

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council
October 8, 2008
Excerpts

Present: J. Cummins, B. Ferguson, K. Jacobson, C. Lindgren, R. Osgood, M. Schneider, P. Smith, B. Trish

The meeting came to order at 3:30 p.m. in Macy House conference room.

President's Remarks

The President thanked everyone who participated in the dedication of the Noyce Science Center this past weekend. He noted that the College is planning a celebration of the 150th year of the College's existence in Grinnell next year and a dedication of the Athletic Facilities in 2010.

He commented on the financial market deterioration and signaled that there may be some negative effects on our budgeting process for next year.

Dean's Remarks

The Dean agreed with the President, noting that she thought the dedication of the Science Center was magnificent. She also noted that she was impressed by the unwavering commitment of the Board of Trustees to what is important to the College community during this financial situation.

She reminded Council members that a special reception celebrating the Grinnell in London program will be held in Macy House on Thursday. The Dean's Office will be taking advantage of this occasion to gather information on perceived constraints to faculty participation in the GIL program and other off-campus teaching opportunities. The Dean's intention is to act quickly on as many of those issues as possible.

She reported that Council members Cummins and Jacobson report movement on a policy for continuing part-time faculty and Council should soon have a draft policy to discuss.

The Dean reported that, in relation to the extended hours for daycare on days when there are faculty meetings, it has been confirmed that all children receive a snack.

She reported that Susan Ferguson and Richard Fyffe are happy to come to a Council meeting to report on their respective departmental self-study.

Finally, she reported on a joint initiative from the chairs of the science departments to construct a budget projection of anticipated needs regarding replacement and repair of major instrumentation and equipment. While the total projected cost is very high and due in part to institutional commitments made at the time when external grants are received, the Dean does not want to discourage such efforts and urged Budget Committee to give appropriate acknowledgment (in the salary review process) to faculty members who submit external grants for major scientific equipment. The President commented that flexibility can be lost when numerous sub-funds are

created, and he noted it could be possible to build in these anticipated repair and replacement needs through an increase to the campus-wide Building Maintenance and Equipment (BM&E) fund.

Council Remarks

J. Cummins suggested that it is not always apparent whether funding is available for EKI projects and from what source, and that the particulars of current or planned EKI projects may not be widely known on campus, even in the departments of the principal agents.

C. Lindgren reminded Council of the current efforts of the Advisory Board to work with faculty in developing/forming clusters of courses and that there was talk of forming wiki sites for faculty to share their ideas associated with a particular cluster...suggesting that this method could serve to enhance communication.

M. Schneider noted that he had recently received information from his alma mater, Carleton College, regarding outcomes of their year long experience with Rankin and Associates. He suggested that it may be instructive for Grinnell to tune in.

Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship Proposal

B. Ferguson moved, M Schneider seconded, approval of the proposal of the Sociology Department to conduct a search for a postdoctoral fellow in Sociology. The motion was approved.

Relationship of the Salary Review Cycle to Timing of Reviews for Promotion to Professor

The Dean noted that, on occasion, the review for promotion to professor occurs in the same year as the salary review and sometimes the salary review occurs in the year after the promotion to professor. The reviews are time intensive and she would like Council to inform her thinking on how to alleviate this problem. M. Schneider reviewed the Council deliberations surrounding the decision to move to a three-year cycle of salary review which was subsequently approved by faculty vote. Council discussed the question of whether there are circumstances under which the three year cycle should be adjusted. The situation occurs when there are many members from the same department scheduled for salary review in the same year or when promotion to full professor occurs in the middle of the merit review cycle. There was a free ranging discussion of various possibilities. The Dean reiterated her objective to reduce the excessive number of reviews. It was decided that M. Schneider and the Dean will draft a proposal for Council consideration.

The President left the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

The Dean brought one final matter to Council for advice. She noted that that traditionally the mid-year graduation ceremonies include a Baccalaureate speaker who has been from the faculty. This year one nominee is not a faculty member. After some discussion, it was decided that it

would be prudent to make this decision based on the nominating rules that were presented to the students prior to their vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Secretary
Karen Wiese