

Illinois Wesleyan University
Minutes of the Meeting of the General Faculty on April 7, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

The presence of a quorum being noted, the meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m. by President Wilson.

GUESTS

The faculty approved the presence of an observer from Student Government.

MINUTES

The faculty approved the minutes of the March meeting as distributed via e-mail.

CURRICULUM COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA

No items were pulled, so all are approved.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE — Prof. M. Chapman

- Prof. Nillas withdrew from FDC consideration, so just vote for 3.
- The Committee distributed and collected ballots.

COUNCIL ON UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS & POLICY --- Prof.. Kearney

- CUPP has distributed its written report.
- Question: What is the background on looking at our medical coverage for retired faculty?
- Pres. Wilson: I've commented on where we rank in both compensation and salaries and explained why we rank higher in compensation because of our favorable benefits, particularly tuition reimbursement and retiree benefits.

CURRICULUM COUNCIL --- Prof. A. Schultz

- An info item: some course proposals would come in without a discussion of the research component of the course; so cc moved language on that so it would be more noticed.
 - Regarding 300/400 level, CC's motion proposes that language change be made more general, removing some restrictions previously placed on courses for Contemporary Social Institutions credit.
- No second was required. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

PROMOTION AND TENURE COMMITTEE — Prof. Bollivar

- The Committee has distributed a written report.
- The Committee proposes a change to the Pantagraph Award. We recommend that it be for Teaching Excellence alone rather than include scholarship and service. The proposal includes some procedural changes. The Committee will not have access to tenure files.
- Question: Is the committee considering parallel awards for research and service.
- Response: The University hopes to establish such awards and find funding to support the awards.

- The motion passed.

- The faculty had no queries on other PAT issues.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL — Prof. Theune

- The Committee has distributed a written report.
- Question: Why can't faculty "buy" a course release with grant money.
- Response by Provost Cunningham: The cost of a course release to the University exceeds just the cost of the replacement adjunct. The issue is still being deliberated, so let us know your thoughts.

HEALTH CARE ADVOCACY COMMITTEE — Prof. Jesek-Hale

- The Committee has had lots of meetings.
- OSF Healthcare proposed a move to Humana. It's not yet approved by government agencies. There are no immediate changes, but we're looking at other plans in case changes are considered later that are undesirable.
- We've received information on three health care plans designed for retirees. We will evaluate each for the President.
- Question: No changes until when? The end of the academic year or the calendar year?
- Response: We typically know by October what's going to happen, but we expect no changes until the next calendar year.
- Question: Is there a problem with the current retiree health system?
- Response: No.
- Question: Then why?
- Response: Because the President asked us.
- Response by President Wilson: Health care is a constantly changing arena, so I pass proposals to the committee which is well constituted to evaluate them.

STRATEGIC CURRICULAR REVIEW TASK FORCE — Prof. West

- The task Force distributed a brief written report.
- We hope have some major pieces in place by the end of the school year even if we've not completed our charge.
- No questions were posed to the Task Force.

PROVOST CUNNINGHAM'S REMARKS

- The childbearing/childrearing leave policy is posted on-line.
- We continue to work on academic affairs restructuring. I'll meet with CUPP next week again on this.
- Two open forums are planned for next week. Memos will be out ahead of time on faculty salaries.
- External funding has not been received for a pilot program in Chinese but will begin one none-the-less using internal funding for now.
- A grant proposal to Hughes in interdisciplinary studies was not funded. We; may be able to find some internal or external funding yet to do part of the proposal..
- We have filled positions through searches in Accounting, Religion, English, Theater, Economics, Library, Bio-chem, and Physics. We're interviewing nursing soon. Filled positions include one minority and two international faculty.
- Question: How firm is the policy on childbearing?

- Response: It's pretty much finalized unless some major issue comes up.
- Question: Might there be some in-between choice instead of medical or whole semester?
- Response: I'd like to try this policy for a couple years and revisit if it's not working well.

PRESIDENT WILSON'S REMARKS

- There's a budget forum tomorrow as announced.
- We have an honors convocation and commencement upcoming.
- No change to Division III structure within the NCAA is likely at this point.
- Thanks to those who helped with open houses.
- Thanks to faculty and staff who were away from campus with students over spring break.
- Not an easy memo to send with a salary decision lower than hoped-for. The economic situation has deteriorated since January. Our earlier budget project was a 4-5% growth in the endowment to about \$194 M. That's not likely now, though our portfolio dropped less than numerous market averages. A lot of not-for-profits have been hurt by changes in the market. Some of the people who insure our bonds have financial problems. We're now covering the change out of pocket at near \$50 K monthly.
- Question: Did we issue our bonds at a fixed rate?
- Response: No, at variable rate.
- Question: Will this hurt the new issue?
- Response: No. Our bond was not with the same bank. We are still looked at positively because we have a balanced budget. We have moved to another rate at auction. We should have the old bond reissued within the next two months before the third auction would occur.
- Question: Will it still be a variable rate?
- Response: Yes, but it will be for a longer time before it can change. We may be able to convert to a fixed rate in a few years.
- Question: What do we expect with converting acceptances into contracts with new students?
- Response: Good question, especially with some schools going to no loans and elimination of early decision dates. So more students have submitted multiple applications. Hard to estimate the exact result. So far, our numbers are holding up with increased international, ALANA, and total applications. Still hoping for 350 deposits in the next three weeks.
- Question: With all this financial uncertainty, why a new dean of curriculum at this time?
- Response: I don't really want to address this today. We believe we have most of this under control and we still need to invest in a way that will help us move forward. This year we absorbed a big drop in our "additional draw" and in the number of students admitted, and still are doing okay. We will revisit at next meeting.
- Question: It is difficult to forecast company failures, but have we looked at other companies we deal with?
- Response: Other bonds are not set up in the same way. Even the problem we have isn't due to a bad plan, it was due to failing bond insurance businesses.
- Question: Is there any problem with student loan markets?
- Response: I understand that the loans for our students are not at risk. They should not have difficulty getting loans from preferred lenders.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

These minutes respectfully submitted by
Bill Walsh, Faculty Secretary