

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council
April 1, 2009
Excerpts

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

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

The minutes of 3/11/09 were approved.

President's Remarks

The President noted that he will not be able to attend the Council meeting next week because he will be in New York at the ACM Board meeting which will be hosted by the Mellon Foundation.

He expressed great regret for the death of Whitney Hendrickson '12. He attended the funeral for her in Colorado Springs last week.

We now have a new Assistant Dean of Students & Director of Residence Life and Orientation, Andrea Conner. She was previously with Bard College and will join the College on May 11. We are also currently interviewing for Residence Life Coordinators.

Dean's Remarks

She announced that she has received nine faculty position proposals for Council consideration this month.

She updated the Council on the status of faculty searches.

Council Remarks

M. Schneider noted that the group working on issues of faculty governance has met for the first time on Monday and have made initial assignments regarding new governance structures and improving the efficacy of existing structures. He will make an announcement at the next Faculty Meeting and send out a note to all faculty.

C. Lindgren noted that he had received an email regarding Cooper Katz wishing to write a public relations piece on the Biology 150 initiative. He is pleased with their approach to listening in order to understand our faculty culture.

C. Lindgren also reported that the Mathematics Department response to their external review will be available to Council next week.

While Barb Trish could not be at today's meeting, she asked that Mark read this into the minutes.

Regarding the Campus Climate Assessment: The description of procedures which accompanies the survey details steps taken to protect the confidentiality of the

respondents. There is no mention, however, of whether the College will have access to the raw data file. I hope that the plan is for those data to stay with Rankin and Associates, and that the College – including the Office of Institutional Research and the Office of Diversity and Achievement – will not receive the raw data. Of course, given the population in question, those raw data could be used to identify respondents. So I ask for confirmation that the College will not receive the data file. And presuming that this is the case, I urge Rankin and Associates, and others involved in administering the survey, to make it clear to the community that this is the policy. This might encourage participation from individuals who, for whatever reason, are concerned about being connected to particular responses.

M. Schneider proposed the abolition of the College. The President thought that a characteristic suggestion by the Chair of the Faculty. Discussion ensued.

Linguistics Concentration

The Dean noted that a letter, dated March 27, 2009, from Carmen Valentin and the other faculty of the Linguistics Concentration regarding their decision not to submit an EKI proposal for consideration by Council this semester. The Dean noted that this is a follow-up regarding Council concerns regarding a position proposal it received from the Concentration last spring. She asked for Council comment by next week so that she can talk with the faculty of the Concentration and convey Council thinking. A brief discussion ensued. Council expressed thanks to the faculty of the Concentration and encouraged them to continue their work to make the Concentration stronger.

Draft Policy on Regular Part-Time Faculty

The Dean distributed tabular information on part-time contract history between 2000-09. She then pointed to previous distribution of proposed change to Faculty Handbook language regarding regular part-time faculty. Kathleen Skerrett has been working with J. Cummins and K. Jacobson on the draft changes. The discussion focused on compensation, mechanisms for converting from a year-to-year temporary position to a long-term term position, need for providing guidance for applied music assistants, review as opportunity for development, and voting rights. K. Jacobson noted that this proposed language includes the recommendation that departments that have this type of contractual situation “should” consider regularizing these ad hoc contracts for ethical reasons as well as professional employment considerations. J. Cummins noted that the group would like to recommend to Executive Council that part-time salary be a proportional amount of a regular full-time salary, where teaching, advising, scholarship, and service is on par with the latter. This proportional approach is recommended over a per course basis as is the case now. As a matter of fairness, they would also like to recommend that where scholarship is a part of contractual expectations that the faculty member have equal access to professional development support from CSFS to enable them to address expectations. M. Schneider asked if the Faculty Handbook language is clear enough regarding who does the review. It was decided that this needs to be rethought before Council promulgation as policy. It was also decided that the working group will draft compensation policy so that it can be approved by Council and appear in the minutes.

Proposed Prison Certification Program

The Dean distributed a current draft proposal for a prison certificate program. This program would offer Grinnell credit for satisfactory completion of courses taken by inmates. An important aspect of the President's support for this idea is that it does not require a change to our reaccreditation.

College Conflict of Interest and Whistleblower Policies

The President introduced this subject by referring to the requirements put in place for institutions as a result of the passage of the Sarbanes-Oxley legislation. Our accountants have stated that institutional policies must include a provision for each employee to sign both documents each year to come into compliance.

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

Secretary
Karen Wiese