

College of Arts and Sciences Faculty

Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2002

Meeting Convened 3:25 PM, Miller 105

Minutes of meeting 6 Feb 2002 approved as amended.

President's Report

President Mooney noted that he is very impressed by the process followed by the members of the Commission on Academic Priorities and expressed his thanks for their work. The Commission will present its report in connection with the March faculty forum.

President Mooney commented on his recent confirmation of Dean Curtis Johnson. The President remarked that he had received a high response to his request for faculty letters of advice on this matter and had received a similar response from trustees and officers of the College. He was impressed with the nuance, passion, balance, and care and concern for the College shown in these letters. These letters have been, and will remain, completely confidential. There has never been such a process in the history of the College. The President analyzed these letters by divisions, by senior and junior faculty responses, by patterns of comments, and by recurrent issues. He then held two sessions with Dean Johnson, discussing certain response patterns without revealing their sources, seeking to understand Dean Johnson's perspective on these topics.

After confirming Dean Johnson's appointment, President Mooney received a memo from Professor Owens, who quoted the President's earlier memo stating that he would create a faculty advisory committee for the confirmation process. He acknowledged his oversight in not doing so. After receiving the memo from Professor Owens, he considered what to do now. He decided to ask a cross section of senior faculty to meet with him, comprising Professors Asher, Davidson, Hunter, Lochner, Mandel, Owens, Rohrbaugh, and Ward [later in the meeting Professor Seeley was added to this list].

President Mooney reviewed the history of the relationship among trustees, faculty, and President since his arrival at the College. At many other liberal arts colleges, the President is the head of the faculty, in contrast to our arrangement. For this reason, President Mooney believes that it is imperative that the President and the Dean of the College work well together.

Professor Matt Levinger moved to suspend the regular order of business to present a motion related to this topic. The motion to suspend the order of business was seconded and passed.

Under Suspended Order of Business

Professor Levinger presented the following motion:

Preamble:

Given that the appointment of Curtis Johnson generated considerable concern on the part of the faculty at the time the appointment was originally made and that President Mooney agreed at that time to accelerate the review of the dean's performance as a response to this concern;

Given that the President pledged in his letter to the faculty of May 25, 2000, to conduct a "full and formal assessment" of Dean Johnson's work during the spring semester of the 2001-2002 academic year; and that as part of that assessment, he pledged to "confer with a cross-section of senior faculty from the divisions whom I will ask to assist me as an Advisory Committee";

Given that the Dean of the College is "the Chair of the Faculty" and "with the president of the College, represents the Faculty on official and public occasions and to the Board of Trustees";

Given that the Dean of the College "moderates all regular and special meetings of the Faculty";

Given that it is customary at excellent liberal arts colleges to form advisory faculty committees to participate in the selection of its administrative representatives;

Given that this has been the custom at Lewis & Clark College until the recent past;

Given that, according to AAUP guidelines, reviews of academic administrators should not be conducted by the appointing administrator, but rather "on behalf of the appointing administrator," and that, "Fellow administrators, faculty, students, and others should participate in the review according to their legitimate interest in the result, with faculty of the unit accorded the primary voice in the case of academic administrators";

Given that the President did not involve the faculty in the selection or review of the Dean in any formal capacity beyond soliciting individual letters;

And given that the College finds itself at a juncture when goodwill and close collaboration among the Dean, the President, and the faculty are of critical importance,

Motion:

"In the interest of seeking a wider consensus, the faculty calls upon President Mooney to constitute an advisory committee consisting of Professors Asher, Davidson, Hunter, Lochner, Mandel, Owens, Rohrbaugh, and Ward, plus three additional members to be elected by the faculty." [Later in the meeting professor Seeley was added to this list.]

Dean Johnson recused himself from the position of meeting chair, and asked Dean Reiness to chair the meeting. Dean Reiness opened the floor for discussion.

Discussion ensued regarding the motion on the floor and its relationship to President Mooney's previous action. Topics included relationship and mutual trust between the faculty and the President, faculty representation in decision making, role of the faculty in the appointment process, role of the faculty in evaluating Deans, diversity of perspectives represented on the advisory committee, appointment versus election of advisory committee members, and advisory versus review roles for the committee. President Mooney stated that the President has the formal authority to appoint Deans and Vice Presidents, and that he would not do anything to bind the authority of his successors. Responding to a comment that the Arts were not represented on the committee, President Mooney said that he would add Professor Seeley to the list of committee members.

Professor Callahan offered a substitute motion, stating that the faculty expresses confidence in the advisory committee of nine members as named by President Mooney. After some discussion, Professor Savage moved to cease debate on the substitute motion. The motion to cease debate was seconded and passed with one dissenting vote. A paper ballot was held on the substitute motion, which failed by a margin of 37 to 43 with 3 abstentions. Discussion returned to the original motion.

After further discussion, Professor Peck moved to cease debate. The motion to cease debate was seconded and passed by voice vote. A paper ballot was held on the original motion, which failed by a margin of 33 to 47 with 3 abstentions.

After brief discussion, a movement to adjourn was made and seconded.

Meeting adjourned, 5:02 PM.

The following report by Dean Johnson was distributed electronically prior to the meeting, but was not presented at the meeting.

Dean's Report (electronic message prior to meeting).

1) CAP update. The Commission has now entered the phase of composing and reviewing the interim report to the faculty on academic priorities. The document we have assembled is substantial, and the tasks of composing it and reviewing it for clarity and accuracy have consumed many more hours than I believe any of us anticipated. Nevertheless, we are on target for a distribution to the faculty sometime prior to our next scheduled Presidential Forum, to be held on the South Campus on Thursday, March 21st. That Forum will be the first occasion for the faculty to discuss the interim report.

2) Faculty Retreat. In the spirit of frugality the Academic Council has decided that, for this year at least, we ought to change the faculty retreat from a two-day off-campus overnight to a single-day retreat. We have researched several possibilities for location and have decided upon McMenamin's Edgefield in Troutdale. The date will be Monday, August 26, when we shall have an all-day retreat, including lunch and dinner. We have also agreed to defer our decision about the theme of the retreat until the faculty has had an opportunity to discuss the CAP report. That discussion could potentially influence our decision about the theme.

End of Dean's Report

Respectfully submitted,

William Kinsella, CAS Faculty Secretary