

Faculty Meeting, September 20, 2011 Minutes

1. President Thomas called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.; 68 members of the faculty were present by 4:15 p.m.
2. Election of the Faculty Secretary: Steven Neshyba nominated Alyce DeMarais as faculty secretary – **M/S/P** by voice vote.
3. **M/S/P Approval** of the minutes of the April 19, 2011 faculty meeting.
4. Announcements: President Thomas welcomed new faculty members.
5. President's Report
 - The academic year is off to a strong start (thanks to the faculty).
 - We had a successful homecoming and family weekend (September 16 – 17); the event was held early this year (therefore numbers were down); constrained by a number of events, especially kick-off of the campaign and the requirement of a home football game; outstanding reports from parents and alumni who visited classes and special academic sessions.
 - Invitation to campaign kick-off scheduled for October 29, 2011; the event will be as inclusive as facilities permit; all fulltime continuing faculty members are invited—look for an invitation in the mail.
 - President Thomas met today with the *ad hoc* committee on educational benefits; he appreciates their work on a proposal that is now moving forward to the Benefits Task Force for their review.
6. Academic Vice President's Report
 - Follow up sessions to the fall faculty conversation have been small but good.
 - We are encouraged to use the master calendar both to look for available event times and to identify when events we plan will be held; event dates are already being double booked.
 - Lisa Ferrari will be calling on departments to fill out the spring 2012 schedule; we still need 14 first year seminars and may have other course needs as well.
 - Introduction of Ellen Peters, Director of Institutional Research
7. Report of the Faculty Senate Chair, Steven Neshyba:
 - Senate events over the late spring and summer 2011:
 - Ward, MacBain, and Neshyba met with the Dean and Associate Deans to make committee assignments. We are still short a faculty person on the Student Life Committee.
 - Neshyba received a report from the *ad hoc* Committee on Childcare, signed by Julia Looper, Megan Johnson, Jennifer Barlow, Kathleen Campbell, Tomi Johnson, Diane Kelley, Leslie Saucedo, and Amy Spivey. The report will be entered into the Senate Minutes for the upcoming Senate meeting on 26 Sept., but Neshyba can provide a copy earlier. [Note added by secretary: the report was not introduced at the 9/26 Senate meeting.] In the summary of the report, the committee recommends that on-site childcare should be included in the campus master plan.
 - An *ad hoc* Committee on Educational Benefits was formed by the Senate Executive Committee after a call for nominations. Members are Bill Breitenbach, David Sousa, Renee Houston, Lynnette Claire (Chair), and Rich Anderson-Connolly. The Faculty Senate charged the Senate *ad hoc* Committee on Educational Benefits to promote the goals expressed in the May 25, 2011 faculty petition to President Thomas by:
 - researching, devising, and proposing a short-term solution to the current

- educational benefits crisis;
- researching, devising, and proposing long-term exchange solutions to the current educational benefits crisis;
- communicating to the Faculty Senate and the faculty on an ongoing basis the progress, findings, and recommendations of the ad hoc committee;
- exploring with the Staff Senate common faculty-staff interests and goals in the resolution of the educational benefits crisis;
- engaging in conversation and informational exchange with key members of the administration, including Sherry Mondou, and the Benefits Task Force;
- requesting, reviewing, and vetting solutions to the educational benefits crisis proposed by Sherry Mondou and the Benefits Task Force.

Neshyba received updates from the committee over the summer. Most recently, the committee reported that they had met with Dean Bartanen and President Thomas, and that Jim Swartz from Grinnell College is coming to campus 10/3/11. Dr. Swartz was involved in revising the Associated Colleges of the Midwest educational benefits program. The committee will host an open forum from 10:30 to 11:30.

The Senate will be receiving a more detailed report from the committee at the upcoming Senate meeting.

