

Minutes of the General Faculty meeting held on December 14, 2004.

Present were: Robin Kuzen, chair, Jean Collier, Camilla Curnow, Derry Wade, Bill Keene, John Wilson, Nancy Gansneder, Ellie Wilson, Carol Hunter, Phil Gates, Chris Milner, Lotta Löfgren, Elaine Attridge, Paige Hopkins (alternate for Jennifer Bauerle), Greg Strickland and Prue Thorner. Guests: Lynda White, Suzanne Louis. Absent were: Robbie Greenlee, Dawn Rigney.

Chair's Report

1. Robin announced that there will be a Legislative Forum on Tuesday, January 7 at noon, in the Newcomb Hall Ballroom. This will be an opportunity to talk to our elected representatives prior to the next General Assembly session, which convenes on January 12, 2005. Robin asked for ideas for one or two additional speakers for the February or March meeting.
2. Ellie suggested the Honor Committee president as a future speaker. Nancy suggested that Bob Reynolds as Chief IT officer would be a suitable speaker. Chris suggested that the future of general faculty would be a good topic for a presentation, although he wasn't sure anyone would be willing to discuss the topic. Lynda suggested the co-chairs of the President's Commission on Diversity and Equity, Michael J. Smith and Angela Davis.
3. Our budget stands at \$6,438. Robin explained that GFC accumulated funding from previous years had not been brought forward by the University Budget Office. When Robin brought this to her attention, Melissa Clarke in the Budget Office corrected this situation. We will spend some of this money on publicizing the GFC and generating more interest in our upcoming elections. Camilla suggested an annual award to recognize an outstanding general faculty member, which would serve to make our existence better known. Ellie suggested a "model policies" for general faculty award to a school of the University. Robin asked her to bring a detailed proposal on this to the next meeting.
4. Robin distributed a copy of the University Code of Ethics, adopted by the Board of Visitors on October 2, 2004. She announced that she has been invited to join the Faculty Senate's Ad Hoc Committee on Charter Status.
5. John Wilson reported as the GFC's representative to the Faculty Senate Research Committee. As a member of this committee, he helps evaluate student research proposals for research grants of \$3,000 each funded by the Harrison family. These awards fall under the auspices of the Center for Graduate Excellence. He also reported that the committee is looking at the issue of sensitive or potentially harmful research. David Hudson (Office of the Vice President for Research) spoke at a recent meeting regarding whether review of research that might be dangerous to the participants (but not within the purview of existing reviews, e.g., IRB's), or harmful to the University and its reputation, should be addressed. The committee is considering how it should formally respond to Mr. Hudson's concerns.
6. Bill Keene discussed the charter issue and the executive committee's efforts to move toward issuing a resolution supporting it. He said that we continue to be concerned about General Faculty representation on the Board of Visitors, the

- issuance of a policy manual for GF, the importance of keeping fees and tuition at an affordable level, and also the potential for creating two classes of employees, pre- and post-charter status. The BOV is clearly against faculty representation on the Board. An assurance is also needed that under charter status employees should not receive a lower pay increase than state employees receive. He is also concerned that the Access UVA program to offer more financial aid to needy students may not keep pace with tuition increases. Therefore, as Chair of the GFC Policy Committee, Bill recommended that we conditionally endorse the charter status, based on receiving assurances that these concerns are satisfactorily addressed by the University administration. If we want to have any impact on the General Assembly, we must act immediately.
7. Bill agrees that the charter status is imperative for maintaining excellence at U.Va. He would like us to express support for chartered status but we need to articulate our specific concerns in the same document.

After a lengthy discussion, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

General Faculty Council Resolution on ‘Charter Status’

The General Faculty Council on behalf of its 1,800 constituents supports the University of Virginia’s effort to establish a new relationship with the Commonwealth of Virginia currently known as the Commonwealth Chartered Universities with the following provisions:

- That the outgoing chairs of the General Faculty Council and the Faculty Senate be appointed as non-voting members of the Board of Visitors.
- That increases in tuition be accompanied by directly proportionate increases in financial aid for Commonwealth citizens of modest means.
- That there be no distinction between grandfathered and non-grandfathered employees with regard to the relative cost of benefits.

Context for

The General Faculty Council
Resolution on the Charter Initiative

14 December 2004

President Casteen, Leonard Sandridge, and other administrators have argued convincingly that the nature of financing our University must change fundamentally if we are to maintain excellence in teaching and research. The General Faculty Council together with many other stakeholders (including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and Commonwealth citizens) agree that some form of charter status is the only viable solution to the crisis we face. We support the administration’s effort to establish a new relationship of this nature with the state. From our perspective, however, revision of the currently proposed Chartered Universities Initiative as outlined below would substantially enhance its value and utility for the University of Virginia (UVA).

1. The draft initiative provides no mechanism to realize the administration's assurances that faculty would have greater voice in university affairs under charter. Faculty representatives serve on the Boards of Visitors (BOVs) of UVA's partner institutions in this initiative (the College of William and Mary and Virginia Tech) and a student representative serves on UVA's board. In contrast, our BOV tabled a proposal by the Faculty Senate in April 2003 to establish a non-voting faculty seat on the board and, in 2004, the Vice Rector of our BOV testified before the state senate against a bill that would have mandated faculty representation. With the increased autonomy of the BOV under charter, we think it vitally important that faculty (both tenure-track and non-tenure-track) be granted a direct voice in governance via representation on the board.
2. The draft initiative does not guarantee that financial aid for students will keep pace with rising tuition. Many feel that the tuition-granting authority given to our BOV should include an obligation to increase aid in direct proportion to tuition thereby ensuring that college education remains affordable for Commonwealth citizens of modest means and preserving the Jeffersonian vision of a public university.
3. The draft legislation (sections 23-38.112-114) specifically authorizes charter institutions to bill new (post-charter) employees at relatively higher rates for benefits. We fear that the establishment of such a "two-tiered" labor force would demoralize employees and thereby compromise their ability to fulfill the University's mission. It would likely also make us less competitive in hiring than other institutions. In our view, the overall compensation packages (i.e., for salary together with benefits) for new employees should not be lower than those for current employees in order to achieve financial solvency through charter.

The next meeting of the General Faculty Council will be held on Tuesday, January 11 at noon in Room 481 Newcomb Hall.