

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council  
February 18, 2009  
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. The minutes of 2/11/09 were approved.

**President's Remarks**

The President remarked that he had met with a group of faculty to discuss current issues of faculty governance today and thought it was incredibly productive.

**Dean's Remarks**

The Dean made no remarks.

**Council Remarks**

K. Jacobson asked the Dean for an update on the activities of the members of the Linguistics Concentration in relation to tasks, beyond a position proposal, which were requested of them by Council last spring. A response will be forthcoming.

**Departmental Proposals to Host 2009-10 CFD-LAC Fellows**

The Dean reminded Council members that their responsibility in this regard is to rank the proposals. Then, the Dean will inform the top-ranked department that they may bring the candidate to campus for an interview. B. Trish noted that, in one case, Council has received input from the SEPC and she urged Council to consider routine processes by which it accepts student input. It was decided that Council would follow a triage procedure as in the past. The ensuing discussion included focus on prior liberal arts experience, contribution to curricular need of the proposing department, relative importance to our students, strength of proposed mentoring, and possible prospects for a future appointment to our faculty. It was decided that additional information on each candidate is desirable and the ranking of proposals would be delayed until the next meeting.

**2010 Commencement Speaker Nominees**

Council recommended nominees for 2010 Commencement Speaker.

**Reviewing Campus Governance Structures**

At the outset, the President remarked that he believes the Faculty Handbook is out of date with respect to faculty governance. At its origin, the office of the President was deemed to be visible

in the various governance structures and he does not think this is the best model. He believes that we have an outdated governance system and, since we are soon coming upon a Presidential transition, it is an opportune time for the Executive Council to visit this issue. The President noted that he does not wish to be part of this process. He noted that he would take this opportunity to bring in consultants to review and make recommendations to policy and procedure in the matter of staff hiring, evaluation, and termination. K. Jacobson asked him about process. The President responded that revision of the faculty governance structure and procedures would require the involvement of the Trustees. M. Schneider offered to reach out to his peers in other institutions and collect a range of models and documentation which could provide a starting point for such deliberation.

### **Revising Long-term Contract Renewal Cycles**

M. Schneider began this discussion by referencing the current Faculty Handbook ( Part Three-Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure, Section III-Policies and Procedures for Appointments, Promotions, and Granting of Tenure Consequent to the By-Laws of the Trustees of Grinnell College, Sub-section B-Provisions for Appointments and Promotions in the Department of Physical Education and the Grinnell College Libraries.) He noted that the agreement to change the current review and re-contracting cycle for these two categories of faculty members from the current five years to the proposed six years can be achieved in the Handbook by simply changing the reference to “five” years in the language of Three-III-B to “six”...which occurs in two places.

Schneider noted that there are four re-contracting reviews and two merit reviews scheduled for next year, which represents a large burden of time spent. He suggested that to follow the schedule that we have not and each time a contract expires, we re-contract and establish a merit score at that time. He stated that there are three five-year re-contracting reviews scheduled this year. In each case, a merit review is scheduled for next year. He suggested that we generate a merit score at the time of those reviews and then re-contract for six years, thus avoiding the redundancy of back to back reviews. The Dean expressed support for this measure but noted that the convenience of coordinating the six-year (interim review) cycle with the three-year (salary review) cycles should not be interpreted as barring the Personnel Committee from renewing a contract for a shorter period than six years in faculty reviews where such a step is deemed appropriate.

### **Dean’s Update on Gender and Women’s Studies Curricular Planning**

The Dean provided a quick overview of the current situation with Gender and Women’s Studies. There was discussion. It was decided that Council would invite Kathleen Skerrett, in her capacity as Chair of the GWS Concentration, to present further information to Council soon.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Secretary  
Karen Wiese