

REPORT OF CHAIR OF THE FACULTY, 2002

Table of Contents

Introduction,p. 1

Achievements

1) College Mission Statement,p. 2
2) MAPs,p. 2
3) Diversity,p. 3
4) Campus Buildings: Mears,p. 3
5) The Budget Steering Process,p. 4
6) Salary increases,p. 4
7) Personnel Committee,p. 6
8) New Faculty Positions,p. 7

Ongoing Issues

1) Long range planning. The surveys, and more,p. 7
2) Revision of the process of determining faculty salary increases,p. 8
3) Independent Projects,p. 8
4) The role of the faculty in the Campus Plan Process,p. 8

Musings of a Political Scientist about the Faculty Role in College Governance
after Two Years of Participant Observation,p. 9

INTRODUCTION

This was a tumultuous year at the College. During an official meeting of the faculty in the fall, chaired by the chair of the faculty, and with none of the top administrators present, and subsequently, at an unofficial meeting in the spring, chaired by the chair-elect of the faculty, again with no administrators present, a number of faculty members expressed great dissatisfaction with decision-making processes at the College. The view was expressed that the administration totally controlled all important decisions, and that elected faculty representatives on the Executive Council were merely carrying out an agenda set by the administration. While it is of course true that no Executive Council does, or could, effectively work if it set itself up merely in opposition to the administration, I think the record demonstrates that the Executive Council, the Personnel Committee, other elected committees of the faculty, and the faculty itself successfully pursued its own agenda, realizing a number of important goals.

THE MISSION STATEMENT

Late in spring 2001, a new mission statement, drafted by the President's staff, was widely circulated. Although the process involved wider participation than had the previous draft, written by then President George Drake, a number of faculty members were dissatisfied with both the process and the outcome. In response to such concerns, the chair of the faculty brought the issue to the Executive Council, where he requested and got from his colleagues permission to appoint a faculty committee to come up with its own mission statement. That Committee spent a great deal of time working up a new statement and came up with a draft which it submitted to the Executive Council. A Council sub-committee took up this draft, revised it substantially, and the Council then brought it to the faculty. After a vigorous debate, the faculty rejected that draft. It was proposed we put on the floor the original committee draft. A further meeting found that draft, too, unsatisfactory, and proposed that the Chair appoint a committee to come up with another draft. The Chair appointed Don Smith to chair another committee. The draft this committee proposed was accepted by the faculty. Although many found the process overly time-consuming, and the nature of the debate frustrating, we ended up with a Mission Statement written by the faculty and accepted by the Trustees, something that had never happened before.

MAPS

For over a decade, the faculty has been on record as supporting changes in the senior year program to make it a culminating experience. In response to the initiation of the Fund for Excellence, a group of faculty members proposed the funding of advanced research projects, to be faculty mentored. A crucial part of the proposal was that the faculty be compensated for this mentoring. Up until then, no faculty work on independent projects had received recognition or compensation from the College. The President agreed to fund what came to be called MAPs on an experimental basis. Last year, the Curriculum Committee decided to evaluate the results of the experiment. The Committee spent most of the year collecting and analyzing data. Committee members analyzed how many and which faculty and students had participated. They did a survey of those participants, as well as of graduates who had not participated. They brought to the Divisions discussions of the MAPs. That found that participation in the program by both faculty and students was widespread. Although such participation was heaviest in the sciences, substantial numbers of faculty and students in both the humanities and social sciences also did MAPs. Furthermore, the Committee found that both the faculty and students involved believed the program to have been an extremely valuable experience. A number of students published papers or gave on or off-campus presentations. Given these results of its evaluation, the Curriculum Committee brought to the floor of the faculty a proposal to make MAPs a regular part of the curriculum. The Executive Council then proposed to the faculty that it offer its support for rolling into the regular budget continuing funding for this program. After a vigorous debate, the faculty overwhelmingly endorsed making MAPs a regular part of the curriculum, and, as well, the proposal from the Council to

endorse a compensation scheme proposed by the Dean's Office. The adoption of MAPs was the first major curricular reform in 30 years. The commitment by the administration to compensate the faculty for at least this form of independent work (but see below) was a major departure from past practices, responsive to our intense feeling of being overworked, and may well be unique among our peers.

