

College of Arts & Sciences

Faculty Meeting Minutes

February 2, 2000

Call to Order, 3:25 PM

Announcement: Dave Martinsen is in the hospital, critically ill; his family will decide on how to keep the College community informed. We wish the best for him.

Approval of December 1, 1999 minutes.

President's Report

We survived Y2K—congratulations to Brett Ingerman and the IT staff. The College's website has won two awards in the CASE regional competition: gold for the front pages, and bronze for the special electronic version of the Viewbook. Congratulations to Kari Chisholm.

Our print publications have won five other CASE awards: gold for the design of the John Buck reception invitation, silver for the design of the John Buck exhibition catalog, bronze for the design of the Frank Manor event invitation and program package, gold for the overall Buck catalog including writing, and grand gold (best in category) for the Buck catalog overall publication. The last of these is now in the running for the grand crystal award (best in show). Congratulations to Judy McNally and the publications staff.

We've recently received \$2,000,000 in cash for undergraduate financial aid from an anonymous but generous donor. This gift will repeat every year while the donor is alive, and may continue for 10 years after the donor's death. Up to \$2,000,000 of the total gift may be used for other purposes, giving us flexibility.

We are laying the foundation for a new capital campaign; now in its quiet, behind the scenes phase.

Dean Atkinson is heading the effort to study the South campus, physical and programmatic aspects, including a number of new residence and student services buildings. We have engaged architects, builders, and landscapers to plan another 3-building concept.

Regarding the Social Sciences and Math & Natural Sciences deanships, conversations are underway, concerning operations and organizational structure.

Dean's Report

The Academic Council has looked at the matter of course and instructor evaluations, as raised at the previous meeting. The matter will be referred to the College Honor Board. Dean Atkinson has met with the Honor Board chair, Andy Holder, who will brief the Board. Professors Bekar, Randall, and Wheeler are the faculty representatives on the Board.

The AAAS committee reported on a discrepancy regarding grade point requirements for the Dean's list and Latin Honors at the last meeting. Effective at the end of this semester, the Dean's List cutoff will become 3.75.

Regarding assessment: The Chronicle of Higher Education has reported on a new study entitled "The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 1999," prepared by the Higher Education Institute at UCLA. We participate in the national survey on which this report is based. National statistics for this year's first year students include:

- 32% report having done 6 or more hours of homework weekly during their senior year in high school. That's down from 44% in 1987.
- 40% report less than 3 hours of homework per week.
- 17% report less than 1 hour per week.
- Yet, a record 34% of 1999 grads had "A" averages in high school, up from 13% in 1969.
- Only 12% of the class of 1999 report ever received a "C", down from 33% in 1969.

Reports such as these fuel demands for educational accountability. He will report to the NWASC in 2000-2001 Fall term, with a site visit in the Spring. By the Fall we need to have a clear, coherent plan in place. Departments and programs (except Inventing America) have been asked to prepare reports identifying curricular goals, curriculum structure in relation to those goals, and means by which faculty determine success toward those goals. The Math & Natural Science Division and Environmental Studies have completed these reports; it's hoped that the others will be completed soon. The Deans will look closely at the reports, and it's likely that the Curriculum Committee will as well. Two task forces will look at writing and speaking and at information literacy. We'll be examining how departmental and program criteria mesh with the overarching goals.

A review is also underway of the Overseas Study programs. Study abroad is fueled by student demand. We need to look at how these experiences mesh with the overall College experience. Faculty need to define the place of overseas study, its connections to the overall program, how quality is monitored. We're returning to questions we examined in the 1980's, and again in the 1990's when we made the change to semesters. Assessing student progress prior to graduation is a faculty responsibility; after that time is an administrative responsibility. We need a more systematic approach to tracking alumnae.

Committee Reports

Committee on Admissions, Awards and Academic Standing: Deborah Lycan

1. At the last faculty meeting, the AAAS proposed restoring language on the performance/grade relationship to the College catalog. AAAS has met since then; proposes the language attached to today's agenda, eliminating the clause on consent of instructor requirement for continuing in a field after receiving a "D" grade. [This will be considered old business today]

2. AAAS has been asked by Dean Atkinson to consider whether the withdrawal policy is fair. At present, faculty have discretion to assign a W or F when students stop coming to class. Do we need a consistent policy? On the principle of faculty discretion, AAAS is recommending no change in policy.

Committee on the Curriculum: Steve Hunt

The committee approved a number of new courses at its last meeting. Deadline for proposing new courses is now past. Regarding the Academic Calendar: Committee wants to point out that we approved the calendar because it was easy to do so. The next four years are OK, so the committee is deferring further consideration. Comment by President Mooney: We have a consistent policy, not observing religious holidays but allowing students to observe these as needed. Christmas poses a delicate problem, as we are closed on that religious holiday but not others. Is Christmas a religious or a secular holiday? Comment on Martin Luther King Day: Should we observe it by canceling classes? Dean Atkinson's response: Curriculum Committee considered the matter and took the position that academic work accompanied by campus celebrations as appropriate.

Educational Technology: Harry Schleef

The committee's main goal this year is to develop a technology strategy identifying goals, needs, resources and implement plans. As step 1, asking each department to respond with current and anticipated uses via department chairs. Each division has a committee representative.

Introduction by Brett Ingerman: Patrick Ryle, from Reed College, began as our new Director of Media Services in September. We're anticipating an increased emphasis on service.

Committee on the Library: Jim Grant:

Nothing to report.

Committee on Promotion and Tenure: Dick Rohrbaugh

No full professors under consideration this year. Two tenure cases are under consideration, letters have been sent to Dean Atkinson. Committee's work is done for the year.

Old Business

AAAS catalog language proposal: no discussion, no debate, question moved, seconded, approved unanimously.

New Business

Mike Sexton for Admissions: We've received more than 300 online applications. 450 early action admissions were sent out on January 15; department chairs have names and contact sheets based on expressed interests.

President Mooney: Year-to-year comparisons are thrown off by new communications modes such as Internet. Remember that personal contact with admitted students is important.

Meeting adjourned, 4:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

William Kinsella, CAS Faculty Secretary