Israel Burshatin presiding

1. New Faculty and Staff Announcements for Spring 2015

2. Minutes from the Faculty Meeting December 18, 2014

3. Items for Action, and Items for Discussion
t   a. FAPC, Casey Londergan & Laura McGrane
      i. Faculty Mortgage Program (discussion)
      ii. On-Campus Housing (possible action)

4. Report of the President

5. Report of the Provost (see attachment)

6. Open question period

Attachments in connection with agenda items:
   a. FAPC, Casey Londergan & Laura McGrane: Faculty Mortgage Program & Housing
   b. Provost, Kimberly Benston: Provost's Report
   c. Provost, Kimberly Benston: Chesick Summer Application

Additional attachments sent out for review (and for questions during open question period):
   a. CPGC Announcements, Ann Preston (no materials)
   b. LACOL Report, Richard Freedman & Fran Blase
   c. FAPC, Jill Stauffer: Bionic
   d. Honor Council, Michelle Parris & Christopher Hadad: Previous semester academic issues
Action I. Approval of the minutes of November 20, 2014.

I. Reports, Items for Action, and items for discussion.

1. FRRC (Faculty Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct): Anne McGuire (att. docs., with additions and modifications handed out at the meeting.)

The Faculty Handbook governs only faculty behavior; the Staff and Administration have their own Handbooks; we hope that they will all be coordinated. We have already discussed sections III.I.6 (Faculty-Student Relations) and III.I.7 (Sexual or Romantic Relations) at the May 2014 faculty meeting. Our modifications (which we just handed out to you here) are underlined on p. 2:

1) “…and committed to creating an environment free from favoritism or the appearance of favoritism.” (top of page, third line.)

2) “A final exception that should be noted: this policy does not prohibit faculty members from sexual or romantic relations with those students who are their spouse, or members of the staff.” (final sentence under e. Exceptions and Classifications.)

QUESTION: Is this policy retroactive, does it apply to relationships that have been established in the past and are on-going now; and what about faculty members who are not present here this semester and hence are unable to note the changes in language (from “unacceptable” to “prohibited”) from the previous version? REPLY: We would have to consult Legal Counsel about the retroactive issue.

COMMENT: In the first paragraph defining the term “student,” the definition of “College housing” is vague: does it, for instance, include a BMC student living in HC housing in the summer? And what about students living in College faculty housing in the summer? Should it be changed to “College STUDENT housing?” [The faculty all agreed that Yes, it should be” College student housing.”]

COMMENT: In the last line under e.: “Spouses” should be changed to “spouses or domestic partners, or those students who are members of the staff,” or perhaps better: those members of the staff who are enrolled in courses.” [The faculty all agreed that Yes, it should be so changed.]
QUESTION: Why are we excluding Swarthmore and Bryn Mawr students? REPLY: We had indeed thought about including “tri-co,” but that would exclude other neighboring institutions such as UPenn and Villanova; so we decided to stick at the moment with what we have: Haverford students, and students enrolled in a class at Haverford (which would include Swarthmore and Bryn Mawr students as well).” RELATED REPLY: And the genesis of this language defining “student” is partly our Legal Counsel’s attempt to define “student” for discrimination cases.

The Clerk called for a straw-poll: Do we accept the revisions to the Handbook on Item III.I.6, including the revision of the revisions which has just been made on the floor of the faculty meeting? [College student housing”] YES 38, NO 1. The Clerk asked: Does the 1 No-vote choose to speak and explain the objections? Apparently not.

The Clerk called for a straw-poll on III.I.7 revisions: Do we accept the revisions, including the revision of the revision to “spouses, domestic partners, and those members of the staff who are enrolled in classes?” YES 37; NO 1. The Clerk asked: Does the 1 No-vote wish to speak? Apparently not.

The Clerk: Do we have a consensus? YES.

Action II. The faculty accepted the (now modified) revisions to the Faculty Handbook.

There was some discussion on the floor about whether a NO-vote on a straw-poll, which was not further explicated verbally, should be interpreted as meaning “standing outside the consensus.” There were differences of opinion, some noting that the straw-poll was adopted as a method for “hearing” from voices who did not want to speak aloud at faculty meeting, and others noting that a “NO” on a straw-poll was not the same as a NO on a consensus-acclamation: one may not want to agree to join the consensus but one might also not want to be explicit about standing outside the consensus. We ask that FAPC address the issue of what “standing outside the consensus, in a non-verbal way” means.

2. EPC, Phil Meneely. Two proposals for discussion (att. doc.)

a. Proposal One: Moving the drop-date to the end of the sixth week of classes (instead of the current third week,) contingent on adviser’s approval. (The drop/add date remaining the same.) The rationale was explained in the EPC document which laid it out: for us, the overwhelming rationale is that many students are not given feedback about their performance in a class until after the current drop-date. [And yes, there would be adjustments in date for ½ courses.]

QUESTION: Is the premise that “students who are not getting what they consider a ‘good’ grade should be allowed to withdraw from the course?” Hmm.
COMMENT: I agree with the previous question; extending the date to half-way through the course emphasizes that the course is all about grading, rather than about the suitability of the course to the student’s education.

COMMENT: Why not simply use the option of a Pass/Fail grade in this case?

COMMENT: Why would an adviser allow it in such a circumstance? I realize, however, our current advising arrangement through Bionic does not allow the adviser to exert any advice-pressure anyway.

COMMENT: In “dire circumstances,” a student can always go to the Dean and get out of a course. Why are we extending the normative time and hence creating the expectation of such a behavior pattern as “normal”?