DIVERSITY

The Executive Council last year supported a diversity initiative, designed to add to the faculty substantial numbers of faculty of color. During the previous year, by various strategies, the College had added four new faculty of color, a significant achievement. Again this year, the Council solicited department searches for possible new tenure track positions and it endorsed three such proposals. In the end, that strategy produced one addition to the faculty, in sociology. However, once again, the use of a range of different strategies resulted in greater success, with both a CSMP conversion and a regular tenure track search producing two additional faculty of color in English. The addition of seven new tenure track faculty of color in two years is commendable, although it still leaves us short of where we'd like to be. It should be added that these new tenure track positions expand the faculty generally and, thus, distribute more widely the various burdens we share.

CAMPUS BUILDINGS: MEARS

Last fall, while visiting Carnegie, the President became aware of the inner, windowless, offices on the second and fourth floor. He found those offices, typically used for temporary or new tenure track faculty, to be unacceptable housing for faculty. Thinking about the problem, he proposed as a possible solution the temporary moving of the bookstore to a site downtown, and the conversion of the resulting empty space in the basement of Carnegie to office space. The faculty initiated discussion of this proposal both at division level and on the Instructional Support Committee. While there was some sympathy for the proposal, particularly within the humanities division, other divisions and the ISC turned instead to the possibility of converting Mears Cottage, whose offices were to be moved to the Chrystal (Welcome) Center being constructed, into faculty offices. After widespread initial faculty reluctance to move to a site so far from central campus, several departments decided that such a move would be desirable. While some details remain to be worked out, it appears that Mears Cottage will become a faculty building, with a couple of small seminar rooms and a substantial number of faculty offices. Moves by faculty from Carnegie and ARH into Mears will, in turn, make possible quick, if partial, renovation of those two buildings. Work on, and faculty decision-making about these two buildings is, of course, only a small part of the overall master plan, and the faculty role in decision-making about the overall contours of that plan remains a controversial issue (see below).

BUDGET STEERING PROCESS

Until 2001-02, budget planning had essentially been done by a small committee, consisting of the President, his special assistant, the Dean and the Treasurer. Added to this committee were two faculty members, selected by the President. While these latter two were “representatives” of the faculty in the sense that they had faculty status, they reported neither to the Executive Council nor to the faculty at large. This past year, the President created a new Budget Steering Committee, Chaired by Vice President for Institutional and Budget Planning Jonathan Brand, the Committee included the President, all the Vice-Presidents, the two Associate Deans, and the Associate Treasurer. In addition, the Chair of the Faculty, and an additional faculty member elected by the Executive Council, Jack Mutti, Chair of the Social Studies Division, were also members. The faculty members regarded themselves as representatives both of the Council and of the faculty, and reported back to both with some frequency. The committee met frequently and discussed vigorously the discretionary parts of the budget. The faculty members participated fully in these discussions. It should be emphasized that the overwhelming majority of the budget was essentially non-discretionary, that discussion focused on what limited additions could be made to the budget, and that, within the parameters of what we anticipated the Trustees would approve, a significant increase in faculty salaries was one of the two highest priorities adopted. The faculty members also sat on an academic/instructional sub-committee of that committee, with the Dean and the two Associate Deans. On that sub-committee we considered all non-salary departmental requests, including proposals for leave replacements. Again, the faculty members were full participants in these discussions. We did not report back on these deliberations. The nature of the new structure, new processes, and faculty participation made budget planning more open, and more consensual than it has ever been. Nevertheless, our communicating with faculty left much to be desired, and general faculty interest and involvement was low. These are issues to be worked on.

