



UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE RECORD

Minutes

The March meeting of the Bucknell University Faculty was called to order by Faculty Chair Marty Ligare at 12:02 p.m. on Tuesday, March 4, 2008 in the Langone Center Forum.

1. Amendments to and approval of February 2008 minutes

2. Announcements and remarks by the President

President Mitchell opened his remarks with an update on the Comprehensive Campaign. A series of informational events including an open forum, an update for the Planning and Budget Committee, and discussion at the University Council meeting last week have been helpful in the development of the case statement for the silent phase of the campaign. The case statement is being reviewed by the deans and members of University Management Group. A draft will be discussed at the next meeting of the University Council. The final printed version will be shared with the Board of Trustees at the April meeting.

Next, the President discussed how the current economic context affects not only the value of the endowment, but also the willingness and the ability of donors to make new pledges. Leadership positions in the campaign for faculty and staff will be established; and individuals and groups on campus that can serve as advocates for particular campaign targets will be identified.

On Tuition and the Budget, letters have been sent to parents and students informing them that tuition has been increased by 3.95% for next year. While tuition puts BU at the top of our peer schools, the overall comprehensive fee puts Bucknell in the middle of those institutions. Tuition number will moderate itself in time.

Then, President Mitchell announced that Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine has ranked Bucknell the 11th best value in American higher education, compared to 19th last year and 27th the year before. The rankings are based on a combination of academic quality and overall affordability, with academics weighted twice the value of price and financial aid.

Concerning the budget for the next fiscal year, the President announced that the worsening global economy indicates that this may be a difficult budget year. However, the final balanced budget should not cause excessive pain.

In terms of campus physical plant, the President mentioned that a campus wide email was sent soliciting nominations for the Campus Greening Council charged to develop recommendations and evaluate the impact of University policies and practices on the ecology of the campus. The council will also serve as the planning and monitoring agency for the commitments required pursuant to the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment. The Environmental Center,

Faculty Council and the Bucknell Student Government Association have also been asked to vet potential candidates.

Also, the President reported on the Lewisburg Core Community Initiative designed to make a series of strategic investments including an academic superstore Bucknell Bookstore, enhancing the Campus Theater, and constructing a Bucknell Inn and Conference Center. Several downtown locations have been identified as possible facilities.

Next, President Mitchell commented on the active series of distinguished visitors to campus, including columnist Barbara Ehrenreich, and journalist Leonard Pitts. Also, as Pennsylvania might become a focal point in the Presidential primary, the campaigns of all remaining candidates for President have been contacted and invited to appear on campus.

Then, President Mitchell addressed comments from Professor Ben Marsh sent in an email this week. To the first point about a formal response from the administration on the external review, the President asked Chief Communications Officer Pete Mackey to comment briefly on the issue of improving internal communications. Secondly, Mitchell addressed the two proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook mentioned by Professor Marsh, stating that it was the President's understanding that these changes had been held up pending a comprehensive review of the Handbook. General Counsel Wayne Bromfield will comment further. Finally, the President addressed comments made by the Chair of the University Board of Trustees at the Board Meeting in January in Newark, NJ, about the tenure rate among Bucknell faculty, and Professor Marsh's suggestion that President Mitchell was the source of those comments. The President stated that the Board Chair was referring to information provided to the Board by Harvard Professor Richard Chait, based on research that he had done.

On the issue of Faculty Handbook amendments, Wayne Bromfield confirmed that both amendments have been discussed and will be addressed serially. Professor Marsh pointed out that although Faculty acts, motions seem to disappear. President Mitchell responded that if the committee is prepared to move ahead with these changes, they could be reviewed at the next University Council and acted upon.

On the question of internal communication, Pete Mackey commented that a discussion of a draft of the internal communications strategy document had been on the agenda for past University Council meetings but had not yet been addressed for lack of time. The issue will be moved to the top of the agenda at the next University Council meeting.

Finally, President Mitchell yielded the floor to Professor Maria Antonaccio, who gave an update on the Provost Search. Although dates are still tentative, Professor Antonaccio announced that all campus visits would include an open forum. For confidentiality reasons, names and material will be released once the dates are concerned. Everyone is strongly encouraged to attend. President Mitchell reinforced the quality of the pool of candidates, and praised the work of search committee.

3. Announcements and remarks by the Chair of the Faculty

Faculty Chair Marty Ligare first reported that the Faculty Council is scheduled to meet with the University Council to discuss important issues related to the Capital Campaign such as financial aid.

Next, the Bucknell Student Government announced that emails will be circulated about the possibility for Faculty to post their office hours online.

Then, Faculty Chair Ligare expressed his disappointment about the remarks made by Judge Crawford concerning tenure rate at Bucknell regardless of the source. Professor Ligare encouraged discussions of tenure policy and rates within the context of the committee working on such issues. A preliminary report will be heard today from the Ad hoc Committee to Review Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures, with a more substantive report due next fall.

