



UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

The December 2006 meetings of the University Faculty will be held on Tuesday, December 7, 2006 in the Langone Center Forum beginning at 12:00 p.m. and running until 12:52 p.m. or the conclusion of business, whichever comes first. Professor Martin Ligare, Chairperson of the Faculty, will preside. Any corrections to the November 2006 minutes should be sent to Faculty Secretary Jamie Hendry prior to the meeting.

MINUTES

Faculty Chair Marty Ligare called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

1. Amendments to and approval of November 2006 minutes

Minutes were approved with two minor amendments.

2. Announcements and remarks by the President

President Mitchell commended the Faculty Council for its response to Professor Ben Marsh's motions made during the November 2006 Faculty Meeting.

The Board of Trustees will be forming an ad hoc committee to conduct an environmental scan to begin to get some sense of what opportunities and concerns might exist with regard to governance. There will also be a governance discussion involving both faculty and administration, manifesting itself originally in two meetings in January. The third governance discussion will involve faculty governance and will include both an internal and an external component.

Middle States has accepted our October 1 (really September 28) letter. We recognize that they are anticipating our work on university governance.

3. Announcements and remarks by the Chair of the Faculty

- The Faculty will hold an election for a one-semester replacement for an untenured member of Faculty Council. Faculty Council put forward one nominee, Dee Ann Reeder. The floor was opened for additional nominations for this position. No additional nominations were forthcoming. Nominations were closed.
- Professor Ligare acknowledged the makeup of Faculty Council: Chair, Secretary, one untenured member, one member from each division, one member from Engineering. He then read Faculty Council's responses to Professor Ben Marsh's motions of November 2006; this response had been provided via email to the faculty the evening before the meeting and can be found in the appendix to these minutes. A motion appeared at the end of this report, but because the report was not available the minimum three days prior to the meeting, that motion will not officially be made until January 2006.

- Jerry Rackoff clarified the way in which Middle States works. He re-read aloud a portion of the FC response. He noted that the University was obligated to address the specifics of the Middle States study itself; we had to express our intent to deal with the issues that the Middle States report said we had to address. Jerry then read the part of the FC response in which we suggested that the process of drafting should have been more inclusive of people who were actually involved in the Middle States process. He noted that MS reviews are supposed to be very inclusive; on the other hand, communications with MS are expected to be administrative syntheses of what had happened and not consensus documents. Jerry noted that he had involved Marty extensively in an early draft of this letter.

Question from a faculty member: if MS continues to have difficulty with our response to their mandate, what happens? Dr. Rackoff: They can request another report, send people in for another audit, etc. There are many steps they can take, depending upon the level of difficulty they have with our responses.

Question from a faculty member: Are you arguing against the recommendation that the process be more inclusive. Dr. Rackoff: I'm arguing that the review was inclusive and that the process of developing further communications is not expected by MS to be inclusive.

Comment from a faculty member: So you're saying that the Bucknell administration's procedures for developing the letter to Middle States didn't violate Middle States' procedures; but I believe the issue isn't that the administration violated *their procedures* but that the administration violated *the faculty's expectations*.

4. Committee Reports:

a. Committee on Planning and Budget

The report of the Committee on Planning and Budget is available in the Appendix. Tom Solomon presented this report. For the second year in the row, the Board recommended a higher level of salary increases than those recommended by CPB so that we can maintain a ranking of 5 out of 11, particularly for Assistant Professors.

In a private communication to the CPB, a faculty member noted that the compensation level doesn't distinguish among "market" and "non-market" faculty salaries. Professor Solomon noted that CPB attempted to do that in the late 1990s. The model was quite involved and intricate. In trying to use the model, our salaries actually fell further behind. CPB decided we did not want to do this because half of our peer group schools also have professors in market fields.

b. Committee on Instruction

Report regarding Course Load Equity: This report was presented by Katharina Vollmayr-Lee. In the April 2006 faculty meeting, a motion was raised regarding whether we should assign a task force to study course load equity. Professor Vollmayr-Lee reported the ways in which labs and student researchers were to be counted toward course load. She noted that way to calculate course load for professors in the sciences would not change; Engineering professors, however, would get more credit. The second question addressed by the Committee on Staff Planning (CSP) concerned complaints about lack of course equity, which was

mostly a concern for those in Biology and Chemistry. COI concluded that the CSP plan either leads to *no* changes or to *more* credit per course; for Biology and Chemistry, the CSP plan will lead to no reduction from the previous load level. As a result, COI concluded that there was no need for a task force.