SALARY INCREASES

The Board of Trustees initially approved salary increases of 5.25%. At a subsequent meeting, they authorized further funds, enabling us to add \$800 to each tenure track assistant professor’s salaries. The Budget Committee of the Executive Council (the Chair of the Faculty and the three Division Chairs) utilized essentially the same procedure for recommending salaries as had been utilized for a number of years. Using Faculty Activity Reports and Curricula Vitae provided by each faculty member, as well as recommendations by each department chair, we evaluated every faculty member’s performance for the previous year. Scores were assigned for teaching, scholarship and service. Weights were assigned to each of these, 3 for teaching, 2 for scholarship and 1 for service. However, given the faculty’s reluctance to make available to the Budget Committee End of Course evaluation data, and the Committee’s reluctance to make teaching evaluations based on reputation, most faculty were assigned the same score (2) on the teaching dimension, with only those reviewed by the personnel committee the previous year or last year given higher or lower scores. As a result, there was little

variation in teaching scores. Consequently most variation in final scores, and, thus, in merit raises, was due to variations in scholarship, and service.

It is the case that members of the Budget Committee and other members of the Executive Council regard this process as deeply flawed. It has the immense strength that faculty members, rather than administrators, annually evaluate their peers – this is a very unusual process among academic institutions. Nevertheless, the procedure is extremely time consuming for department chairs and members of the Budget Committee. Moreover, the faculty has never ratified policies which would so privilege scholarship and service. Last year the Council began an examination of these procedures and policies and, with luck, will this year bring to the faculty a proposal for a radically altered procedure.

The salary recommendations we made reflected the following agreed upon policies of the Budget Committee:

The mean salary increase for the tenured faculty will be 5.25%.

The mean salary increase for the untenured, tenure-track faculty will be 5.25%, plus \$800.

The only exception to this second policy is that first year tenure track faculty received an average raise of 4.75%, plus \$800.

Faculty who were going into the terminal year of their term contract were given a 4.75% raise.

The resulting salaries for this coming year are, for those continuing in the same rank they held last year:

| | Maximum Salary | Minimum Salary | Average Salary | Percent Increase |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Professors | 149,600 | 75,600 | 93,680 | 5.50% |
| Associate Professors | 90,000 | 57,500 | 67,111 | 5.24% |
| Assistant Professors | 61,600 | 43,300 | 50,212 | 6.59%* |

*For assistant professors, the formula of a 5.25% + \$800 average raise has the interesting consequence of producing, for an assistant professor who's relatively new, i.e. with a relatively low salary, a higher percentage increase than the more experienced, i.e. higher salaried, assistant professor with the same merit score will receive. Of course, the latter will receive more money.

While the Budget Committees merely makes recommendations to the Dean, these recommendations are overwhelmingly accepted without change. This year the Dean changed only two of our recommendations.

The provision in 2001-2002 by the Trustees of a 5.25% increment for the tenured faculty, and 5.25% plus an additional \$800 for the untenured tenure track faculty (giving them a percentage increase of 6.59 %) was a generous one. However, given an inflation rate of

1.9%, the resulting average real percentage increases were 3.35% for the tenured faculty and 5% for the untenured tenure-track faculty.

A number of years ago, the Executive Council, at the request of the Board of Trustees, proposed a faculty salary policy of keeping our salaries, at each rank, at 105% of our peer group of twelve schools. We will not have comparative data on the impact of these raises on our ranking within our peer schools until the spring of 2003. However, the raises of 2001-2002 (5.5% for the tenured faculty, 6.5% for untenured tenure-track faculty) had the following impact, according to the March-April 2002 issue of *Academe*. For this past academic year, full and associate professors' salaries are about 101% of our peer's averages. Despite the effort by the College to put additional money into assistant professor salaries last year (as well as this), our assistant professors' salaries this year were only 93% of those of our peers, and we had the eighth highest assistant professor salary among the twelve. That is disgraceful. If we continue to lag behind, our ability to attract the best faculty will be severely compromised. Al Jones gathered data on average annual salary increases for the past five years among 25 elite liberal arts colleges (10 of our 12 member peer group.) Among these 25, we were tied for nineteenth in average raises for Professors, (9th), twenty-second for Associates (tied for 9th) and twenty-second for Assistant Professors (9th). While I recognize that both macro problems with the American economy and (limited) fluctuations in Grinnell's endowment have constrained our efforts to achieve that goal, it seems to be the case that our peers, most with smaller endowments, are pulling away from us. These data suggest the urgency of reminding the trustees of the long-term policy we have recommended and of urging them strongly to reverse this downward trend in our comparative standing.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

