

Minutes: Faculty Meeting February 14, 2008

I. Call to Order

II. Opening Prayer

Pastor Benson invited reflection on the three contexts in which St. Olaf faculty pursue the mission of the College. These contexts include that of a liberal arts college, a global perspective, and a loving God. The pastor offered a prayer on this theme.

III. Approval of the Minutes of the December faculty meeting

The minutes were approved.

IV. Remarks by the President

A. The Science Campaign Victory. **President Anderson** announced that the Science Campaign is complete, which is not only cause for celebration, but also a message, in his words, to our friends and to our competition that great things are happening here. The president thanked the community for their financial support of the project. Next Thursday during community time, the Regents will be on campus to recognize the success of the campaign in the Buntrock Crossroads. The building will be officially dedicated next fall during Homecoming.

B. Recruitment of Future Regents. The president indicated his intention to begin to recruit and develop future regents for the College in the coming years, with an eye toward increasing the representation of women and minorities.

C. Advancement. The College has done very well in terms of attracting large donations, but there is room to improve annual alumni giving. The president communicated the goal of improving the Partners program so that it is consistently producing a solid foundation of giving to the College. At the end of January, he reported, there was 21% participation among alumni in the Partners program, with 6600 alumni contributing. At the end of last year, the rate of participation was approximately 33%, which is close to the mean for similar colleges. However, the numbers are higher this year than they were last year at this time. On-line giving has increased by one-third. The president encouraged everyone in our community to continue to communicate a positive message about the good things happening at the College.

D. Admissions and Recruitment. The applicant pool this spring is flat. President Anderson offered two theories to explain the lack of an increase over last year. The first is that some applicants at the margins, who probably would not have been admitted, are applying elsewhere as our admissions have become more competitive. The second (more troubling) theory is that we have reached a temporary lull in our attractiveness to applicants. As we attract more high-profile students, their set of criteria for making their decisions represents the high expectations of students with many options. Between now

and decision day, the president encouraged everyone to do their best to recruit potential students.

The president mentioned that the cross-applicant schools that our applicants indicated have changed a bit. The top five: University of Minnesota, Gustavus, Carleton, Macalester, University of Wisconsin at Madison. The second five: St. Thomas, Luther, Lawrence, Northwestern, and Grinnell. The President would like the top five to be Carleton, Macalester, Lawrence, Grinnell, and Northwestern. The trends are right, but we want to keep working in the right direction.

The early decision pool was 160, which was the largest in some time. The president would like to see up to 20% of students admitted early. One-hundred and forty of these have been admitted. A few statistics concerning the early decision students: average GPA is 3.5, ACT is 27.5, SAT is 1246. Sixteen percent are first generation college students, 40% identify as Lutheran, 41% are legacy students, 9.5% are domestic multicultural students.

Finally, the president announced that we will move to a single notification plan next year. Applicants may apply for early decision or in the regular pool, in which everyone will be notified at the same time in the spring. This will end rolling admissions. The president explained that this will enable more rational financial aid planning. St. Olaf has historically promised to package financial aid to meet the needs of all applicants. The package might include grants, loans, and/or work. St. Olaf is working to figure out how to address the concerns parents have about the cost of higher education. For the long term, this will likely mean developing an endowment specifically to meet the financial aid needs of students.

V. Consent Agenda

Jeanine Grenberg requested that Spring Sports Schedules be moved from the Consent Agenda to New Business.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Curriculum Committee, *David Booth*

1. Booth announced that the Curriculum Committee is adopting an electronic admissions procedure for new courses. New Course Proposal Forms may be found on the Curriculum Committee's web page. Proposals will then be forwarded as e-mail attachments through the chain of command to collect the necessary signatures.

2. The Pandemic Flu Taskforce and the Dean of the College have awarded grants to two faculty members to develop courses that would be offered in the case of pandemic flu or other significant emergency. Professor **Karen Gervais** of the Philosophy Department will develop the course "Health Policy, Ethics, and Pandemic Influenza" and Professor

Collin Wells of the English Department will develop “Literature and the Preservation of the Common Good.”

3. WRI and ORC general education requirements will be considered in sub-committee, owing to a perception that the original intent of these credits is not being consistently applied.

B. RPC, *Dan Hofrenning*

1. Federal dictates that St. Olaf College have a conflict of interest policy, which we currently do not. The Assistant Provost presented a draft of the Conflict of Interest Policy presented to RPC. It will go into effect in 4 – 8 weeks and will go into the Faculty Handbook. It does not require a vote by the entire faculty.

2. Salary recommendations. The overall raise will be 5.25%. RPC continues to be committed to raising salaries to the 85th percentile for comparable institutions. RPC recommended the following distribution:

- Term contract, less than 5 years, with at least .50 FTE: 3.25% raise
- Instructor, long term contract (above 85th percentile this year): 4% raise
- Assistant professor (74th percentile this year): 6% raise
- Associate professor (79th percentile this year): 4% raise
- Full professor: 5.7% increase, distributed as \$5,000 to each full professor

3. Green sheet for March faculty meeting proposing two new committees: 1) Faculty Life Committee (ten members). Tenure and Promotion will be a sub-committee. 2) Faculty Governance Committee. Hofrenning asked the faculty to look at the details of the proposals before the next meeting.

VII. New Business

A. Spring Sports Schedules, Student Life Committee, *Judy Kutulas*

Floor opened for discussion. **Jeanine Grenberg** questioned whether the document provides the information that faculty need in order to assess how many classes a student will miss for athletics. It is not possible to ascertain when students need to depart for a game, for example.

The Spring Athletic schedule was approved by the faculty.

VIII. Remarks for the Good of the Order

A. Remarks from the Dean. *Dean May* welcomed the following groups: new faculty, faculty returning from sabbatical, faculty returning from field supervision, and tour directors. The Dean also asked the faculty to participate in the HERI survey.

B. Introduction of Visiting Scholars, *Eric Lund* introduced the following visiting scholars: Mr. Baraka Kanyabuyinya, an Assistant Lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in the Faculty of Law; Mr. Deogratias Fuli, a computer systems analyst in the Department of Mathematics at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and Mr. D. Prince Annadurai, from Madras Christian College, Chennai, India.

C. McNair Summer Research Opportunities for Faculty, *Mark Schelske* announced briefly that there are opportunities available; please see the web page for more details.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Anna Kuxhausen, Asst. Professor, Dept. of History.

A sound recording of this meeting has been filed in the College's Archive.