

# UMW Faculty Senate

## Wednesday 05 December 2007, 16h00

### Red Room, Woodard Campus Center

Steve Fuller (President) called the meeting to order at 16:02. The minutes of the November meeting were approved without change.

## Reports

### Report of the Interim Dean of the Faculty

Dean Barra gave the names of those who received for Faculty Achievement Awards:

**Nabil al-Tikriti** - named a Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow at the U.S. Institute of Peace

**Deena Applebury** - named the WBCA, NCAA Division III National Coach of the Year

**Janet Asper** - received a research grant from the American Chemical Society, Petroleum Research Fund

**Robert Barr** - received the Junior Faculty Grant for International Security and Foreign Policy from the Smith Richardson Foundation

**Teresa Coffman** - received a grant from the Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

**Jeffrey Edmunds** - for organizing the calculus tournament for high school students that brought eight high school teams to the campus for a *Jeopardy*-like competition

**Claudia Emerson** - won the Carole Weinstein Prize in Poetry

**Deborah Hydorn, Kathy Loesser-Casey, and Alan Griffith** - received a grant from the American Statistical Association for enhancing awareness of biostatistics among students

**Chris Kilmartin** - elected to Fellow status in the American Psychological Association

**Ben Kisila** - received research grants from the Army Corps of Engineers and from Dominion Virginia Power

**David Kolar and Christine McBride** - for their role in the successful grant received by Rappahannock Big Brothers Big Sisters from the Department of Health and Human Services

**Kathy Loesser-Casey and Lynn Lewis** - received a grant for introducing phage genomics labs into an introductory biology course

**Nicole Myers** - for her coordination of Camp of Hope, a day camp for children with special needs, held at the Quantico Marine Corps base

**Allyson Poska** - awarded a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies

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Anand Rao (ESL) asked about online courses and support for faculty. Dean Barra said that department chairs had received the online course proposal in August: three faculty members will be teaching online courses this summer, and these courses have been approved by the Curriculum Committee. This project has been ongoing since 2000. There are not yet other means of support for faculty teaching or developing online courses. Prof. Rao wanted to know whether administrative review had been done or was being reinstated: Dean Barra said that this was never done through Academic Affairs, but that the process of review for administrative faculty was currently under review by the Core. Mary Rigsby (President-Elect) said that this was a faculty initiative and could be taken up later among the faculty.

### Report of the Vice President for Academic Affairs

Charles Sharpless (CHEM) asked whether the proposals on page seven of the report would be continuing. Prof. Morello said yes, but that these proposals would be ongoing so that he did not have to set up separate pages for each semester.

Steve Watkins (ESL) asked whether the Senate might be given advance notice of the upcoming purchase by the University on Friday 07 December. Dean Barra demurred, citing confidentiality issues.

### Report of the President of the Senate

Kristen Marsh (At-Large) asked for further details on the report on diversity. Prof. Fuller said that this had been compiled by the administration for the Board of Visitors. Dean Barra said that the reason for the report was a request by a member of the Board for more information on the university's programs for diversity, and that the report was published in the meeting's agenda packet.

## Standing Committees

No questions were asked of any committee.

## Old Business

The motion to amend faculty evaluation procedures was brought to the floor. Prof. Watkins expressed his admiration for the committee's work in creating language that reflected the will of the Senate.

Robert Ekey (PHYS) asked about first-year faculty: was this a default or would it be established when a new faculty member was hired? Dean Barra said that since new faculty had no track record, they would therefore receive an automatic "1". Prof. Mellinger said that at the end of the first year, they would be evaluated like anyone else.

Mindy Erchull (PSYCH) asked when this would go into effect. Prof. Mellinger said that it could not go into effect until approved, and thus it would be for the 2008-09 year. Prof. Erchull then asked how the committee arrived at the bounds. She said that her department expressed concern about the extremes of the numbers. Prof. Mellinger said that it was not unanimous among the committee, either, but that it was "a good start". Prof. Rigsby said that the percentages were largely based on the models found at other universities.

Prof. Sharpless said that on section 5.2.2.2, it ought to be the Provost, rather than the President, who would review things. Dean Barra said that there would be overall changes made to the Handbook to reflect the existence of the Provost, should that position be retained.

Robert Barr (PLSCI) wanted to know whether there would be a quota system across campus: if more people could tailor their review process, this might increase the overall number of "3" ratings, and would the overall number of available "3" ratings grow to compensate for this. Prof. Mellinger said that he did not know. Dean Barra said there was no quota, and that it depended on the understandings of "excellence".

