

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council
September 24, 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 the Biology Department and the Center for Prairie Studies for hosting a wonderful 40th anniversary event for/at CERA last weekend.

He noted that our two cross country teams will be participating in a meet in Palo Alto this weekend and he will be there for the race and an alumni event.

He spoke about the problems in the financial markets and the possibility of the College being negatively affected.

As he was walking to the meeting today he heard someone playing the 1947 Aeolean-Skinner organ and our long restoration project of this wonderful instrument has ended.

Dean's Remarks

The Dean also expressed her thanks to those who organized the CERA festivities and the successful family weekend.

She noted that the Dean's Office has received the first round of preliminary proposals for the new opportunities grants to be funded under the Mellon EKI grant. There were more than 20 proposals and she is very pleased with the faculty response. Once models are created based on these preliminary proposals, further proposals will be solicited.

Council Remarks

Following the remarks of the Dean about the recent round of grant proposals, J. Cummins asked if the budgets of the ISC and CSFS would be increased. The Dean responded affirmatively, explaining that this increase is made possible by the Mellon grant.

B. Ferguson also commented on the success of family weekend and his particular pleasure with the poster sessions. He also noted that the Social Studies Division had met on Monday where they were joined by Leslie Gregg-Jolly, Bill Francis, and Richard Fyffe for a discussion of teaching with technology and space requirements. Many faculty are concerned with issues of physical space, installed technology, and CTS support. A subcommittee was organized to continue to work on these issues.

B. Trish noted that she has received complaints about no refreshments at the faculty meetings lately. Trish also noted that the drop deadline is later than the deadline for returning books to the bookstore which is causing obvious problems for students and asked the Dean to take appropriate action.

Jacobson requested that Marci Sortor be invited back to attend a future Council meeting for a question-and-answer session on proposed directions for the EKI.

Council Guidance for Candidate Interviews

M. Schneider had previously circulated a document, “Executive Council Interviews of Tenure-Track Candidates—9/23/08” to guide discussion. Discussion ensued.

Preliminary Discussion of Student Participation on the Committee on Academic Standing

The Dean reviewed recent conversations with the new Vice President for Student Affairs, Houston Dougherty, regarding his interest in adding student members to the Committee on Academic Standing. Her response to him was that this is a Handbook level issue. She alerted Council to the possibility that CAS may bring a proposal to the faculty for their deliberation. There was discussion of this idea among Council members, with differing perspectives expressed.

Follow-up to Campus Plan Update

Following the presentation to Council by Marci Sortor on September 17th, the Dean asked Council for advice on processes that will allow collection of the highest quality information on future classroom teaching needs. She noted the Social Studies Division subcommittee model as one mechanism. K. Jacobson noted that in the Science Division the discussion of teaching space needs began with a departmental-level examination of pedagogy. The Dean suggested clusters of departments with overlapping needs such as the foreign languages or the fine arts. The President offered the opinion that the rooms need to be flexible in the range of use possibilities. He agreed that the successful process would begin with pedagogical discussions and then move to a small committee responsible for creating and reporting out the updated plan. M. Schneider noted that in the process of designing new science spaces many visitors came to talk about curriculum and pedagogy well before discussions of instructional spaces began. It was also agreed that groups of Grinnell faculty should visit other campuses.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Secretary
Karen Wiese