- Senate events so far this fall:
 - The Senate met in retreat during the first week of classes to decide priorities, after an email broadcast on the facultygovernance listserv for suggestions. One outcome was the decision to enroll all voting members of the faculty on the facultygovernance listserv (with an option to get out); that action has been taken. Another subject concerned the transparency of processes by which awards such as Distinguished Professor are decided; it was decided to take this up in Senate this year. The Senate did not get through the entire list of possible topics. As always, if a faculty member wants Senate to consider something, please email Neshyba.
 - In its first meeting this year, the Senate confirmed Keith Ward as Senate Vice Chair, Tiffany MacBain as Senate Secretary, and Gareth Barkin as temporary replacement senator. We completed charges to the 2011-2012 Curriculum Committee (CC), including:

To consult with and advise the Burlington Northern First Year Seminar Group on its proposed revisions to the first year seminars. (The Senate requests this charge be placed on the CC agenda as early as possible in the Fall semester.)

The Senate began consideration of charges to Academic Standards, but has not completed that task. Next up is the Enrichment Committee.

8. Who ARE these new first year students in my classes? (presented by Ellen Peters, Director of Institutional Research)

Peters presented an interesting overview of our first-year students with information derived from the first-year survey (national) and our own 6-week survey.

- 20% of the students expected to work on research with a professor—Neshyba wondered how many of these respondents were science students? Peters will find out.

- Neshyba also asked if there were any data about students' perceptions of the intellectual rigor of their peers. Peters noted these data were not available from the national survey, but questions could be added to 6-week survey to ask about this.
- Kontogeorgopoulos asked if data were available from beyond the 6-week survey. Peters reported that the NSSE survey is administered in the spring (although not every year).

9. Second reading of proposed revision to Bylaws Article V, Section 6.C.a – Faculty Advancement Committee:

Sec. 2. **Organization.** The Senate shall name a Convener for each committee during the first month of the fall semester for the purpose of electing a Committee Chairperson and orienting the committee based on the committee's prior year-end report, except when otherwise provided in the organization of the committee.

Section 6.C. The Faculty Advancement Committee.

- a. Membership. The Committee shall consist of the Dean of the University (ex-officio) and five tenure-line Faculty members. The Dean convenes the Committee when evaluation files are ready for review. The Faculty Advancement Committee members serve as equal participants in faculty reviews, thus there is no designated chair. The Committee designates a faculty member to deliver the annual report to the Faculty Senate.

A slate of nominees will be selected by the Faculty using the method specified for the election of Senators. In order to stand for election, a nominee must agree to serve a minimum of two consecutive years. The slate of nominees will number three if there is one position to be filled. If there are two or more positions to be filled, the slate will number two persons for each position open. The Dean normally will select from the nominees in such a way as to avoid the appointment of two members of the same department or school to serve on the Committee at the same time.

[The underlined words form the proposed revision.]

- Neshyba introduced the proposed amendment to the Bylaws and moved to revise the Bylaws as read; second by Bill Barry.
- Discussion:
 - Neshyba noted (in his capacity as chair of faculty senate) that a vote either way would provide clarity
 - Haltom introduced an amendment to change the organization of the revision:

Proposed Amendment One : The revision should be located amid Article V, Section 2.

As rendered at its first reading last spring, the proposed revision would be inserted into Article V, Section 6, Subsection C of the Bylaws at the end of the first paragraph of Subsection C. That part of Subsection C concerns membership on the Faculty Advancement Committee. The proposed revision does not concern membership on that committee. The proposed revision concerns whether the Faculty Advancement Committee shall elect a chair. Haltom, therefore, regards the proposed revision as misplaced.

M/S/P (by voice vote) to approve Amendment 1 to locate the revision amid Article V, Section 2 of the Bylaws.

Haltom introduced a second amendment to make the revision consistent with the rest of the Bylaws:

Proposed Amendment Two: The revision should be reworded as follows:

Sec. 2. Organization. The Senate shall name a Convener for each committee except the Faculty Advancement Committee during the first month of the fall semester for the purpose of electing a Committee Chairperson and orienting the committee based on the committee's prior year-end report, except when otherwise provided in the organization of the committee. The Dean will convene the Faculty Advancement Committee when evaluation files are ready for review. The Faculty Advancement Committee will then elect a Committee Chairperson whose sole responsibility or authority as chairperson will be to deliver the annual report to the Faculty Senate.

[The underlined language in this passage highlights the amended language.]

Haltom proposed this amendment so that the Faculty Advancement Committee will have a chair – consistent with other Faculty Senate Committees and in keeping with language in the Bylaws.

