

Notes of the General Faculty Council meeting held on November 8, 2005.

Present were: Jean Collier, chair, Bill Keene, Nancy Gansneder, Dawn Rigney, Phil Gates, Lynda White (representing Lotta Löfgren), Derry Wade, Robin Kuzen, Gary Davis, Mark Ross, Ed Murphy, John Wilson, Ellie Wilson, Carol Hunter, Daisy Rodriguez, Pam MacIntyre, Prue Thorner.

Invited guests: Houston Wood, Donna Plasket.

1. Jean Collier welcomed Houston Wood, president of the Faculty Senate, who was invited to speak about the activities of the Senate and plans for future action.

Houston Wood's presentation:

He stated that there are 80 senators who each serve a four year term. Eight executive committee members serve for three years. In SEAS, a nominating committee selects members. IN CLAS, departments and units elect representatives. In the Law School the dean appoints representative senators.

Standing committees of the Senate include Academic Affairs, and this year's chair is Reg Garrett. One of the programs that the Senate oversees is the awarding of dissertation year fellowships that support students in the last year of their academic career at U.Va. The Research and Scholarship committee is chaired by Dr. Susan Kirk in SOM. This committee selects Harrison awards for 40 undergraduate students. \$150,000 is currently available to fund these awards. Nicole Hurd of the Center for Undergraduate Excellence oversees the administration of these awards.

Last year the Senate undertook a report on graduate education. This effort was chaired by Aaron Mills, and the report resulted in funds to recruit the best graduate students by offering research assistantships. \$100,000 is available for this purpose. This is part of an outstanding effort led by Roseanne Ford to create a real sense of community for postdocs at U.Va.

This year the Senate will have a mid-year retreat in January. Among its activities this fall the Senate approved a resolution opposing racist activities on Grounds. The two constituencies (of the Faculty Senate and the GFC) will benefit from increased dialogue.

Personal observations:

Houston stated that he believes that President Casteen does not support faculty representation on the Board of Visitors; however, the chair of the Faculty Senate does have a seat on the Educational Policy committee of the BOV. The Provost also has a seat at the table, which is a significant step forward and is a member of the General Faculty. He commented that he believes there is poor recognition of the function of the Faculty Senate, or who the senators are who represent them, among academic faculty.

He is concerned about how the University can improve its recruitment of the best faculty. An important step would be to improve faculty benefits, possibly by offering paid tuition for children of faculty and staff. He would like to see the academic point of view represented in the capital campaign. He believes that capital campaign funds should be

used to improve the quality of the academic experience for students, rather than for construction. Some regulations regarding voting capacity of research faculty on the Senate are inconsistent.

Discussion points with Houston Wood's responses:

Bill Keene: we are asking the Senate to endorse disability leave for research staff and faculty, and benefits during a hiatus in external funding. Houston responded that the Executive Council will review our resolutions and get back to us.

Ellie Wilson: affordable housing is a major concern. Houston: there may be a long-term plan for U.Va. to construct housing for faculty. University support for reduced interest rates on mortgages is also needed. We do have the ear of President Casteen on these issues. He realizes that the recruitment and retention of the best faculty is essential if U.Va is to improve its national ranking.

Robin Kuzen: can we work together to demonstrate unity on these matters? Houston: yes.

Keene: we also need policies that nurture and support researchers specifically for the GFC's two resolutions on hiatus support and disability coverage.

Rodriguez: would like to see a statement on the importance of diversity and tolerance. Houston: the Faculty Senate has already done so. The Black Student Alliance has asked the Senate to endorse a statement of tolerance that welcomes people from all backgrounds.

Gansneder: we have to better articulate what we do.

Gates: asked how the Senate was able to become identified with the fellowships and recruitment funding as being key successes for the Senate. The GFC should be identified with issues such as student life and affordable housing through the work that we do.

MacIntyre: benefits and affordable housing should be the top issues we are identified with. We should not be afraid to "make waves".

Collier: The Provost's Office has recently surveyed some peer institutions through the Mellon Foundation's review of general faculty at comparable institutions. We need to collate policies on promotion and tenure for all units of the University to identify inconsistencies. We are concerned about the status of adjunct faculty.

Plasket: Adjunct faculty appointments in the School of Continued and Professional Studies are re-appointed on a course-by-course basis.

Jean Collier said is willing to meet with President Casteen if we can commence a dialogue regarding adjunct faculty status—together with the past and incoming chairs of the GFC.

John Wilson: we need to nurture the relationship with the Provost so that he better understands our positions on these key issues.

Jean will e-mail discussion points to Council members prior to the **December meeting** with Provost Gene Block on 12/13. The location is to be announced.

Respectfully submitted by: Prue Thorner