

Minutes from the General Faculty Council Meeting
Wednesday, April 14, 2010
12:00 noon – 1:30 pm
Newcomb Hall Room 481

Representatives Present – Otilie Austin, Casandra Blassingame, Addeane Calleigh, Richard Floyd, Anne Ingram, Denise Kavoli, Barbara Kessler, Aaron Laushway, Catherine Leslie, Terry Lockhard, Barbara Millar, Peter Norton, Bethany Nowviskie, Ricky Patterson, Kathryn Reid, Jeff Sitler, Colleen Smith, Steven Warner

Representatives Absent – Penny Bowles, Ryan Carter, Pam MacIntyre, Wendy Sue Sewack, Michael Smith,

Preliminaries

1. 12:00 **Gathering of Members**

2. 12:10 **Call to Order**

Ricky Patterson, outgoing Chair, welcomed the members and guests. The GFC took a moment to introduce themselves.

It was noted that there are two new members of the council who are coming from off grounds. Cassandra Blassingame comes from the U.Va. Northern Virginia Center in Falls Church and Catherine Leslie from Staunton.

Business

3. 12:15 **Declaration against Discrimination**

Ricky Patterson updated the GFC on the Declaration against Discrimination. He reviewed the background, beginning with the Attorney General Cuccinelli's statements on discrimination in March, followed by Governor McDonnell's response to the statement. Terri Lockhard noted that the Declaration against Discrimination was discussed at length in the Daily Progress on April 6, and the GFC was prominent in the article. (See article below)

Of course. The University of Virginia's position of leadership in the realms of scholarship and academic freedom depend on the practice of nondiscrimination.

State Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli seems to be the only person of note who questions that reality.

So it was good to see the UVa faculty reaffirm their commitment to non-discrimination in the wake of Mr. Cuccinelli's controversial letter advising otherwise.

Mr. Cuccinelli told colleges and universities that any policy they might have that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation was in fact impermissible because the state had not approved such a policy.

Apart from the human rights angle, there are several things wrong with that line of reasoning but we will mention only one, cited by Gov. Bob McDonnell

when he finally intervened: Discrimination based on sexual preference is prohibited by federal law and state institutions have no right to violate federal law.

Perhaps it was unnecessary for the university's Faculty Senate to reiterate a stand against nondiscrimination.

But it was wise.

The statement, endorsed by the General Faculty Council and which in turn reaffirms a policy adopted by the Board of Visitors, leaves no doubt as to the faculty's position and the underpinnings of that position.

That policy says the university "will not tolerate discrimination or harassment in the workplace, academic setting or in its programs or activities based on age, color, disability, marital status, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, or veteran status."

In implementing that policy, the faculty statement said, that university faculties have a "special charge" to "foster diversity" and to assure "equal support to all participants faculty, staff and students alike."

In this environment of variety, with multiple viewpoints, diverse life experiences and other stimulating differences, academic pursuits can flourish. (For that matter, so can personal growth.)

"These protections," said the faculty, "and our institutional commitment to an inclusive community are essential to the health of the academic enterprise and must not be compromised."

Hear, hear.

On March 31st the GFC endorsed the draft of the Faculty Senate's response. On April 5th there was a forum on the issue of sexual orientation, which focused on a discussion of where things really stood at U.Va. It was determined that U.Va might have a lawsuit, and that the Dillon Rule probably will not apply. There needs to be legislative action either in the General Assembly, but it might be more likely to have something like this passed in Congress to be certain that the rights are unquestionable.

Barbara Kessler, on behalf of the GFC, both current and new members, thanked Ricky Patterson for leading and managing the comments and suggestions on this important issue of discrimination.

3: 12:20 Election of New Officers

It was noted that the election process did not change from the old bylaws to the new bylaws.

Peter nominated Barbara Millar for Chair of the General Faculty Council. Terri Lockhard seconded the nomination.

Barbara Millar shared her observations about the GFC. 1) There is an issue of a breakdown or separation between the A&P faculty and Research faculty, and she

wants it to be acknowledged. Since the HR restructuring, the issue has become more compounded. She noted as an example Susan Carkeek's statement that the Employee Council represents managerial and executive university staff. Barbara challenges the validity of this statement. 2) We need to ask ourselves why we are here. What is the purpose of the GFC as these changes roll through? If we don't ask ourselves this question, we will go out of business.

The GFC should redefine itself, its committee structures, in the broadest terms. We need to take a hard look at this.

The GFC's vote for Barbara Millar was unanimous.

Terry Lockhard agreed to be Chair-elect. Colleen Smith agreed to a second-term as Secretary. Ricky Patterson nominated the slate of officers. Barbara Kessler seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

4. 12:30 **Committees**

The incoming committee chairs, along with their responsibilities and membership are as follows:

Bylaws – Wendy Sewack, Chair

Responsibilities include: Management of the bylaws as necessary.

