

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council**  
**March 11, 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 3/4/09 were approved.

**President's Remarks**

The President noted that he had sent out a letter to the College community today regarding the fiscal situation and budget outlook for FY 2011-12.

The President mentioned that he had attended the performance of the Grinnell Symphony Orchestra and the play, the Life of Galileo, over the weekend and he very much enjoyed both.

He mentioned that he will begin a busy month of travel tomorrow with a visit to the Lilly Endowment in Indianapolis.

Responding to J. Cummins' request for information on the status of his interactions with the group of concerned faculty, the President noted that he had thought he would write a letter to be printed in the Scarlet and Black last week. As it turned out, he did not reach agreement with the faculty group on an appropriate response.

**Dean's Remarks**

The Dean updated Council on the status of faculty searches.

She also updated Council on the progress of the Gender and Women's Studies major proposal. She noted that the Humanities Division approved, the Social Studies Division tabled the discussion, and the Science Division has yet to take up the issue. J. Cummins noted that the motion that was approved in the Humanities Division would create a major and eliminate the concentration. The Dean noted that there is hope that there will be a vote of the full faculty by the end of the semester. This would mean that students would be able to declare a major next year but not this year.

**Council Remarks**

M. Schneider reported that he and B. Trish met with Bob Cadmus and Kelly Herold regarding their participation in process of consideration of governance issues. They have indicated willingness and there are others who will be asked to participate. It is his intention to hold a meeting promptly after break. J. Cummins noted that he has been looking at the faculty handbook with an eye toward identifying decision-making points and decision-makers and it

appears that the President is the person with decision-making authority. He asked what a faculty member can do if s/he has a grievance with the President. The President responded that the faculty member can file a grievance...but not in the case of a personnel or budget matter. He suggested that the consideration of governance issues should begin with a look at other faculty handbooks.

B. Ferguson reported on the most recent Social Studies Division meeting. He noted that course approvals took the first 40 minutes of the one-hour meeting. The remaining discussion concerned the GWS proposal for a new major in GWSS. While comments were generally supportive, the division did not have time to complete the discussion, particularly concerning the relationship of the proposal to disciplines and interdisciplinary studies. It was therefore tabled with continued discussion scheduled as the first agenda item for the April 13 meeting. A straw poll at the end of the meeting showed nearly unanimous support for the proposal.

B. Trish asked the President if he has a process in mind for dealing with the academic and non-academic budget requests through this difficult fiscal period. The President responded that he believes that we should follow our normal budget processes, but he believes we would need to cut in the 5%-10% range. M. Schneider asked if he has the inclination to deal with budget year 2011 separately from 2012 or as a package. The President responded that, because of the way we do budget projections, he thinks it best to deal with FY 2011 first.

The Dean noted that there will be at least seven proposals to create or replace faculty positions coming to Council this spring. The President responded that he believes Council should go through its normal position proposal process in April, though we might not be able to authorize a search that would come into the budget in FY 2011...which is projected to be our worst year.

K. Jacobson, B. Ferguson, and J. Cummins met with Stephanie Harves who is on campus to conduct a review of the Linguistics Concentration.

### **Proposal to Pre-Approve a 2010-11 Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship**

The Dean distributed a modified proposal for pre-approval of a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship. There was discussion. Because it was linked to securing an external grant and the internal endowment probably cannot support a postdoctoral fellowship salary unassisted, the pre-approval was granted contingent on the necessary external funding.

### **Question of Compensation for MAPs and Independent Study**

The Dean noted that Council members have brought this up informally. Given prior year Curriculum Committee and Executive Council action, does this Council believe the matter is resolved? J. Cummins noted that, at the April 2008 Humanities Division meeting, a motion to compensate all forms of independent study was passed. However, the Council did not vote on recommendation of the Curriculum Committee. It was demonstrated that the matter was not resolved by Council, but was stalled in the Divisions. M. Schneider noted that there are three issues not currently being attended to. Do we require departments to verify quality of MAP proposals? What is the relationship between MAPs and Independent Study. What are the limits

on the number of MAPs for students and faculty during the academic year? The President remembered that previous Council had looked at the issue of what constitutes Independent Study. J. Cummins noted that there has historically been an issue with quality control with both MAPs and Independent Study. He also suggested that compensation is what is influencing decisions between calling something a MAP or Independent Study. The President responded that then Dean Swartz did not want compensation issues to turn faculty into piece workers. He noted that after MAPs were implemented the total number of Independent Study projects declined. M. Schneider noted that the total number of both MAPS and Independent Study projects declined during the academic year. C. Lindgren noted that, given the academic year decline, you would expect MAPs to increase during the summer, but that is not the case. The Dean noted that, while the College is very happy and proud to be able to offer the MAP program to faculty and students, the MAP budget is not going to get bigger. She believes it best to introduce disincentives for Independent Study in favor of students electing to take existing classes to place less burden on faculty members if the project is not at a high level. It was generally agreed that the issues have not been resolved and this should come back to Council in future.

### **March 1, 2009 Letter from the Sociology Department**

The Dean and members of Council received a memorandum dated 3/1/09 from the Department of Sociology regarding concern for a recent decision not to support a faculty member's bid to edit Teaching Sociology. There was discussion.

### **Voluntary Salary Deductions to Support the Campus Community**

M. Schneider noted that Jean Ketter had approached him with an idea that tenured faculty voluntarily give up their raises to enhance the staff salary pool. He said that he talked to a few faculty about her idea and found support in principle, but concern about minimal impact and logistical issues. He has decided that, with the President's approval, he would approach the Staff Relations Committee with the idea of soliciting ways we could collect money to be able to continue campus-wide community building efforts. The President recalled a similar situation at Cornell University, but rather than community building efforts, its focus was operating as an emergency loan fund and it worked very well. Schneider decided to approach the Committee and B. Trish offered to accompany him if needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Secretary  
Karen Wiese