Question from a faculty member: Why should Biology and Chemistry support the five-course load when they are getting nothing out of it? Professor Vollmayr-Lee: Under the old system, Biology and Chemistry professors got more credit than others; the new plan under the five-course load just puts everyone on a level playing field. If Biology and Chemistry are unhappy with the plan, perhaps they could suggest criteria that could be used to assess labs more fairly. Alternatively, perhaps COI could consider handling Biology and Chemistry on a course-by-course basis.

Robert Midkiff: Dean Midkiff is the person who monitors and oversees course loads, so he asked to clarify what Professor Vollmayr-Lee was saying. Biology and Chemistry essentially already had a five-course load; they already got credit for supervising research students that no one else had gotten. That happened when Bucknell changed from credit hours to course credits, years and years ago. He explained that it is in Biology and Chemistry's best interest to accept the COI conclusion.

Kevin Myers: Professor Myers was the Chair of COI during these discussions. He reminded everyone that COI was only charged with a) deciding whether a task force be created, and b) reporting regarding their conclusion about a task force in December 2006.

Question from a faculty member: Are Presidential Fellows counted in determining someone's course load credit? Dean Midkiff: Presidential Fellows are paid and don't get course credit, therefore they don't count toward course load.

Professor Ligare interrupted the spirited discussion to point out that the faculty meeting had to be adjourned in only four minutes; he therefore called the faculty's attention to the report at hand and not on debating how courses should be counted.

Question from a faculty member: Can the course credits for independent studies be banked? Yes, after year three of the plan.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m. Remaining business will be handled at the February 13 meeting of the Faculty.

APPENDIX

Faculty Council Response to Professor Ben Marsh's Motion of November 2006

Motion from Professor Marsh, Part 1: The Faculty requests that the Faculty Council seek to organize a public dialogue with the administration on the strengths and weaknesses of shared governance at Bucknell.

To address the first part of Professor Marsh's motion, two meetings have been arranged. The purpose of these meetings will be to "organize a public dialogue with the administration on the

strengths and weaknesses of shared governance at Bucknell.” The meetings are scheduled to take place on January 23, 2007 and January 30, 2007 during the noon hour.

Motion from Professor Marsh, Part 2: The Faculty requests that Faculty Council review both the MSA letter and the process by which it was produced and report back to the Faculty at the December meeting with a recommendation on any action the Faculty might take in response to the letter’s contents or the procedures by which it was drafted.

In order to respond to this motion the Faculty Council believes that it is important to review the recent history of, and motivation for, governance review at Bucknell. The 2004 report of the Middle States Evaluation Team identified several issues concerning board and faculty governance at Bucknell, and one of its recommendations was “a serious, substantial, and self-critical review of faculty governance.” Although the Faculty Council does not agree with all of the conclusions of the 2004 Middle States Evaluation Team report, the Council recognizes that the faculty should periodically assess whether or not its governance structure is working efficiently and effectively. Such an assessment requires that we examine our system critically, identifying strengths and weaknesses. Toward that end, in April 2004, the faculty commissioned an Ad Hoc Committee to Review Faculty Governance, which was chaired by John Peeler. This committee investigated an array of governance issues, including the specific concerns raised by the Middle States Evaluation Team.

To facilitate its review the Ad Hoc Committee, in Fall 2004, “solicit[ed] comments from members of the university community, ... submit[ted] an online survey to all recipients of the Faculty list-serve, and ... conduct[ed] confidential interviews with several present and former senior administrators and faculty officers.” The Committee’s report listed three sets of recommendations: a) Immediate Recommendations, b) Recommendations Requiring Handbook Amendments, and c) a Recommendation to consider a basic structural change. In addition, the report produced “ideas for further study” and asked the Faculty Council, guided by the faculty, to determine what further action should be taken. In January 2005 the Ad Hoc Committee brought its report to the faculty. We describe briefly where we are with respect to this report before we turn to a discussion of the MSC letter.

