UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

Minutes of the Faculty Meeting
November 1, 2004

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

Announcements by the President

President Mitchell began by announcing that Homecoming is this coming weekend. He introduced his assistant Kathy Martin who discussed the revamped Trustee Access Day, now called Bucknell Community Dialogue Day, to be held November 11. This event is meant to be a structured opportunity for trustees to learn from faculty, students, and staff about a particular issue. This year's theme is technology transformations in teaching and is to include a panel discussion and tour of facilities. President Mitchell continued by addressing matters he and Board Chair Susan Crawford agree are important for the Board of Trustees to deal with at the November meeting. Nominations for new trustees should work towards the goal of increasing diversity and also include people willing and able to support the next capital campaign. A recommendation for next year's comprehensive fee is being developed with the aid of our Finance Office; we need good data to defend the fee structure. The Board is undergoing a review of governance, chaired by President Mitchell and Trustee Craig Mills, which will deal with both long- and short-term issues, as well as relationships within and between the Board and other constituents. This should be finished by next April. Finally, the President is working on a statement of timelines and procedures for long-range planning. We need to set priorities for the campaign. After presenting his ideas to the trustees, he will share them with the faculty in public presentations, in the spirit of treating Bucknell as a community.

Prof. Harold Schweizer asked whether the theme for the Dialogue Day will encompass consideration of teaching that is not affected by technology and also how teaching might affect technology, rather than just *vice versa*. President Mitchell agreed that all possible relationships between teaching and technology should be considered and he will bring up this point. Prof. John Peeler asked a question about the recent email announcing implementation of the new merit aid plan. He was concerned about possible decreases in educational opportunities for disadvantaged students. The President voiced his strong agreement with this goal, saying that we would try to evaluate potential excellence in each student. He asked VP Kurt Thiede to report to the faculty on the review process at the end of the plan's first year.

Announcement by the Chair of Faculty

Prof. Ligare announced that this meeting marks the end of the Secretary's term of office. He asked the group to join him in a show of thanks. This was followed by an enthusiastic round of applause, for which the undersigned, in turn, thanks her colleagues.

Prof. John Peeler reported on behalf of the Faculty Governance Review Committee. He presented their proposed charge, as the committee was convened without a charge from the faculty. Their purview is university, not college governance. They will be talking to individual faculty and administrators, as well as surveying the faculty as a whole. The report will eventually go to Faculty Council for any implementation. Prof. Ligare added that the initial report will come to the faculty in February with a final report due in March.

Prof. Charlie Clapp next reported from the Provost Search Committee. An ad appeared in the *Chronicle* several weeks ago, and there is job profile posted on Electronic Reserves; password = provost. The search firm will build an applicant pool in November; in December and January, review will proceed for three finalists for open interviews in February. The search firm staff wants to be aggressive in the search and invites suggestions for candidates, even if they are "long shots". Suggestions should be mailed to the search firm (contact information to follow shortly in an email).

The next item was a motion from Committee on Instruction from Prof. Tom Cassidy. They were asked to consider adding D+ and D- to the grading system. The current system of plusses and minuses came into being in 1984, although the Minutes of that meeting record little discussion. Grading policies at other colleges are quite diverse. COI decided that because D is a passing grade, allowing a D- to also reflect a pass would not be acceptable. However, some students find it hard to reach a 2.0 GPA and a D+ option will help, as well as provide a small incentive. There seems no reason not to allow a D+. After a second to the motion, Dean Robert Midkiff offered his opinion that a D+ option might increase the incidence of "grade-grubbing" among students and also lead to pressure to offer an A+. Other questions from faculty and administrators included: Would D+ be a midsemester grade? What is the point value of a D+? When would this start? The point value would be 1.33, but COI had not thoroughly considered the other matters. Prof. Chris Boyatzis supported the motion by saying that as we make distinction between a B and B+ , we should be able to do so for D and D+, and the D+ would reward additional mastery. Others spoke against the motion, citing problems in distinguishing low from slightly less low grades. Although some students currently getting D's might get D+'s in the new system, others might fall from C- to D+. The motion was then voted on and failed.