M/S/P (by voice vote) Amendment Two substitution of language to the revision.

Discussion of the original motion of revision to Bylaws Article V, Section 6.C.a:

- Hanson and Wood asked if the motion is sufficient or if it is too specific.
- Buescher wondered if someone would need to convene more than the first FAC meeting; should the chair convene all subsequent meetings? He also wondered about the “sole responsibility or authority” language.
 - Haltom responded that the FAC proceeds almost entirely by consensus and meetings are convened as schedules allow. Haltom added the “sole responsibility...” language because over the past few years several members of FAC were concerned that having a chair would upset the cooperative/collegial setting of the FAC and did not want someone to preside OVER the FAC in any respect other than the annual report delivery. In order to reconcile the Bylaws and FAC practice, the revision of the Bylaws must state that the FAC chair reports to the senate but does nothing else that may impact the way the FAC works.
 - Wood wondered if the FAC has performed other duties outside of faculty reviews. Bartanen clarified that the Dean has provided information sessions for untenured faculty members in which former FAC members participate, for example, so there is no conflict of interest with sitting FAC members.
 - Bartanen clarified that the FAC works under auspices of the Code, dealing with files as they are presented. The FAC works through the files alphabetically, assigns streamlined reviews alphabetically, etc. Bartanen also provided some historical context by noting that over the past few years the senate has pressed the FAC to have a chair. The FAC tried to explain why it operates as it does since spring 2006 spring. When the FAC was last pressed by the senate to elect a chair, the FAC decided that all members should be elected as co-chairs but the senate did not approve of this option. The FAC has provided annual reports to the Senate since 2006. Bartanen further noted that she supports the amendment.
- Smithers proposed changing the motion to read: “...faculty advancement committee will elect a committee chairperson whose responsibility is to perform, as necessary,

such occasional tasks as delivering the annual report.”

- Ward spoke against the Smithers amendment: amendment came about for a very specific situation and this doesn't address
 - Smithers noted the FAC has to meet with PSC at times and, therefore, a chair might be necessary.
 - Wood expressed concern that faculty members would come to the FAC chair with specific questions/requests and the amendment should address this.
 - Ward noted there is perception and there is legislation—if this is what is in the Bylaws, then that is the deciding factor.
 - Weisz agreed with Ward: in spirit of multiple representation and shared power, the original amendment is consistent with Bylaws
 - Hastings wondered if the original revision may be causing the problem by designating a specific duty—what is wrong with “no chair” solution?
 - Haltom responded that not having a chair is in conflict with 3 or 4 areas in the Bylaws. This makes it difficult for individuals such as the senate chair who is charged by the Bylaws to receive report from the committee chair (for example).
 - Neshyba spoke against Smithers amendment by circuitous reasoning: it has become the practice of the senate to assign senate liaisons who are not chairs of standing committees; he likes the simplicity of the original motion as revised.
 - Jackson noted the Bylaws designate a convener of committees—is this the same as the senate liaison? Neshyba responded that this was not the case. [Note added by secretary: it is often the senate liaison who convenes the committee.]
 - Jackson thought the language of the revision seemed odd, with two “excepts”; with Stuart's language, FAC chair similar to all other committees.
 - Hastings suggested a wording change to “whose responsibilities or authority of chairperson determined by FAC.”
- **M/S/P to call the question on the Smithers amendment.**

M/S/F the Smithers amendment.

Returned to discussion of the original motion:

- **M/S/P to call the question on the original motion.**

M/S/P original revision of Bylaws Article V, Section 6.C.a, as revised by Haltom amendments, by paper ballot (46 in favor, 10 against).

10. First reading of proposed revision to Bylaws Article V, Section 6.B.a – Curriculum Committee

Alisa Kessel introduced the revision to add the Director of the Library to the committee membership.

Article V: Standing Committees
Section 6: Standing Committees

B. The Curriculum Committee.

- a. The Committee shall consist of the Dean of the University (ex-officio), Registrar (ex-officio), Library Director (ex-officio), no fewer than seven appointed members of the Faculty, and two student members.