After an Open Forum to discuss the report, several of the Committee’s initial recommendations were modified and, in March 2005, the faculty addressed all nine of the amended versions of the Immediate Recommendations. All nine of the recommendations received the support of the faculty.

In April 2005, the faculty addressed the recommendations that require a change to the *Handbook*. The faculty expressed support for the creation of a standing Committee on Athletics and a standing Committee on Information Services and Resources. It supported the idea that the existing University Council should become a standing Strategic Planning Council and it agreed with the Ad Hoc Committee that the Faculty Council needed a clearer charge. In addition, the faculty supported an increase in the quorum for faculty meetings. These votes of the faculty did not change the *Handbook*; rather they served as advice to the Faculty Council. In last month’s meeting, one of the *Handbook* changes was completed, and others remain on the agenda of the Faculty Council.

The recommendation to consider basic structural changes remains to be addressed, and our consideration of it will be informed by our continuing analysis of our governance system and of structures used at our peer institutions.

We turn now to the task at hand: a discussion of the September 28 letter to the Middle States Review Commission from President Brian Mitchell. The letter describes numerous changes made to date in response to the Middle States Review, including several made by the faculty. However, the letter also highlights the Evaluation Team's conclusion:

- “[T]he faculty will now address the core issue the Evaluation Team identified: the faculty’s role in governance needs to change... We are confident that Bucknell’s faculty are committed to addressing these issues in a timely manner that will place Bucknell’s governance practices more within the norms established with American private higher education.”
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As noted earlier, the faculty as a whole has already begun an internal governance review and has made some changes as a result. As a part of the University’s wider governance discussions, we are arranging for an external review involving an outside team of experts. During this period of self-study, we intend to consider carefully the results of both reviews to determine whether additional governance changes would, in fact, be appropriate and in the best interest of the University. In particular, we lack information about whether Bucknell is outside of governance norms, and if so to what extent. Further, deviations from common practice, should they be found, are not necessarily weaknesses but should be evaluated as to their actual effectiveness. We will withhold conclusions concerning our structures and practice until the reviews are complete. The decision to use the Middle States language in the September 28 letter suggests that the University has accepted that body’s conclusions about Faculty governance. Such remarks were, in our view, premature and presented a sense of agreement that has not yet been established.

The Faculty Council believes that the September 28 letter to the Middle States Commission would have served the University better if the drafting process had been more inclusive and had allowed time for important changes in successive drafts to be considered by all parties. Writing a response to the Middle States Commission could have been an opportunity to consult with those who were involved in the original Middle States Review, including those faculty and administrators who were members of the University Council at that time. In the future, the Faculty Council encourages more involvement of knowledgeable parties in creating such external communications; we would like to assure that Bucknell is presented in the most accurate light possible.

Further, we should acknowledge that issues of governance are inherently issues of power, and while they are often contentious, the Faculty Council concurs with the Introduction to the Ad Hoc Committee’s January 2005 Report, which states:

“All members of the Bucknell community share an interest in making the University stronger. While conflict is often a necessary part of decision-making, it is important that it occur in the context of an overarching sense of collaboration in this common cause.”

The Faculty Council encourages the faculty and the University administration to have collegial and critical discussions about the current status of University governance and about potential “best practices.”

The second part of Professor Marsh’s motion asks the Faculty Council to make a recommendation on any action the Faculty might take in response to the contents of the September 28 letter to the Middle States Commission or the procedures by which it was drafted. The Faculty Council’s recommendation is based on our belief that the faculty has a responsibility to participate fully in accreditation reviews. This responsibility cannot rest on a single faculty member or officer of the faculty and should be included in the formal charge of a governance committee. Under our current governance system, no committee has this responsibility.

The Faculty Council recommends that the upcoming governance review yield, as one of its outcomes, formal guidance from the faculty as to where the responsibility for faculty participation in accreditation reviews will reside. Therefore, we will make the following motion:

The Faculty Council moves that we add consideration of this recommendation to those listed in Section 3 of the Ad Hoc Committee report, titled “Recommendations requiring Handbook Amendments.”