It is not common for the Chair of the Faculty to report on the activities of the Personnel Committee. Those are considered the most confidential matters any faculty members deal with. However, this is a crucial committee of the faculty, arguably its most important, and service on this committee is one of the most important duties of the Chair. Moreover, over the course of the past two years, I have come to believe that there is widespread faculty ignorance about the work of the Committee and about personnel procedures and policies of the College. This Committee deals with contract renewal for untenured faculty, including a complete review in the third year, tenure considerations, and promotions to full professor. I, and every other faculty member who has sat on this committee, have come away from the process impressed not only by its thoroughness, but by its fairness. While the quality and quantity of scholarship by candidates is considered, the Committee's overwhelming emphasis is on the quality of candidates' teaching. In the College' hiring decisions, probable teaching strength is emphasized and we think we hire extremely strong teachers as well as scholars. It is clear that there is a strong presumption that we hire well, and with the intention of tenuring most of the people we hire. Over a fifteen year period (i.e. from 1982-83 to 1996-7, when those who got tenure this past year arrived), of those who came to the tenure point, 85% received tenure. During the last twenty years, we have hired 159 tenure track faculty: Of those 32 (20%)

left voluntarily before tenure, 15 (9%) were not renewed , 11 (7%) were denied tenure, and, so far, 63 (40%) have received tenure, while (24%) have not yet come up. Last year, the Personnel Committee considered, and recommended for tenure and promotion, five faculty members.

NEW FACULTY POSITIONS

One of the most important activities of the Executive Council is to consider, each spring, departmental requests for the replacement of faculty who have left or will be leaving, as well as requests for new tenure track lines. In recent years, the Council has requested departments to submit such proposals by April 1, with an extensive justification of why they should retain positions that they have held, or acquire new positions. It is fair to say that the Council tends to hold departments requesting expansions to a higher standard than departments seeking replacements. In their justifications, departments tend to make curricular arguments, enrollment arguments, and arguments about departmental instability. Last year, the Council had requests from Mathematics to replace two impending moves to SFS, from Education, Philosophy, and Psychology to replace resignations, from Theater to transform a term appointment to a tenure-track one, from Psychology to reaffirm a new position granted the previous year that they had been unable to fill, from Physics to expand the department to leave proof it, and from Tom Moore, as head of the Statistics program, to hire someone both to teach statistics and to act as a statistical consultant. The Council recommended approval of the two math replacements and the Psych replacement, and recommended that, since Education and Philosophy were undergoing Departmental reviews in 2002-03, they retain their tenure-track positions, but fill them for one year with temporary hires, pending possible re-definitions of the positions. Council recommended approval of the second Psych slot, and the Statistics one, pending Dean's resolution with the departments involved of some troubling questions. The Council expressed sympathy with the Physics Department's desire to leave proof the department, but indicated that it was not prepared at this time to accept that as adequate justification for a new slot. The Council recommended that the theater slot be continued as a term appointment for the present, at least until after their department review.

ONGOING ISSUES

Long Range Planning

Two years ago, the Council initiated a process of long range academic planning. Last year, we brought in an outside consultant, had him meet with us and with the faculty at large. We attempted to set up a process, agree on goals, and get moving. Ultimately we decided that the process required faculty direction, and we distributed to the faculty an initial survey assessing faculty perceptions as to what the College did well, and what it did less well. With the guidance of the Council, Carol Trosset, our institutional researcher, designed a second survey, using the results of the first survey to create a set of

questions that would permit the faculty to express their priorities about what were the most important areas we should work on changing. Because returns of the survey were slow, and the Council was eager to get as much faculty participation as possible, the process was slowed down, and results are only now available. They will be presented to the faculty, and discussed, in the fall. At the end of the school year, the Trustees authorized a College-wide long range planning process, and it is not clear either how the results of these surveys, or the broader Council long range academic planning effort, will synchronize with that.

