

## Haverford College Faculty Meeting Minutes

January 25, 2018

Deborah Roberts, Clerk

Moment of silence.

.        **I. Introduction of faculty** who are new in the spring semester.

**Action I.** Approval of the minutes of December 21, 2017.

### **II. Reports. Items for Action, and Items for Discussion**

1. FAPC: Rob Bret Mulligan (att. doc.)

We are requesting approval now for the status of “permanent standing committee” for FAPC. There are now two modifications of the December proposal, after discussions with the faculty: 1) that the “doubling” function operate only occasionally, when deemed necessary (“may be appointed to other committees”) and 2) a more precise definition of “junior faculty member” (not yet tenured and not with a tenure-case coming up in the current year.)

**COMMENT:** (I missed the discussion last month.) About the methods of elections: It seems to me that too few people in the faculty are willing to stand for election. Did you discuss changing the method of elections? (It is a self-selected group to some extent. People can be nominated, or can nominate themselves; they are asked to submit a statement when they stand for election about what issues are important to them. Unlike other committee assignments, or elections to Academic Council, people can also decline being considered.) Does this method (and perhaps also the work-load implied by the possibility of a “double” committee assignment) reduce the constituency of those who serve?

**REPLY:** We did not look for statistics about who (and how many) agree to actually stand for election, and we did not discuss the process of elections. We could discuss this in the future.

**COMMENT:** (I also was not here for the discussion last month.) We are always adding things, but we rarely subtract things; and FAPC was a recent addition. What if we suspended FAPC for a year and saw whether we actually miss it?

**COMMENT:** We restructured functions when we created FAPC. We would certainly miss it if we simply suspended it, because FAPC does more and different things than Academic Council now does.

The Clerk asked for a straw-poll:

Willing to go with the proposal 38; Not willing 4 (42 votes)

The Clerk asked: Does anyone else wish to speak?

**COMMENT:** We could make a simple change to the appointment process: that you are *not* able to decline nomination.

**COMMENT:** Well, I myself would decline under current circumstances because I would not want to write that “election statement.”

**REPLY (FAPC):** It is not *required* that you write that paragraph.

**COMMENT:** That paragraph statement doesn’t seem to be necessary now. **REPLY (FAPC):** At the time we created FAPC, it seemed to us to be useful; why not keep the practice (although not mandatory) an open option? **RELATED COMMENT (current FAPC member):** When I was nominated, I found having to write it a useful experience for me.

**COMMENT:** FAPC is an important committee representing solely faculty interests; as a faculty member, I do not want an “unwilling” faculty member serving on FAPC; and I do indeed want to know how people stand on certain faculty issues when I am electing.

The Clerk asked: As we move to the consensus process, I now ask: Do any of the 4 who responded “No” on the straw-poll wish to speak and to indicate whether they would wish to actually stand *outside* a consensus? Two people spoke: “I would wish to be noted as standing outside a consensus.”

The Clerk then asked the faculty: Do we have a consensus, (noting that two explicitly stand outside it)? Apparently, Yes.

**Action II.** The faculty approved regularizing the existence of FAPC as a standing committee.

2. Institutional Effectiveness Committee [IEF]: Richard Freedman, Assoc. Provost) (att. doc.)

There *is* indeed a Middle States self-study on the horizon, which is part of a process of an eight-year cycle of assessment from Middle States.

It arouses groans for those of us who have been through this before, but the Middle States process has been much improved since some previous experiences we have had with this. Periodic self-review can be an *opportunity*, and for us especially in the post-2020 Strategic Plan period.

So it seems time for us to raise general issues that would go into our (eventual) self-study. We (IEC) are still in the process of setting up the Middle States task forces; we are mindful of the potential load of work.

**COMMENTS (about issues to raise):**

Advising, especially of first-year students.

Grading.

Are our students now “different” from previous generations? Do we need new ways of helping them achieve their best potential?

Faculty research productivity across the professor’s life-span.

What goes on in our Freshman Writing Courses, and what are reasonable standards to set for a student’s potential to write a good senior thesis?

Is our administrative structure organized too monopolistically? Could we fragment (distribute) certain functions (such as, for instance, “safety”) better among different offices with specific relevances?