Report from the Committee on Planning and Budget – December 2006

Budget for FY 2007/2008 (FY ’08): At the November meeting of the Board of Trustees, the board’s Compensation Committee asked the administration to investigate going a little beyond CPB’s recommended increase of 4.53% if budgetarily appropriate; specifically, the trustees prefer to maintain the recent gains made in our rankings for salaries for assistant professors. Similarly, the trustees endorsed a range of from 6.0% - 7.0% for increases in the comprehensive fee. The ranges are intended to give the administration flexibility in forming a budget FY ’08.

CPB continues to work with and advise the Finance Office in the development of a budget not only for FY ’08 but also for subsequent years, accounting for additional expenses incurred both by a new fuel contract (due to take effect next year) and the multi-year move to a 5-course teaching load.

Discussions about Faculty compensation model: In response to a question from a faculty member, CPB has had discussions about the model used to determine recommendations for salary increases. (The questions were also forwarded to FAPC for discussion.) Specifically, questions were raised about including both market (e.g., management and engineering) and

non-market fields in salary averages in the model. Several issues came out of these discussions:

1. As part of the strategic financial plan, “Excellence and Access,” Bucknell employed a complicated compensation model in the late 1990s that attempted to compare non-market fields at Bucknell with those of our peers, and market fields with separate peer groups. The Board did not clearly understand this model and had little confidence in its predictive ability. Consequently, they consistently authorized lower salary increases than the model projected we would need to maintain our salary ranking.
2. A request was made to determine the rankings excluding the salaries of market fields at Bucknell. CPB is reluctant to do this considering that about half of the schools on our peer list also have faculty in market fields. Re-calculating averages at our peer schools without market fields would be extremely time-consuming and unreliable, considering the lack of available data.
3. Regardless of the *magnitude* of salaries, the model currently used successfully tracks *increases* with our competitors. The evidence indicates that entering salaries are sufficient to avoid losing prospective faculty members. Consequently, CPB considers the model currently used to be sufficient to enable Bucknell to attract and retain qualified faculty, regardless of the field.

Report from the Committee on Instruction regarding Course Load Equity – December 2006

At the April 2006 faculty meeting, the following motion by Prof. Brian Williams was referred to the Committee on Instruction (CoI):

The faculty recommends that a task force be established to study the question of course load policy. This task force would be organized and chaired by Provost DeCredico and include representatives of all divisions and the administration in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Engineering. The task force would report back to the faculty any findings or recommendations within one year.

It was specified that CoI should produce a report this year, with an interim report due in the fall semester .

CoI has investigated this issue. Some key points of this investigation are listed below:

- The method used by the Committee on Staff Planning (CSP) to calculate teaching loads does not make major changes in the way these loads are calculated for the Chemistry and Biology departments; members of these departments raised the original concerns about the CSP method. Teaching credit for laboratory sections (1/2 credit) is unchanged. For Chemistry and Biology, there is a slight increase in the load generated by independent study students; previously, supervising three such

students counted for 1/2 of a teaching credit, while CSP's method gives 1/2 credit for supervising four students. CSP's method, however, extends this teaching credit to all departments, which CoI sees as more fair. CoI heard no objections to Engineering's move from the twelfths system to the system used by Arts and Sciences.

- The Dean's Office in the College of Arts and Sciences has been approving course loads in Biology and Chemistry that amount to five or five and one-half courses per year under the old system of counting teaching credit. This is a result of an agreement of long standing; we were unable to determine who made the agreement or when it was made. Under CSP's method, the allocation of teaching credit for these loads will not change except for the counting of independent study students discussed above. Under the five-course load plan, however, these loads will not be reduced below five courses per year.
- CoI determined that there are a few situations in which a full teaching credit is granted for teaching a half-credit lecture course. Specific examples include mathematics courses required by Engineering degree programs. This exception was made because these courses meet for three hours of lecture a week. We also received comments about Psychology, where majors were required to take two half-credit laboratory courses; teaching credit for these courses was a full course. This is no longer the case. The Psychology Department has replaced their half-credit offerings with a selection of one-credit courses as part of a larger revision to the Psychology curriculum that was already in progress.
- Exceptions to the specified allocation of teaching credit are currently negotiated between department chairs and their respective deans, subject to approval of the provost.

As a result of this investigation, CoI does not believe there are issues to justify a task force or major study of course load equity at this time. CoI plans to discuss further how exceptions to the standard allocation of teaching credit should be handled.