11. Update on budget issues by Dean Bartanen

- The purpose of this update is to provide transparency regarding the budget process.
- Dean Bartanen intends no subtle messages with this report—just open discussion about the budget and where we are; she values input from the faculty.
- These “business matters” affect what we do.
- Review of the academic budget reduction plan:
 - For 2011-2012: original projection of a \$995,000 reduction
 - For 2012-2013: original projection of a \$420,000 reduction
 - For 2013-2014: original projection of a \$205,000 reduction
- Enrollment drives the budget (and enrollment this year is good). In the past, increased enrollment means increased revenue; however, we have had to increase the discount rate, especially for transfer students (but very close to projections). First-to-second year retention looks good--88%.
- Enrollment will also be a factor because we will graduate our “big class” (721) in 2013 and have the smaller class (625) in the pipeline, so fewer students overall.
- Endowment income also affects the operating budget: three year trailing average with a one year lag so endowment projections will continue to “dip” in FY13.
- Therefore, a revision of budget projections is likely:
 - Total reduction to academic budget for 2011-2012 is \$1.143 million
 - Projected reduction for 2012-2013 of \$800,000
- Continue to work on MAT program recruitment (low enrollment is a hit to the budget).
- Budget is also affected by issues such as fundraising revenues increasing more slowly than projected; also, increase in cost of study abroad programs (providers raised costs 15-20%).
- We will begin to talk about how to address these budget reductions in days ahead:
 - Course schedule: sabbatical coverage within ongoing faculty (schedule will be tight)
 - Course schedule memo: increase enrollment in some courses
 - Long Range Plan (LRP) assumptions: currently models compensation pool increases at inflation plus 1% and tuition increases at inflation plus 2%. Is it more important to advance compensation above inflation than to retain visiting replacement faculty positions and staff positions? [NOTE: This is an increase in the salary pool in addition to “raises” built into the salary scale via steps and promotions, which we have been able to cover due to retirement savings.]
 - Is a higher proportion of tenure-line faculty more important than small class size to achieve the academic environment we and our students seek? For example, should we convert instructor positions to tenure-lines at a ratio of 4:3 to protect longer-term faculty compensation budget?
 - What can the faculty do differently to strengthen student persistence to graduation?
- Amy Spivey asked about the impact of the capital campaign. President Thomas confirmed that the LRP includes projected targets of campaign.
- Jennifer Hastings wondered how tuition increases and discount rates were related. Would the discount rate decrease if tuition is not increased as much? Bartanen thought the discount rate would not increase as much if tuition increases were low; however,

the discount rate is especially tied to families' ability to pay.

- John Hanson noted that he has not been asked to make many sacrifices personally as a faculty member. He would not feel bad about giving up salary increases over next couple of years.
- Steve Rodgers agree with Hanson and asked if the information presented today would be available online so those who were not present would be able to see it; the information will be available in the minutes
- Martin Jackson wondered if our reduction of visiting positions was related to our need for courses such as seminars for the spring semester. Dean Bartanen confirmed that this was probably the case. It is preferable to have tenure-line faculty members teaching courses such as the seminars; however, as departments are pressed to cover sabbaticals, for example, the inclination is to pull back from core courses and interdisciplinary programs. We are determined to make the course schedule work but this may mean that some of our smaller elective classes in the majors will have to go on a longer rotation (e.g., every three semesters rather than every two). Jackson asked if the faculty makes more of a sacrifice (e.g., forgo pay increases) in order to hire more visitors, what do we gain? Bartanen noted that a 1% increase in faculty compensation covers about 3 to 3.5 positions. She reiterated that we intend to continue to cover sabbaticals, faculty development, etc.
- Bill Barry asked about scale – if we decrease the number of visitors by four in FY2013, how does that compare to this year? We have 31 fulltime visitors this year.
- Jill Nealey-Moore agreed with Hanson: she would rather forgo additional compensation than be stretched thin in the departments.
- Rich Anderson-Connolly asked if the faculty did not have a salary increase, what would be the impact on tuition increases? Bartanen noted that a 0.1% increase in tuition is approximately \$67,000.
- The Budget Task Force (BTF) will continue to gather data, receive input, and have further conversation.

12. Other business – with a class entering the room, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Alyce DeMarais.