The University Faculty
The University of Richmond

Minutes of the Meeting of January 29, 2009

Call to Order

Provost Steve Allred called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM in the Alice Haynes Room of the Tyler Haynes Commons.

Informational Item

In November 2008, the University Senate approved a proposal from the Robins School of Business to create enrollment management guidelines for business majors and minors which will be effective Fall 2010. The guidelines will be reassessed after two years.

Consent Agenda

The following consent agenda items were approved by voice vote without dissent or abstention.

1. Approval of the Minutes of December 11, 2008 Special-Called Meeting (available online)
2. Approval of Proposed New Student Organizations (available online) – Max Vest

President’s Report

2. The Board of Trustees. The Board unanimously endorsed the Strategic Plan.
3. Searches. The following searches are ongoing: Vice President for Business and Finance, Associate Vice President for Communications, University Chaplain, Dean of the Robins School of Business, and Dean of Undergraduate Admission. All are expected to be filled by July 1.
4. Admissions. Round 1 Early Admissions are up this year – 260 have said they are coming. We are already within 40 applications of last year’s record 7,970. The challenge now is to yield them. We will probably make a larger number of offers because we expect the yield to be down as students apply to a larger number of schools than previously. UVA and William and Mary both have 15% more applicants than last year. Law School applications are up 9%, even though applications are down nationwide. Progress is being made with respect to diversity, and qualifications are about the same.
5. Hard Times. The University of Richmond is in much better position financially than many schools for several reasons.
   a. We are private. State contributions to public colleges and universities are down 15%.
   b. We are not as dependent on annual giving as many private universities. For example, Harvard’s annual giving funds about 7% of their budget while
Wellesley’s funds 4%. By contrast, our annual giving funds 1.4%. Having said this, it is worth noting that our annual giving is holding up so far.

c. Many universities depend on “soft money” from indirect costs charged to sponsored research. At 2.5%, our overhead rate is much lower than is typical and we do not link spending to this source of funds.

d. Our spending policy from the endowment smoothes out cycles. Richmond stays within a 4-6% “tunnel” in annual payout to the operating budget from the endowment. The base to which this range is applied is calculated on a three-year moving average and a one-year lag of the endowment value. The three-year moving average smoothes cycles while the one-year lag allows us to look a year ahead and stay within the tunnel. Since we have stayed close to the 4% end of the tunnel, we have more flexibility in difficult times than had we routinely approached the 6% end. By contrast, some schools do approach the 6% end, some do not use a moving average, some do not use a one-year lag, and some do all three differently than we do. Had we not followed these practices we would need $17 million in cuts to stay in the tunnel rather than the gradual increase that we anticipate. Our endowment has done about as well as any in the United States. We do not have to raise money to meet calls. We estimate that our endowment value has declined about 25% to date and anticipate that it will decline another 10%. Right now it stands about where it was in 2004. As a result of all of this we do not expect to be in financial trouble. If we stay in the tunnel, we will be fine.

e. The Budget Committee has been making most strategic decisions. Reallocating the operating budget allows us to continue attracting new talent and provide a modest compensation pool. Priorities in moving forward are to:
   i. protect our core academic mission,
   ii. protect the student experience,
   iii. protect student accessibility to financial aid, and
   iv. protect faculty and staff.

Old Business

1. Approval of remaining assessment plans for field-of-study courses - Joe Kent

   Motion for action by the faculty of Arts & Sciences, Jepson School of Leadership Studies, and the Robins School of Business to endorse the use of the following proposed assessment plans with the understanding that all plans are subject to review and revision by the General Education Committee after the initial use:

   - Historical Studies (available online)
   - Symbolic Reasoning (available online)
   - Visual & Performing Arts (available online)

   A friendly amendment was accepted to delete department names from the Visual and Performing Arts assessment plan. The motion to adopt these assessment plans was passed unanimously by voice vote.
New Business

1. Changes to Standards and Procedures for Promotion and Long-Term Appointments for Law Library Director as a Faculty Member (Section D) of the T.C. Williams School of Law Personnel Policies and Procedures – John Douglass

Although the American Bar Association requires at least a five-year term for the Library Director, the current T.C. Williams policy is for a three-year term. The suggested changes are being made to conform to ABA policy.

The motion to approve these changes was passed unanimously by voice vote.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 4:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Schmidt, University Faculty Secretary