Members include: Catherine Leslie, Casandra Blassingame, Barbara Kessler, Jeff Sitler and Richard Floyd

Elections – Jeff Sitler, Chair

Responsibilities include:

- 1) Run the elections for the new members of the committees across the grounds.
- 2) Sending out emails asking people "Who wants to be elected?" There is a software package put together by ITC that is specific for GFC.
- 3) The Elections committee runs the results, the results are announced. This is once a year and you have one week to get it done.

Policy – Peter Norton, Chair

Responsibilities include:

- 1) Review policies under review by U.Va. The Faculty Senate has a policy review committee. This group is the communication between the two groups.
- 2) Meets between the monthly GFC meetings. Much of the work is done via email, but sometimes it is important to find an administrator to talk to, as many as 2-3 times per semester.
- 3) Current issues are focusing on AP constituents, as they are worried about their futures. Re-titling was once an issue that this committee spearheaded.
- 4) Policy issues tend to be around research and teaching, not A&P.
- 5) There was once a joint committee with the Faculty Senate, but now it is dormant.

Committee members include: Kathryn Reid, Bethany Nowviskie, Addean Caellegh, Anne Ingram, Denise Karaole, Barbara Kessler, Ricky Patterson.

Communications – Steve Warner, Chair, Aaron Laushway, Co-Chair

Responsibilities include:

- 1) Appointment of the Webmaster, who does not have to be on the Communications committee.
- 2) Holds the role of general communications about GFC.
- 3) Organize professional development events, twice a year. Plan those events and arrange speakers.
- 4) Committee should meet every month, more often around events.
- 5) This is one of the most active committees.

New members include: Terry Lockard, Kathryn Reid, Colleen Smith, Barbara Millar, Steven Warner, and Aaron Laushway.

Data Management – Ricky Patterson, Chair

Responsibilities include:

Once a year it gets a list of institutional assessment and studies groups of all of the members. We make sure they are on our GFC list. This is important to confirm that we have a group eligible to vote. Note, looking at the numbers of how many in each of the areas that we represent, with changes in AP faculty, it could mean that we don't include M (management) and P (professional) then administrative might decrease because of how the numbers change.

Members include: Bethany Nowviskie and Rickie Patterson.

5. 12:50 Other Business

- Discussion about the annual luncheon for the GFC ensued. It was decided that the luncheon would be at the Darden School on June 9, 2010 at 12:00pm, in a private room, and everyone could pitch in \$10. This would replace the Boars Head luncheon and would officially be the 10th meeting of the year. There will be no meeting in July and August. It was noted that this would keep the spirit of the GFC not wanting to spend its budget for food.
- Terry Lochard told the group about the upcoming career development event. It will be a luncheon event on June 4. The working title is: **Leading Change**. Alec Horniman will be the facilitator. It will be a 45-minute presentation at Harrison Institute in the Small Special Collections Library. Lunch will follow.

The Communication Committee plans a fall event that will be a welcome for new President Theresa Sullivan. All general faculty will be invited.

- Barbara Kessler pointed out that the issue of Attorney General Cuccinelli's statement generated the ability for GFC to mobilize and respond to an issue in a timely fashion. The Faculty Senate, the GFC, and the Employee Council

were all on the same schedule. It was a strategic experience for us, proving that with good relationships with other groups we could collectively make decisions as a group. This was process oriented and will help us in future conversations.

Barbara Millar observed that the connection with the Faculty Senate is good, but what about the Employee Council? The Chair of the Employee Council is in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies. They don't know what they are allowed to do and they have issues with speaking publicly.

- Ricky and Terry planned to attend their meeting in May. The Faculty Senate relationship needs to continue to be nurtured.
- It was noted that another topic that the Faculty Senate is involved in following the outcome of Open Access resolution. It was passed by the Faculty Senate, albeit weakened. What should an Open Access Repository look like? Could the GFC continue to be a part of that conversation?
- Barbara Millar suggested that we invite the Senate Chair to be a part of our group in the fall. Have we ever invited the Employee Council? Perhaps we could have them on the agenda at one of our meetings.
- What about professional research staff. What council is going to represent them? Professional research staff – what council is going to represent these people?
- Ricky will be meeting with attending the Diversity Council tomorrow on April 15. The Diversity Council meets Thursday mornings (3rd Thursday) and they represent everything.
- New council members were welcomed again by Barbara Millar, who also thanked Ricky for the great job he did on behalf of the GFC. The GFC gave Ricky a round of applause.

1:20 **Adjournment**

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 12, 2010, Newcomb Hall Ballroom, Room 481.