

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council
October 28, 2009
Excerpts

Present: S. Andrews, V. Bentley-Condit, C. Lindgren, R. Osgood, M. Schneider, P. Smith, A. Vishevsky.

The meeting came to order at 4:15 p.m. in the Nollen House first-floor conference room. The minutes of October 14, 2009, were approved electronically.

Mickey Munley, Vice President of College and Alumni Relations, joined the meeting at the invitation of the Council to discuss the new "10K in 2010" initiative. He briefly presented patterns in alumni giving. He noted that Grinnell's alumni giving percentage has been historically low relative to our peers (averaging 37% the past three years). With this initiative he had wanted to set a goal of raising alumni participation to at least 50%. But, after consultation with his staff, they have decided to increase the goal to getting 10,000 alumni donors this year. He noted that periods of leadership transition normally equate to additional opportunities for alumni giving. He stated that he is speaking with Council today to request their leadership in promoting this initiative to faculty. His faculty participation goal is at least 50%. He believes high faculty participation is a powerful example of leadership that will motivate alumni and meaningfully impact the success of the 10K initiative. Discussion ensued. Munley left the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

President's Remarks

The President made no remarks. Because of the need for him to leave the meeting early, he suggested taking up an agenda item scheduled for later discussion at this time.

College Web Posting of Minutes for Faculty and Council meetings

The last time Council discussed this matter, the President was asked to confer with the College attorney. The President reported back to Council that he had in fact talked with the attorney who recommended that faculty minutes be posted within PioneerWeb because it is inevitable that some future discussion will touch on subjects that should not be made available to the public. A. Vishevsky asked what other Colleges do in this regard. The President said that he would look into that and report back. C. Lindgren suggested that his view is minutes are meant for use by the body for which they are taken. There was additional discussion. The Dean concluded that, whatever decision is taken, the goal should be for faculty meetings to offer an environment conducive to good governance.

Dean's Remarks

The Dean distributed a list of faculty in the associate professor rank for Council discussion of the nomination process for promotion to the rank of professor.

She reported that last Monday a student resolution regarding wellness, the academic calendar, and stress relief was passed by the Joint Board. M. Schneider stated that CAS has already initially discussed this.

She noted that pre-registration is scheduled for November 2-12 and many fewer students are asking for paper copies, opting instead for electronic registration.

Finally, she reported that production of the printed Campus Directory is still in process.

Council Remarks

Schneider also reported that CAS is planning to make a noncontroversial change to the honors policy. Currently the policy states that GPA determination is based on grades received through the seventh semester. This policy does not take into consideration students who graduate early. The proposed change would specify that under normal circumstances GPA determination will be made in the final semester.

B. Trish asked that policies on eligibility for varsity athletics be placed on a future Council agenda.

Arabic Language Position

There was discussion of a possible tenure-track position in Arabic.

Faculty Advising Workload

M. Schneider distributed data on the fall '09 and spring '09 faculty advising load. These data show that there are significant increases in the fall semester in political science, sociology, and history and in the spring semester in biology, economics, political science, chemistry, psychology, and history. With this information we can determine that there is an issue mostly with the big departments with a high number of majors. There was discussion of the impact of leaves, tutorials, and other factors on the advising load and the possibilities of better distribution of advisees through departmental coordination. M. Schneider agreed to contact those with exceptionally large numbers of advisees as well as their department chairs to get a better idea of the challenges.

Nomination Process for Promotion to the Rank of Professor

The Dean noted that a memorandum went out today inviting those faculty who are eligible for promotion to professor to review the criteria for promotion established by the Faculty Handbook. She distributed a list of eligible faculty and asked Council to review the list with the aim of identifying those that they think might be ready to come up for review for promotion. The Dean noted that there are some faculty who have been in the associate rank for over 20 years, and observed that each case is unique. B. Trish asked what the next steps in this process are and what is the role of Council? The Dean responded that Council has been asked by the Personnel Committee to discuss potential candidates to help avoid a situation where a faculty member

comes up for review for promotion and the Personnel Committee is forced to deny promotion...a situation for which there is virtually no precedent at Grinnell. There was brief discussion of whether such a step is tantamount to having Executive Council engaged in the business of the Personnel Committee. In the end, it was decided that Council members would proceed to initiate conversation with anyone they think should be considering coming up for review.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Secretary
Karen Wiese