The treatment of interim faculty.

Addressing the disadvantages to students of having too many one-time visiting professors. What are the soft-costs of a large turn-over of interim faculty?

Hybrid staff/faculty appointments: the consequences of this practice.

Can we look at what kinds of assessment work well for us? (**Reply from IEC:** At the moment we do have a system of assessment, and it is in its early days; we have made it into a rather simple and routine process that seems to produce results without too much trouble; let us see how it works out before moving to a different one.)

**COMMENT:** We should remember that what we tell Middle States we are going to do, we must then do. And we will then have to measure how well we do it. (Or: “Be careful what you wish for, and what you promise to do.”) **REPLY (IEC):** We *can* avoid “over-reach”; we can simply “fix” things that we notice need fixing without “institutionalizing” them into the final Middle States report.

### III. Open Question Period

1. EPC: New course proposals are due February 16, 2018. The submission forms have been rationalized, (we hope.)

**QUESTION:** What is the difference between “permanent” course approval by EPC, “interim” course approval by EPC, and “ad hoc course approval by the Provost?” **REPLY:** Permanent course approval usually applies to courses designed by regular faculty members; temporary approval is for courses taught by interim, visiting, faculty; ad hoc Provost’s approval comes for courses from people hired at the end of the semester or in the summer, after EPC has ceased to meet. **QUESTION:** Would a policy of making all temporary interim course approvals come from the Provost’s office lighten the burden of EPC? **REPLY:** EPC feels that EPC should be in charge of all course proposals, whenever possible; that is the charge of the EPC (Educational Policy Committee.)

#### IV. **Report of the President**

1. We have joined the American Talent Initiative consortium (of like-minded colleges and universities) to discuss with these others the problems facing low-income students these days, with the goal of boosting more of them into the academy.

Although Congress has approved the re-authorization of the Higher Education bill, there are new burdens for these low-income students. We will try to make up these financial gaps.

2. We are beginning to think about the next 10 years of filling faculty slots, thinking collectively and holistically. I urge you to think more about partnerships, within your disciplines and programs, certainly, but also across departments and even divisions, and even with Bryn Mawr; “growth” comes from connectivity.

#### V. **Report of the Provost** (att. doc.)

I remind you of the planned new Term Professorships (to last 3 years) created by the Board for research, available to professors who are at least 4 years past the tenure decision. You will hear more soon.

We have an upcoming Distinguished Visitor in “transnational studies,” funded under the Paul Desjardins Fund: Prof. Simeon Man (UCSan Diego), who will give a seminar on Tuesday April 3. (The Area and Transnational Studies Working Group will be meeting all semester, discussing among other things a proposed minor in Comparative and Transnational Studies CATS.)

We will also have a visit from Prof. Sigal Ben-Porath (UPenn) who is giving a talk on “Free Speech on Campus” on Thursday March 8.

Lindsay Reckson (English) will be the next D3 (“Drinks, Dinner, Discourse”) speaker on Wednesday March 28: “The Ghost Dance and Realism’s Techno-Spiritual Frontier.”

A propos the USN&WR rankings, about which Kim spoke to us last month: we know that people do look at them. Their processes are neither consistent nor transparent, but we do know that they have hit hard on us in the “faculty resources” category for having too many courses with over 50 students. We ourselves worry about large courses, (which seem to be sometimes necessary.) They fall especially frequently in the fall semesters. The numbers of such courses here are dropping lately; I suggest that we be strategic about this. If we change the top LE (limited enrollment number) to 45 (instead of 50), if we try to limit the unavoidable over-50s, and if we have sectioned courses keep individual sections size down to under 50, it would help.

Problems of “Sexual Harassment” and “Hostile Work Environment” (including the use of offensive insulting language) are once again in the public eye. There will once again be a mandatory session for everyone to discuss Title IX and hostile work environment; the session will be offered twice (on March 1 and on March 7); as before, there will be a possibility of participating in the session virtually (in the usual fashion) if you cannot make one of those dates; but it is absolutely mandatory that you participate.

Adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Linda Gerstein, Secretary to the Faculty