



UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

Minutes of the Faculty Meeting 7 February 2006

The meeting was called to order at 12:04PM by Professor Martin Ligare, Chair of the Faculty.

Announcements and remarks by the President and Provost

President Mitchell provided a brief overview of the January Board of Trustees meeting. Discussion of the Strategic Plan went very well, and included some consideration of metrics and a conservative financial model. He noted that Bucknell's endowment is now above \$500 million, which, although good, it is less than we need to do what we would like. Issues surrounding growth in University Relations, such as physical space and hiring, in preparation for the campaign were discussed, as was the by-law review process. He also noted that Board diversity is changing.

President Mitchell then discussed the two-tiered comprehensive fee structure adopted by the Board at the recommendation of the Committee on Planning and Budget in which entering students will pay a higher fee than continuing students. After acknowledging the student contribution to this idea, President Mitchell noted that this will move us to the middle of our 13 peer institutions, allowing us to bring in the resources necessary to address big expected costs (e.g. energy and healthcare). Compensation, too, was approved as part of a two-year plan to stabilize faculty salaries before the start of the campaign by moving to the 5th or 6th position out of our 11 frame of reference institutions. President Mitchell also emphasized that staff salaries had been addressed first through a large increase in that pool.

President Mitchell next turned to the five-course load. Assuming The Plan is adopted by the Board, Bucknell will move quickly to implement this initiative. The president asked Provost DeCredico to comment on the five-course load. Provost DeCredico noted that the Board supported The Plan. Assuming adoption of The Plan, the five-course load should be in place by 2008 at latest. The transition will begin with replacement-position hires for AY06–07.

President Mitchell next addressed the revised Carnegie Classification and explained that a letter had been sent to the committee asking them to reconsider Bucknell's classification. He then announced a CTW Foundation grant of \$250,000 for the Humanities Institute endowment in memory of Charlie Watts. He then discussed general ways to strengthen the Patriot League before asking Vice President for Enrollment Management and Communications Thiede to provide a brief comment on where the admissions process stands. Vice President Thiede said that applications are up more than 8% with Early Decision applications up about 13%. The quality and diversity of the applicant pool is up as well.

Finally, President Mitchell described the advantages to Bucknell as we move toward the campaign, of our upgraded AA2 rating from Moody's.

Announcements by the Chair of the Faculty

Professor Ligare introduced the undersigned as Secretary of the Faculty for Spring 2006 (noting that a replacement will be needed for AY06–07) and the new BSG leadership.

Next, Professor Ligare provided an update on the situation concerning Dr. Berhanu Nega. A letter has been sent to the Ethiopian Ambassador, Senators Specter and Santorum, and Secretary of State Rice. To date, no response has been received.

Professor Ligare then brought to the floor a proposal from Faculty Council which called for moving elections to the URC up from the normal April schedule to February. He reiterated the rationale already presented in an e-mail to the faculty (4 Feb 06), citing scheduling issues associated with the course release URC members receive. As this is not intended to be a permanent procedural change (which would necessitate modifying the Faculty Handbook), Professor Ligare, in consultation with Parliamentarian Professor Dee Casteel, moved that, in the absence of any opposition, the change would be approved by General Consent. No opposition was voiced. Nominations and the election will take place in the near future.

Professor Ligare moved on to a brief report on the January Board of Trustees meeting, noting that Board gave great weight to campus efforts in the dual issues of comprehensive fee and compensation. He also described President Mitchell's efforts to balance a desire for new initiatives voiced by some trustees with the need for a recognition of the strengths that already exist at Bucknell.

Finally, Professor Ligare discussed the role Faculty Council will play in developing Unit Action Plans as a component of strategic planning. Faculty Council will work with the Provost to help articulate what UAPs might be, and how to coordinate the specifics that will come from them. As a first step, Faculty Council will meet with department Chairs by division in an effort to determine what individual, common, or interdisciplinary needs there are, and how they might be coordinated. If Faculty Meeting concludes all its business today, the first of these meetings will take place on Tuesday, 21 February 2006. Professor Ligare also noted that Faculty Council will be meeting with University Council on 14 February 2006 to discuss the Strategic Plan.

Unfinished Business

Professor Ben Marsh reiterated his motion to return the Committee on Instruction's proposal ("that the Faculty approve the plan described in the [report attached to the December Agenda] for annual dissemination of grading statistics to faculty members") to the committee for further consideration. Professor Marsh noted that he had been in contact with the Chair of CoI, and that his motion was intended to be benign and supportive. Professor Steve Guattery, for CoI, responded that the committee does not object. Feedback such as this is useful and the committee would welcome other suggestions. The motion was voted on and passed.

Committee Reports

Professor Ben Marsh, Chair of the Committee on Planning and Budget, presented a report on the January Board meeting, and the Comprehensive Fee and compensation numbers. He explained the logic of the Board decision to adopt a two-tiered pricing model with a sizable

increase for new students, and a smaller (more ordinary) increase for continuing students as a recognition of that the assumptions that underlay the long debates about pricing for the institution in the past were no longer applicable. It does not make sense to strive to be underpriced, for we are not trying to be less good; rather, we are trying for a price that is within a relatively narrow band, one that will allow Bucknell to be as good as it should be. Professor Marsh explained that after three years, we will pass out of this differential pricing.

Next, Professor Marsh turned to compensation. The figures come from the Board Compensation Committee, are somewhat higher than what P&B had suggested, and represent a desire to do what we have wanted to do: move faculty salaries to the mid-range of our peers. Professor Marsh observed that President Mitchell made a strong case to the Board for a better, not cheaper, institution. With an assumption of 2.5% growth in salaries while our peers were moving at 5.2%, we were constantly losing ground. To get to the mid-range, we need roughly a 10% increase, but this will be split over two years: 8.12% for next year, and about 6.6% for the year after.

Professor Tony Massoud, Chair of the Committee on Staff Planning, provided an update on the implementation of the five-course load, but cautioned that everything is conditional on Board approval of The Plan. A call has already gone out to department Chairs for staffing proposals to meet the curricular needs of moving to a five-course load. The actual vote on the CSP plan will come later in March. The proposed schedule effects a three-year phase in: all tenure-track hires made in AY06–07 for AY07–08 will have a five-course load. Roughly half the new positions will be filled. In AY07–08, all tenure-track assistant professors will move to a five-course load, and the second half of the new hires will be made. In AY08–09 all positions will be in place and all remaining tenured or tenure-track faculty will move to a five-course load. Professor Massoud noted that this is a logistically complex transformation that will involve reallocating existing resources. The course release program will disappear and administrative release time will change. The assumption is that all full-time faculty will teach a minimum of three courses a year. The Committee is exploring standardization in counting teaching load (labs, independent studies, undergraduate research, etc.)

Some concerns were raised. Professor Carl Kirby wondered whether small departments would be able to take advantage of these changes. Professor Greg Krohn was concerned that during the transition period—particularly the second year before all associate and full professors moved to a five-course load—there would be more courses offered than would be needed. Professor Massoud acknowledged that this is a work in progress, and that CSP welcomes feedback.

The meeting adjourned at 12:53PM. There will be no meeting on 21 February 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

Erik R. Lofgren
Secretary of the Faculty