

Faculty Meeting Minutes February 4, 2002

President Pierce called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. Fifty-nine voting members of the faculty were present.

Minutes of the November 7, 2001 faculty meeting were approved as distributed.

In response to President Pierce's call for announcements, Associate Dean Bill Barry reported that the Curriculum Committee had set deadlines for submitting course proposals for the new core.

Proposals for Approaches Courses are due to the Committee by March 25, 2002. First year seminar course proposals are due September 1, 2002.

President Pierce reported that the University has received the pledge of a gift of one million dollars for the new science building. When the gift is actually received, sometime before December 31, 2002, she will announce the name of the donor. President Pierce noted that this is the second major gift the University has received for the project; the first was for \$330,000.

President Pierce, noting that the basketball floor in the Fieldhouse is due for refinishing next summer, asked if there was interest in a faculty/staff Fieldhouse dance, with balloon decorations, sometime after commencement and before the refinishing project begins. There seemed to be an overwhelmingly positive response from those assembled.

Dean Cooney had no report other than to note that faculty strolling across campus with strangers this time of year were a sign of faculty candidates visiting campus, not new romances.

Hans Ostrom had no Faculty Senate Chair's Report.

We turned to discussion of the latest draft of the document *Strategic Priorities: Goals for this Decade* that President Pierce had earlier sent to all faculty by email. She reminded us that last October the Trustees had endorsed the six strategic priorities the document contained as a framework for University planning. She said the current document elaborates on those priorities and includes five fundraising priorities for the decade. She said she and the members of her cabinet, in consultation with others on campus, were developing an internal operational "working plan" that elaborates how we meet the goals, in an ideal world what the timetables might be, and what resources are needed. She said she would share this living, breathing, and changeable document with and seek input from administrative offices and with a faculty advisory group that she planned to constitute for this purpose.

President Pierce asked for comments and questions. Suzanne Barnett pointed out that the document's preamble says in the fourth paragraph that data will drive choices. What, she asked, about wisdom or best educational practices also driving choices? President Pierce responded that this means we will try to be as informed as we can by data about the choices we make. Later in the meeting she suggested replacing the words "data-driven in its choices" with "choices informed by data" and the consensus was that this seemed fine. There were no further questions or comments. In response to President Pierce's question, "does the document look okay?" the consensus was that it did.

We moved to the last item on the agenda, a presentation by the Faculty Salary Committee (FSC) of a proposal for a new instructor salary scale. President Pierce reminded us that the faculty at its October 16 meeting had asked the FSC to come back to the full faculty with a recommendation about instructor salaries. Today's discussion will inform an FSC recommendation to Dean Cooney, who will then make a recommendation to President Pierce.

FSC member Doug Goodman said that what the FSC was hoping for today was endorsement by the faculty of the proposal. He said the proposal was presented to the Faculty Senate last week. He urged us to review the full instructor salary scale proposal on the FSC web site, as well as the document the FSC

presented to the Budget Task Force. Goodman said that the proposal would consume a small percentage of the money available next year for salary increases, but that it would not be a significant ongoing factor.

Matt Pickard described the proposal and its main features. He began with a brief history, explaining that instructor positions were created in 1982 with six steps in the salary scale. Salary increases beyond the six steps were first possible with the introduction of merit increases in about 1987. He said that because there are so many instructors employed now with great longevity there is interest in making one more adjustment to the instructor salary scale so that the contributions of these people can be recognized.

Pickard projected onto a screen several tables and figures from the [FSC's proposal](#). He said that the proposal retains the original six salary steps and adds six new steps yielding twelve levels corresponding to the first twelve years of service. Beyond level twelve, pay increases would be tied to the three-year instructor evaluation decisions of the Faculty Advancement Committee, through seventeen pay levels.

Pickard said that an important issue in the proposal was how to treat instructors already in the system, giving credit for time and experience. He explained how the proposal would move current instructors onto the new salary scale. He said that instructors who have merit pay currently would retain it until they exceed pay level seventeen, at which time they would lose it.

Pickard then presented data projecting that the cost of implementing the proposed instructor salary scale next year would be about \$76,000, one-half of one percent of the total faculty salary pool, and about 17.7% of new salary money available for next year.

Curt Mehlhaff asked if the cost of implementing the proposal was a one-time cost. Pickard responded that it was mostly a one-year cost, with the cost the second year dropping to about \$15,000.

John Hanson M/S/P "that the faculty endorses the Faculty Salary Committee's instructor salary scale proposal and urges the FSC to include it in their recommendation to Dean Cooney who will then make a recommendation to President Pierce." Hanson said the proposal was well thought out and was perhaps too conservative, but was very reasonable and fair.

Barry Goldstein suggested that money to pay for the proposal could come either from the salary pool increase or from someplace else. Dean Cooney said it would have to come from the salary pool increase. He said that if the proposal is implemented, the across-the-board salary increase we are looking at for next year is about two per cent, given the need also to fund step increases and promotions for the faculty as a whole.

President Pierce pointed out that she would not be willing to increase tuition above the recommended 6.4% in order to add additional money to the faculty salary pool. The reason was that we are late into a budgeting process (President Pierce will take the proposal to the trustees in just a few days) in which the Budget Task Force struggled with increased costs, such as health benefits, utilities, and technology. Nancy Bristow spoke in favor of the motion, arguing that we could not get by without our instructors. She said we are lucky to have them and that this proposal is long overdue.

The Hanson motion then passed on voice vote, with no nay votes. Dean Cooney abstained because the recommendation was to come eventually to him. President Pierce complimented Matt Pickard on the clarity of his presentation, and he received an appreciative round of applause.

We adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Finney
Secretary of the Faculty