COMMENT: If this applies mainly to beginning courses for beginning students, why don’t we ask the faculty to give out feedback earlier? RESPONSE/COMMENTS No! We don’t want the faculty to change its teaching practices about feedback in general. But if this is a problem, could we introduce the drop-change just for first semester freshmen in introductory courses? LATER COMMENT: If first-year students are the problem, why don’t we make all first-semester freshman courses Pass/Fail?

COMMENT: How would this affect our grade-inflation problem, (that is, if the weaker students are dropping out of the course)?

COMMENT: I encourage students who get a low grade on their first exam to work through the challenge and learn to work better and improve. (Education is about learning how to do better.) This proposal seems to suggest otherwise. AND: do we really want students to quit just to protect their GPA?

COMMENT: This proposal would surely encourage students to take 5 courses in order to assure a 4-course load after six weeks. This would create even more chaos than that caused in pre-registration by the lottery system and the uncertainties of the shopping-period; now there would be a further shift in enrollments half way through the course. Moreover, attention paid to weaker students at the beginning of the course would be wasted when the student later exits the course; this would encourage faculty to stop making that now-wasted effort for weaker students.

COMMENT: Most of our peers have a later drop-date; do we know whether they have experienced the down-sides that we fear?

The Clerk asked for a straw-poll: YES 2 ; NO 28; TOO SOON TO SAY 9.

b. Proposal two: Changing the divisional General Education requirement by allowing all 3 courses to be in one department. This would encourage
more depth-work in another division, and the ability to take more 200-and
300-courses.

COMMENT: I support this proposal, and for that reason: it encourages a possibility of
depth. But it also does not require it.

COMMENT: The proposal keeps in place the principle of strict divisional separation, a
principle that has become more and more outdated with the appearance of cross-
disciplinary fields.

COMMENT: The divisional requirement as it now stands forces students into liberal arts
breadth, and to the possibility of encountering fields that they had never before
experienced. This can be a large educational benefit to them. The change would create a
Major/Minor pattern, not breadth.

COMMENT: Why did we create the old system in that way? REPLY: In order to
courage liberal arts breadth. [And yes, we did not have Minors then; we have had
Areas of Concentration coordinated with Majors since the early 1980s, but Minors came
much later.]

COMMENT: But the “no more than 2 in one department” encourages students to make a
mere “random” choice for a 3rd in the division. ANOTHER COMMENT: Courses in a
second department need not be “random,” in fact may powerfully complement a course in
the main department of study.

QUESTION: Has EPC thought about establishing a deadline by which time the students
must have fulfilled the General Education requirements? REPLY: Not yet.

The Clerk asked for a straw-poll: YES 15; NO 9; TOO SOON TO SAY 14.

3. FAPC, Casey Londergan & Laura McGrane; Faculty housing (att. doc.)

We are now asking you to discuss the principle: what is the value to us of faculty
housing? What is important to the community?

COMMENT (The President): This document is a good start. We must begin to consider
housing policy. We can be flexible about housing, we have a lot of land; we could create
new options, for instance with a new facility on campus land.

COMMENT: We have been considering this for quite a few years recently. What is
clear from the many discussions we have had is that we, “as a community,” have
different views, we do not speak with one voice. And any discussion about campus
housing must be connected to a discussion about a College mortgage policy for off-
campus housing (as well as any newly-constructed, purchased, on-campus housing.)
REPLY: Yes, we will be discussing mortgages too; but we want to separate out the
“campus housing” strain: what can campus housing do for us.
COMMENT: I didn’t see any discussion, on this list, of “close-to-retirement” faculty. We have been thinking about “the whole career path” of the faculty; this is part of it.

COMMENT: I would like to see more economic discussion: there are certainly cost-benefits of living on campus (and by the way, the savings in commuting-costs is one); but there is also the costs of a retirement without housing-equity to consider.

QUESTION: Several years ago, when we started to talk about this, there was a sense of “urgency”: that something had to change, and right now. Is this still true? REPLY: We are asking you now to consider the value of faculty housing aside from the question of urgency. “What about faculty housing does the faculty value, or not value?”

COMMENT: It is hard to talk about “principles” when one has been so happy with one’s own personal choice. RELATED COMMENT: We can talk about valuing campus housing even though we don’t all do it ourselves. It is part of our “brand” and the College should invest in it.

COMMENT: We know what the issues are by now. There must be a diversity of options, including non-campus housing; but no one is advocating doing-away-with campus housing.

COMMENT (The President): You might think about campus housing as a “faculty benefit,” but you could also think of faculty housing as an investment in a strategic plan. A strategic plan must be implemented: we have to be professionally responsible to this asset and deal with its costs and with its present state (which must be addressed.)

II. Report of the President.

We are about to have consultants come to discuss the implementation of an ombudsman system of some sort; it is in the works.

The Diversity Task Force is in operation: we are discussing the “diversity environment” on campus, the issue of staff hiring and retention, the academic program and curriculum, the educational opportunities for staff, and the nature of the campus community.

III. Report of the Provost (att. doc.)

1. The Provost turned to Fran Blase: the Middle States Periodic Review (att. doc.)

A prime ingredient of the Middle State Report was the senior thesis or capstone work. The periodic review asks for departmental self-assessments.

We will be holding four workshops this spring about Access to Learning.
2. We have begun a discussion of “diversity in the curriculum” this week; some interesting ideas came up which we will explore further.

3. We have just been apprised of a new Pennsylvania State Law which applies to all employees (including faculty!) who have contact with minors (i.e., age 17: many of our freshmen.) All employees (including those already here and those who are being considered by current search committees) will have to undergo background checks. We do not yet know the implications for us; we are consulting with Legal Counsel; more information is to come.

**IV: Open Question Period** was postponed, due to the time.

Adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Linda Gerstein, Secretary to the Faculty