Prof. Ben Marsh presented the report from Committee on Planning and Budget (attached). As is usual practice, the Committee recommends each November the budget increase for continuing faculty salaries. This year they advise a 4.3% increase. Trustees want to position faculty salaries in the middle of the range of a set of comparison schools, although "middle" is not strictly defined. We improved in this comparison from 01-02 to 02-03, but since then our ranking has fallen due to recent budget constraints. The recommended figure is halfway between the number needed to bring the faculty as a whole to position 7, and the number needed to improve just into position 6. Prof. Nancy White was troubled by tying our salaries to performance of our endowment (which supplies about 1/8 of our budget); Prof. Marsh noted that we use rolling averages in many of our calculations, which then lag behind current endowment performance. Several faculty members wondered if the 4.3% figure was likely to be acceptable to the Board of Trustees, as often they have reduced the recommendation. Prof. Marsh believed this recommendation would be accepted and he also felt they will be responsive to the concern that future increases should be large enough to avoid getting further and further behind our desired position. He also addressed the apparently lower comparative salaries of Assistant Professors in the recommendation by saying that this rank is highly volatile due to promotions and also variable initial starting salaries. In addition, merit increments are fixed, so are proportionally larger for Assistants. The Personnel Committee actually distributes the salary pool to people at each rank.

The final item was the report from Committee on Complementary Activities, printed in the Agenda. Student Merisa Levine stood ready to receive questions about the report. There were none, and the meeting adjourned at 6PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Halpern
Secretary of the Faculty

Committee on Planning and Budget report to the Faculty, November 4, 2004

The Committee on Planning and Budget recommends an average 4.3% increase in continuing faculty salaries in FY '05 – '06.

Background To determine the recommended size of the faculty increase, the university has been using a simple model which compares salary for each academic rank at Bucknell with that at 10 other schools. The campus has worked with a semi-formal goal of attaining 6th rank among the 11 schools on the list. (The trustees have been receptive to the general idea of a peer-based faculty salary target, but have sought "the middle of the range", rather than any specific number.) Under the austerity budgets of the last two years the faculty have lost some ground in this comparison. (See section A of the table.)

An average salary increase of 5.6% is needed to reach the "6th-of-11" target (column C). An increase of 3.5% is needed to bring the faculty to 7th rank (column D). The "Scenario Z" medium term plan that the university has been working with for several yeas assumes a 3% increase in faculty salaries; that increase would permit continued erosion of the overall faculty salary rank (see column B).

The Planning and Budget committee decided to recommend a number below 5.6% for the increase, in recognition of the ongoing resource constraints that the university has been dealing with during this time of reduced endowment value. We chose 4.3%, which is simply halfway between 5.6% target for 6th rank, and the 3.0% increase from "Scenario Z". This increase should slightly improve the ranking of Bucknell faculty salaries within our peer group. (Note that all of the numbers that we use after 2003-04 are estimates based on our assumptions about what the peers will do.)

With the Consumer Price Index projected to be around 2.5%, a 4.3% increase should yield about a 1.3% across-the-board increase [half CPI], and a 3.0% merit increase — to be allocated through the established methods by the Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee. The merit system provides proportionately greater salary increases to faculty at lower salary, which will raise average salaries for assistant and associate professors more, thus helping their relatively worse rankings. The actual improvements in each rank will depend on the allocations made through FAPC.

The Committee on Planning and Budget hopes that next year's faculty salary increase can provide more progress toward the middle of the peer-group distribution. The committee further hopes that the upcoming strategic process that the president is initiating can specify target levels for faculty salaries more clearly.

This year's (non-faculty) staff compensation request will also be above the 3% level of the "Scenario Z" plan. In addition to the budgeted merit increase, a significant investment is foreseen to provide one-time equity adjustments for staff who are below the target salary determined in the recently completed staff compensation review.

			A			B	C	D
			Salary rank among 11 peers				Est. minimum. increase for	
Academic rank	5-year average increase	2004-5 average salary	2002-3	2003-4	est. 2004-5	Rank, w/ 3% inc., est. 2005-6	6th rank	7th rank
Professor	5.94%	$101,809	5	7	7	7	4.5	1.4
Associate	5.24%	$74,235	4	6	6	7	3.5	2.7
Assistant	4.93%	$58,828	7	8	8	9	9.2	6.5
Weighted average	5.28	$74,779					5.6%	3.5%