In terms of timing for Faculty Handbook amendments, Chair Ligare mentioned that it might be appropriate to discuss conditions when passing amendments individually or as a package.

4. Committee Reports:

a. Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee

Professor Geoff Schneider, Chair of the Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee opened his report with a reading of the motion on Revising the Faculty Council Charge. The complete written report of the Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee appears in the Appendix to the agenda for this meeting.

As a product of the ongoing review of faculty governance at Bucknell, the Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee is proposing the following change in the faculty handbook to the charge for the Faculty Council:

Faculty Council fosters the operation of a responsive and inclusive Faculty governance system. Faculty Council supports the committee system by consulting with and coordinating the Faculty and University committees, by facilitating inter-committee communication, and by providing advice and oversight guidance to insure that Faculty governance processes are executed effectively. The Faculty Council insures that committees other than the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure (see II.F) are populated, by preparing lists of nominees, soliciting additional nominees from the Faculty, and organizing elections to fill positions vacated by the routine cycle of terms, and by that means or by appointment to fill positions vacated mid-term. The Faculty Council helps to set the long-term agenda of the Faculty by identifying and reporting pending issues of importance to the Faculty with regard to governance and to the academic mission of the University. Faculty Council facilitates communication between the Faculty and the Administration by meeting regularly with the University Council and by providing advice to the president as requested on matters of substance and process. In consultation with the Faculty and University committees, the Faculty Council advises the administration and makes recommendations on strategic planning through the University Council and otherwise as requested. The Faculty Council responds to issues of Faculty concern that are not under the purview of existing parts of the Faculty governance system, to act upon them or to direct them to an existing or *ad hoc* Faculty body. The Faculty Council receives governance matters when the Faculty is unable to meet, and may speak for the Faculty at such times if it believes this is necessary. When Faculty Council acts for the Faculty because of the nature of the issue or because of its timing, Faculty Council will consult with relevant committees, will report actions to the Faculty, and will seek to integrate issues into normal governance channels, in a timely fashion.

Professor Schneider added that the membership of the Faculty Council remains unchanged, and that the charge described in the motion aims at improving government structure. The motion was seconded, questions and comments followed. Professor Peter Stryker inquired about ways to consult the Faculty body when Faculty is not present on campus. Professor Schneider and Chair Ligare responded that for issues needing immediate attention when Faculty is not in session, the Faculty Council would make a decision and report back to the Faculty. No governance changes are associated with the motion. Professor Ben Marsh pointed out that present references to the responsibilities of the Faculty Council appear in various sections of the Faculty Handbook that will need to be removed and replaced with current charge.

b. Committee on Instruction

Professor Katharina Vollmayr-Lee, Chair of the Committee on Instruction reported that:

1. CoI unanimously approved the curricular aspect of the proposal for a new “Languages & Cultures Residential College.” CoI directed the proposal to the dean’s & provost’s offices for final approval.
2. Since the Learning Goals have now been endorsed, CoI is revising the other parts of the Strategic Academic Vision document.

c. Committee on Complementary Activities

Professor Beth Capaldi, Chair of the Committee on Complementary Activities, opened her report with a review of the charge and the membership of the committee; then continued with recent activities that called the committee’s attention, emphasizing that most of the committee’s time has been spent reviewing Public Safety Emergency Procedures. While a number of issues have not yet been resolved, the Task Force created by the Board of Trustees remains active, and will continue to work with CCA and the Bucknell Student Government to identify concerns and solicit recommendations. The email box they established (armingquestion@bucknell.edu) remains active. Professor Capaldi urged everyone to get involved.

The complete written report of the Committee on Complementary Activities appears in the Appendix to the agenda for this meeting.

5. Ad hoc Committee Reports:

Ad hoc Committee to Review Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures

Professor Ben Vollmayr-Lee reported for the Ad hoc Committee to Review Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures charged with undertaking a comprehensive review of tenure and promotion at Bucknell. He explained that the timeline at present consists of collecting and synthesizing the information through the Spring semester, and forming the specific recommendations and communicating these at some point next Fall. A survey of the Faculty has been issued, it is intended to bring a sense of faculty perceptions of what the system is and opinions of what it should be. The survey results will be used to identify targets for follow up data collection, most likely in the form of focus groups and meetings. All information gathered will be made public in suitable form, with appropriate attention to confidentiality.

The complete written report of the Ad Hoc Committee to Review Tenure and Promotion Policies and Procedures appears in the Appendix to the agenda for this.

Finally, Eric Affsprung, Associate Director of Psychological Services took the floor and invited students and Faculty to consult the office of Psychological Services regarding any questions or concerns about the recent traumatic events on Illinois and Louisiana campuses. Pamphlets and guidance about recognizing students in distress are available.

6. Adjournment

The March 2008 Meeting of the Bucknell Faculty was adjourned at 12:54 p.m.; no second meeting time was necessary this month.

Respectfully submitted,

Philippe C. Dubois
Secretary of the Faculty