs to be started earlier; the President agreed.

Prof. Payne concluded the meeting by suggesting that chairs of major on-campus committees be representatives to the appropriate Trustee committees. He also cautioned the assembly that we cannot always spend this much time on questions, and would like to limit question time to 30 min. In particular, he noted that COI has been waiting to present a report for two months. The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Halpern
Secretary of the Faculty