

Minutes of the Faculty Meeting

20 December 2010

Dean Susan Ashley called the Meeting to order in Gates Common Room at 3:34 p.m.

I. Agenda and November 22 minutes. No agenda changes were called for. The Block III minutes were approved after two typographic corrections.

II. Dean's Report. Dean Ashley shared some happy news: The College will receive a \$490K grant from the Mellon Foundation to support work in digital communications and new media. This builds upon the "connections" theme that has informed much of the activity of the Cornerstone Arts Center. Film and new media are to receive special emphasis in the funding of Residences and partnerships in this area. More will be heard in coming months from a steering committee.

Also in the good news column, a Mellon Summer Seminars \$700K grant will fund work in the US and abroad aimed at assembling temporary research centers for interdisciplinary studies of emerging issues.

Susan commented that although it is a period of reduced foundation support in general, CC "seems to be on the list" at Mellon, which has been particularly active in the College's behalf. Nicole Rivet deserves special credit for the cultivating of this substantial support.

Since the November faculty meeting, the Budget Committee vetted its draft with the Trustees subcommittee; next to examine it would be the President and the Board. The draft recommended reducing overenrollment to return to the 1965 population target over a 2 year span. Also proposed was a 2.39 per cent fee increase, which would exceed inflation and help to cover the loss in endowment income. Most constituencies regard financial aid as the first area requiring additional funding. The Committee thinks it possible to raise an additional half million in FA per cohort, despite the expected 5 % decline of endowment income.

Susan saluted Professors Tim Fuller, Paul Myrow, and Rebecca Tucker for their continuing service on the Budget Committee. Also applauded for huge labors in this area was Lyrae Williams.

Gratitude further to those with the Sisyfucian persistence to prosecute the Handbook update, namely Sam Williams, David Weddle, and the FEC Governance subcommittees over 2 years, brought a round of applause.

III. Report of the Chair, Faculty Executive Committee. Esther Redmount immediately yielded the floor to David Weddle and Kristi Erdal, who moved a final vote on the bundle of Handbook revisions. Jeff Noblett noted an ambiguity concerning membership on the International Studies Committee: The assigned faculty were to

number 3 or 2 depending on where one looked in the paragraph. Informed colleagues agreed that the correct number was 3, and promised to correct the draft. The Committee intended, assuming faculty approval, to pass the long-evolving modifications to the President and (through him) to the Trustees. No one raised any further discussion, and the voice vote was unanimously in favor. Thereupon sounded forth joyous strains from a Consort of Recorders and Krumhorn, ably winded by Nancy Ekberg, Re Evitt, Emily Chan, and Boyce Drummond, which with the aforementioned editorial success won loud applause from the Faculty assembled.

IV. Report of the Committee on Instruction, Dean Nelson-Cisneros presenting.

Victor moved approval of a consent agenda of ten items from Physics, Mathematics and Computer Science, Music, and Education, including course modifications and (in PC and MU) broader curriculum re-configuration. This was seconded and passed unanimously.

V. Report of the General Education Oversight Committee, Assoc. Dean Noblett presenting.

Jeff moved approval of SI designation for EV120, and SI/L designation for BY100 in its Mediterranean Ecology and Biometeorology version. This received a second and passed unanimously.

VI. President's Report. President Celeste called attention to some proud news: Jane Lubchenco, a 1969 biology graduate and since last March the Administrator of NOAA, was named Nature Person of the Year by the editors of that important journal.

Commenting on matters earlier in the meeting, Dick pointed out that Susan Ashley's excellent reputation was among the key factors in winning the Mellon grant. Also, Sam Williams may have been "dragooned" into the Handbook update task, but he worked at it energetically, with exacting care and his unflagging high standards.

News on Admissions: Early decision cases to date number 264, with 137 admitted (compare 365 days ago 189 and 115.) Early action applications were 1617 with 577 offers (last year was 1387 and 714.) Total applications were at 1881, up 20% from the previous cycle, and the target for the class of 2015 is 500 matriculations. Invited to comment, Mark Hatch was enthusiastic about the very talented pool with relatively many international students (22) and about the same American Ethnic Minority numbers (120) as a year previous (6 and 133 respectively.) He reported that the total financial aid offerings would be about \$1M less than the previous year.

Dick reported that White Whale was doing a terrific job listening and conceptualizing toward major improvements to the College web presence. And in Health headlines, Dan Johnson and the Boettcher Health Center study committee were planning to invite bids from the current team and other organizations outside.

The President had returned from the 14th city visit of his current trajectory, and was able to report half a million dollars worth of progress toward the match for the Walton challenge grant. Support via the President's Council and the 1874 Club was also looking good.

VII. Committee reports. Gail Murphy-Geiss for the Curriculum Committee spoke of prospects for the “Build your own Block” course structure option, which offers for instructor invention three forms possibly not discussed since the early 1970s. She said that some colleagues have responded to the effect of “Yes, but not next year.”

An interim IT Committee report took the form of a four-page appendix to the agenda.

VII. Announcements. Amelia Taylor urged colleagues to respond to the Learning Commons questionnaire on line, as a review of that ensemble of facilities was in underway.

The meeting was adjourned at about 4:37.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Lindeman
Secretary of the Faculty