Eric Gable (SOCANTH) said that he felt the ratings were vague and it made the "3" rating, especially for professional development, seem too easy to obtain. What was the distinction between "2" and "3" ratings with respect to peer review? Prof. Mellinger agreed and said that the guidelines were intended to be guidelines: the standards would likely vary across departments.

Marcel Rotter (MDFL) said that the proposed system would lead to a two-tier faculty (teaching v. research), and that if too many faculty chose a low percentage for service, who would be doing the service? Should there be a regulation for a minimum service level? Prof. Mellinger misunderstood the question. Prof. Kolar said that peer reviewers would not see the percentages, so service (or teaching) would be judged on a more objective basis.

Prof. Gable urged less nitpicking and concentration on extreme cases, on the grounds that it would ruin a good plan. Prof. Marsh agreed with Prof. Gable in spirit, but spoke up in favor of nitpicking, on the grounds that the Senate should be comfortable with the final range of percentages selected.

Thomas Fallace (EDUC) spoke against the motion, preferring the current system. He brought up the hypothetical of someone who wanted to do a lot of service, but did not get elected to committees? It

was pointed out to him that the percentages were selected after the fact. He then brought up the general torpidity of the peer-review process and wondered what the effect of this on selecting one's own percentage would be. Prof. Marsh argued that this was moot because the percentages were chosen after the fact.

Alan Griffith (BIOL) spoke in favor of the proposal.

Prof. Watkins said that the Senate had had consensus last spring and the proposal reflected this consensus, and that the proposal should thus be accepted without further changes. Prof. Fuller said that the system was not cast in stone and was open to later changes if such should prove necessary.

Prof. Rao spoke in favor of the proposal. He wanted to know how the FAAR and weighting forms would be dealt with separately in the case of someone with a special responsibility that released them from some of their teaching. Prof. Mellinger said that such details would be likely included in the FAAR and that peer reviewers would therefore be aware of them. Prof. Ekey wanted to know whether the percentages could be put in the FAAR. Prof. Kolar said no, because this would be likely to distort the perceptions of peer reviewers.

The question was raised of whether the percentages could be changed after the ratings had been received. Prof. Kolar said that this would be impossible because the percentages had to be submitted simultaneously with the FAAR.

Prof. Watkins once again spoke in favor of the proposal.

Prof. Rigsby said that the proposal gave the faculty the opportunity to represent the complexity of what they do.

Dean Barra expressed concern that the "1" meant "needs improvement" and was therefore problematic to give to a first-year colleague. Prof. Gable wondered why new faculty couldn't be given a "2". Dean Barra said that this implied that new faculty would be receiving a larger raise than some of their colleagues with longer tenure, when they would only have been at UMW for three months. Prof. Erchull said that when she was a first-year faculty member, she was pleased to have been given a raise after three months and did not take the implicit "1" personally. Prof. Rao wondered what would happen if no raises were given in a given year, and first-year faculty received a "1", would this be averaged into merit numbers for later years' raises? Crosstalk ensued. Dean Barra said that in this extremely hypothetical event, the then-dean would take it into account: she was concerned about the documentation and the words "needs improvement". Angela Gossetti-Murrayjohn (ESL) wondered whether wording might not be added to the proposal. Prof. Mellinger said that this was a needless over-complication. Prof. Rigsby said that this could be revisited at a later date. Further crosstalk ensued.

Margaret Ray (ECON) called the question. The motion carried by general acclaim.

The second motion, on the distribution of merit pay, was brought to the floor. It passed unanimously.

## **New Business**

The motion from the Academic Affairs Committee, on raising the cap on majors, was brought to the floor.

Prof. Fallace argued against the proposal, on the grounds that students in his department were burdened with additional coursework due to state regulations. Prof. Ray pointed out that any change in a major would go through the Curriculum Committee, who would be tasked with determining the effects on other departments. David Long (MUSC) said that some of the new requirements might

count for General Education or other requirements. Prof. Gable said that this might lead to a two-tier major system and that this might address Prof. Fallace's concern. Prof. Fuller raised the issue of professional certifications for departments, which was the rationale for the proposal. Prof. Griffith reiterated that concerns relating to individual departments could be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Prof. Fallace said that his department had not always had the smoothest relations with certain other departments: Prof. Griffith responded that this was the advantage of the Curriculum Committee. Prof. Erchull said that this was a general problem for double-majors and that it was not unusual for students with two majors to extend their education beyond four years.

Prof. Gossetti-Murrayjohn wondered why 48 credits rather than a different numbers had been chosen. Prof. Houghtalin said that this, plus prerequisites, made up half the entire degree.

The motion passed by general acclaim.

Prof. Fuller adjourned the meeting at 17:09.