Faculty Salary Process

Last year the Council spent a good deal of time on, and made substantial progress on, revising the process by which faculty salary raises are determined. There seemed to be agreement on a number of principles, perhaps the most important of which was that we would move to a multi-year process in which only a part of the faculty would be evaluated each year. Such a process would both permit a somewhat more thorough evaluation of longer term faculty development, and reduce many people's work load. With luck, both such a process, and the criteria of evaluation for teaching scholarship and service, can be quickly agreed upon by Council, and brought to the faculty for its approval this coming semester.

Independent Projects

Subsequent to its approval of MAPs, the faculty mandated that the Curriculum Committee undertake this coming year an examination of the various other kinds of independent projects done at the College, with a view to possibly extending the newly accepted principle of compensation for independent work beyond the MAPs themselves.

Faculty Involvement in the Master Plan

The faculty voted last spring to request the Council and the FOC consider structures and processes that would enhance faculty influence over what buildings were built, where, and in what order. Given the lateness of the year, little got done, but that is still on the agenda.

MUSINGS OF A POLITICAL SCIENTIST ABOUT THE FACULTY ROLE IN COLLEGE GOVERNANCE AFTER TWO YEARS OF PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Two years ago, in her final report as Chair of the Faculty, my predecessor, Elizabeth Dobbs, in dealing with Faculty Governance, had the following to say:

Faculty Governance

I begin, as I did last year, with the issue of faculty governance, because I see this as a primary concern of the faculty. In last year's report, I urged each of you to consider an important part of your life here to be reasonable involvement in our self-governance of the curriculum and of those who teach in it and in our shared governance of the College. I think that faculty governance does exist at Grinnell: we really do both govern ourselves and share with the administration the governing of the institution. I also think that this governance is essential to the character of the College. I make these points, because not too many years ago, I was hearing both incoming and long-time faculty asking why we were spending our time doing certain "service" activities rather than having administrators do them. The sense was that we'd been hired to teach and do scholarship and that these committee activities were unnecessary. True, some of what faculty committees do--say, awarding grant money or awarding money for course development--could be done by administrative offices, but that would require the hiring of more administrators and, at least as serious, change an important part of what happens at Grinnell: the faculty role in making decisions about matters that closely touch us. I encourage you to be or stay involved. The College and the faculty especially need people who are willing to become involved and knowledgeable beyond the department level.

She clearly treats the faculty role in College governance as both real and substantial, and treats as the major problem in such governance the failure of many faculty members to get involved.

To a great extent, I share her perception that faculty play an important role: some faculty members essentially control the faculty personnel process, others control, within the limits of what the administration is prepared to recommend as an average salary increase, and the Board to ratify, faculty salaries. Faculty control the curriculum and the requirements for graduation. While the term "control" is too strong for the impact of the Executive Council on the administration's decisions as to where to allocate replacement positions or new positions, the Council has a substantial impact there. These are areas of great faculty concern. From discussions with colleagues at other institutions, I come away with the sense that we have more power than most faculties. However, the areas we control, or have substantial influence over, do not exhaust College governance, and I will discuss this below. Furthermore, I have been careful to specify that "some faculty" have such control or influence, and the relationship between those who exercise such influence "in the name of the faculty," and the rest of the faculty is the problematic I wish to focus on below.

I also share Elizabeth's sense that a substantial part of the faculty is uninterested in and uninvolved in governance. I noted with interest that, at the faculty meetings that generated the most intense interest, we had some 85 to 90 faculty members present.

Depending on how one defines, and then counts, faculty members, we have anywhere from 145 to 200 faculty members. Thus, at best, slightly over 60% of the faculty made decisions on the Mission Statement, or on MAPs. Despite the Executive Council slowing to a crawl the process of gathering surveys from the faculty, only 87 faculty members returned the second survey, again, at best, about 60%.

The problem of non-involvement is severe not only at the level of attending faculty meetings or filling out a survey. Elections of Chair of the Faculty, members of the Executive Council, members of the Personnel Committee, and Chair of the Faculty Organization Committee are preceded by numerous eligible faculty members withdrawing their names from consideration. Thus there emerges a process of recycling the same few people for leadership positions, which brings its own problems.

