

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council
April 15, 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 4/8/09 were approved.

President's Remarks

The President noted that various offices have received student requests to change our religious holiday observance policy. The concerned students have come to him to talk about proposed changes and offered the policy at Macalester as an example of what they would like to see adopted by the faculty here. He asked if the Council would like to consider endorsing such a change. M. Schneider suggested that, as a first step, he would place this matter as a topic for discussion at the next informal faculty discussion group meeting. Then he would take the matter to the May 4th faculty meeting for action.

The President noted that he will be attending the Joint Board meeting tonight and will be talking about the budget situation and will do so again at the next faculty meeting. He distributed his talking points to Council members and shared his thinking. B. Ferguson suggested that this might be an opportune time to push alumni giving. M. Schneider suggested that the time is right for a more targeted major gift campaign.

Dean's Remarks

The Dean updated Council on the status of faculty searches.

She noted that she has still not received the response to the external review of the Math Department.

She noted that the Sociology Department external review team is on campus this week and that the next Council will be reviewing the Department's response. Library reviewers will be here in two weeks.

Council Remarks

M. Schneider noted that the open discussion with faculty on Monday was quite well attended. Many good ideas were shared, including a request that the Executive Council find a way to more directly communicate with the faculty at large. He plans to change the meeting time for the next informal discussion to noon on Mondays when no division meetings are scheduled.

B. Ferguson noted that, as division chair, he met the Sociology Department outside reviewers. He reports they had a very good conversation and that he thought their approach was constructive. He also noted that the faculty of the Social Studies Division had approved the GWSS major proposal. After the division meeting a division member voiced concerns about eliminating the Concentration in favor of the major as this may serve as a deterrent to students who do not want to major but do wish some lesser recognition of concentrated study. He also noted that the Division had conducted a straw poll with a favorable outcome regarding the Prison Program proposal. Some concern was expressed over staffing the courses and the college's ability to deliver on what is promised. Finally, he noted that the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies Advisory Board had met on Monday and had conducted a review of those departmental position proposals with potential interdisciplinary aspects. Council now has their comments.

C. Lindgren reported similar outcomes from discussions in the Science Division of the GWSS major proposal and the Prison Program proposal, although no straw poll was taken with regard to the latter.

The President observed that he had mixed reaction to the Prison Program until he taught one day at the Correctional Facility in Newton. He came away thinking that this was a good idea and believes it is an exemplary social service activity of the College.

Tenure-Track Faculty Position Proposals

The Dean distributed a memorandum from the OIS Advisory Board dated 4/14/09 with their review comments on the position proposals passed to them by Council. She noted that today the Council will focus on faculty replacement requests in classics, history, Spanish, sociology, and education. There was discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Secretary
Karen Wiese