“Some faculty” have substantial power over some areas of decision-making at the College. Should those faculty, or others, have control over other areas, say the distribution of the whole College budget, or determining which buildings get built, in what order, at what expense, or what the College’s Drug and Alcohol policies should be. The Board of Trustees, the ultimate authority at the College, assigns other people – administrators, or students (who also take pride in their self-governance) primary responsibility in these areas. While I can not deal with this issue at length, I’m hard put to find a justification for “some faculty” to “control” or have “substantial impact on” decisions in such areas. If one uses the language of “community,” we are merely a part of the community. Why should our control be extended to such areas? If one talks about expertise, how does our expertise in medieval literature or Russian politics, or in the best pedagogical techniques, justify our control in these other areas? Surely we are not invoking democratic thought to justify such control. There are areas I haven’t discussed in which faculty interest/expertise seems to justify substantial faculty influence, e.g. admissions policy, where we do have such influence. There may be others where we should have, but do not now have, such influence. I do not see that as a major problem, however.

What I do see as a major problem is the relationship between faculty leaders, those elected to exercise “control,” “substantial impact,” or “influence” as representatives of the faculty, and the rest of the faculty. The faculty as a whole does, and only can, exercise its influence sporadically. Many, but not all, of the important decisions that “some faculty” make should be brought to the faculty as a whole for support, qualification, or rejection. Thus, both the Mission Statement and Maps came to the faculty, the former from the Executive Council, the latter from the Curriculum Committee. But it seems to me inappropriate for personnel decisions, salary decisions, or allocation of positions to come to the faculty as a whole. Yet there seems to be a widespread sense (at least among those who find interesting/important these issues) that the faculty’s elected representatives do not truly represent the faculty.

Political scientists spend a lot of time thinking about “representation,” a very complex subject. For some, the appropriate model is what we’d call a Burkean one: the large group elects as leaders those it perceives to be honest and competent, leaders who then

promote the interests of the larger group as best they understand them. They do not further consult the larger group, but may be “accountable” to them in the sense that such representatives may face re-election and, to the extent that what they did in office is known to the larger group, that group can reward them for satisfactory performance or punish them for perceived inadequate performance. It is clear that, in the past, many faculty were willing to accept a Burkean model of representation, even though our system did not permit accountability, both because faculty lacked knowledge of what their representatives had done, and because elected leaders seldom “ran” for re-election. It is also clear that few faculty members would now espouse such a model of representation.

Another model is that representatives, confronted by important decisions, consult with the group that elected them, thus serving largely as a conduit for group preferences. To some extent, the Council moved this year closer to that model. Divisional representatives frequently brought to the Divisions issues before the Council, seeking some “sense of the Divisions.” Thus, on the MAPs, the Mears issue, and the issue of distribution of speakers’ funds (after the fact), the Divisions played a crucial role. It is not clear, however, that on issues requiring confidentiality, personnel, salaries, and allocation of positions, this model can be brought to bear.

A partial move in this direction is to expand the decision-making beyond the small groups now making the decisions. On tenure and promotion cases, tenured members of departments and division personnel committees are involved. On salaries, department chairs make recommendations. On positions, again, the departments make proposals. Thus, in these crucial areas, the “some faculty” are supplemented by “some more” faculty. But most faculty are still left out of the loop, and apparently feel that a group of “others” is controlling decisions. The faculty surveys indicate that this sense is widespread, and leading to low morale. It is hard to see how that feeling can be transformed, but it will be crucially important to do so.

Last year, in my annual report, I indicated that the College was moving to decision-making processes which were more transparent and open. While I viewed this as a healthy development, I felt both that the process had not gone far enough and that, while openness in decision-making was desirable in and of itself, it was necessary to move beyond that to give the faculty a meaningful and substantial role in that decision-making. To some extent I believe both that “the faculty” (some faculty) has (have) played a decisive role in crucial events that have happened during the past year and that the process has been more transparent than it has ever been. Much remains to be done.