

# ANNUAL REPORT

## Faculty Executive Committee

Sept. 8, 2010

### INTRODUCTION

The Faculty Executive Committee met 28 times during the academic year of 2009-2010. The Chair participated in the new faculty orientation program in September. The committee also met twice with the VPAA and the Dean of the Faculty and once again with them along with members of the CAPT to discuss FEC's service and governance proposals as well as a range of other topics. FEC also had substantive email correspondence with the VPAA, the DOF, and Chairs of all major committees at the College.

### FACULTY HANDBOOK

FEC brought to the floor of the October 2 Faculty Meeting a slightly revised *Faculty Handbook*. The revisions involved nomenclature, some committee memberships, and personnel candidates' access to materials. With these changes, the *Handbook* was adopted at the November 6 meeting.

### ELECTIONS

FEC oversaw four rounds of the Willingness to Serve and subsequent election process, consisting of the usual two per semester. We were successful in filling almost all committee spots, with a participation which could be described as more "robust" than in recent years.

### COMMITTEE OF COMMITTEES

As stipulated by the *Faculty Handbook*, FEC convened the Committee of Committees one time each semester. Along with the usual discussion of committee interaction with administration, which was regarded as essentially positive, we concentrated on issues of service and governance, which are described below.

### BOT OBSERVATIONS

FEC observed the regular meetings of the Board of Trustees in October, February, and May. The observations and the subsequent compilations of notes were done in the traditional way. FEC's concern whether this method is efficient or can be done in some better way, if at all, continues. Extensive discussions about how the whole undertaking of faculty observation might be improved have not yet brought any proposals for change. Such discussions will continue next year.

### SERVICE AND GOVERNANCE

Probably the most important project FEC undertook this year was a continuation of last year's study of how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the faculty's work in service and governance. This work culminated in one motion, brought jointly with CAPT, which was entitled "The Big Seven" and two resolutions, called "Ten Principles of Governance" and "The 30% Reduction", all three of which were presented to the Faculty. The content of these actions are in Appendices A, B, and C, respectively, which are included below. The Faculty voted against the motion, but accepted the two resolutions. First responses to the 30% reduction will be discussed later in this report. In a long discussion of the defeat of the "Big Seven" motion, FEC members were of one mind: an important discussion of the roles of service in personnel decisions and in the campus culture had been initiated by its being moved and debated. We are sure that certain misconceptions have been cleared, and that the Faculty has spoken on what it believes to be the best path to follow.

### IPPC/FEC-6/FEC-9

FEC and IPPC tried an experiment this year. Rather than the alternative FEC 6/FEC 9 meetings of previous committee incarnations, we decided to try to meet independently, unless circumstances or other motivations brought us together. This led to two meetings of FEC at which IPPC was represented and one full meeting of FEC 9. Overall, it was felt that this structure was an improvement but needs further work, since communication between the two groups seemed to have been too minimal this year. The idea of regular contact between a non-chair FEC member and one of the IPPC FEC members had universal support, and it is hoped that this will be implemented next year.

### TEACHING ASSOCIATES

FEC made a motion to the Faculty that employees who are Teaching Associates be allowed to vote at Faculty meetings. This motion was accepted by the Faculty. The content of the motion is included below in Appendix D.

### THE 30% REDUCTION

Most faculty committees responded to FEC's request they consider reducing their memberships, as suggested in the resolution adopted by the Faculty. Several committees took steps in the direction of reducing the numbers of their members, and one committee, the IRC, conducted discussions which led to their request for dissolution. FEC attended these meetings for the IRC and asked for careful rationales and faculty/non-faculty ratio analyses from those wishing membership reductions. For committees having membership stipulated in the *Faculty Handbook*, certain stipulated steps will be necessary if they are to change. These steps will require the committees to write a rationale, with the FEC helping on any questions or concerns, and then FEC bringing the motion. This will continue to be considered next year. But FEC members were greatly encouraged by the general response to our attempt to control the committee component of faculty professional responsibilities.

### OTHER BUSINESS

FEC was consulted on a number of smaller matters as well, which include the following. Questions were raised about the Anti-Harassment Workshops offered to the Faculty, on the role of the Music Faculty in space decisions in the Zankel Music Center, on the *Handbook* paragraph concerning discipline of tenured faculty, on parental leave and the tenure clock, and on the new Distinguished Service Award. We expressed our opinions on each of these topics.

### AGENDA FOR 2010-2011

- IPPC/FEC6/FEC9
- Board of Trustee observations (revisit our revisit)
- Work related to the 30% Reduction Resolution
- Management of the on-line elements of governance, including the update of committee memberships, the update of operating codes (including FEC's)
- Early attention to the *Faculty Handbook* for approval by the Faculty

### MEMBERSHIP

2009-2010

John Brueggemann  
Pat Hilleren  
Dan Hurwitz (Chair)  
Karen Kellogg (1 year replacement for Stokes)  
Reg Lilly  
Natalie Taylor  
Sue Bender (on leave Fall 09, IPPC Representative Spring 10)  
Hugh Foley (IPPC Representative)  
Tim Harper (Fall 09 IPPC Representative)  
Adrienne Zuerner (IPPC Representative)

2010-2011

Barbara Black  
Ben Givan  
Patricia Hilleren  
Dan Hurwitz (LV Fall 2010)  
Karen Kellogg (F'10 replacement for Hurwitz)Reg Lilly (Chair)  
Natalie Taylor  
Hugh Foley (IPPC Representative)  
Denise Smith (IPPC Representative)  
Adrienne Zuerner (IPPC Representative)

## APPENDIX A

### III. Motions: Big 7

#### A. Motion

FEC and CAPT jointly move to insert the following text (italic type) into the Faculty Handbook, Part One, Article VI, Section A. (Tenure-Track Faculty), under Community Service (page 107): Participation in faculty governance is another important option requiring skills and commitment that answer the needs of the College. *In particular, and especially as it pertains to faculty with tenure, It should be noted that service in the seven core governance committees is critical to maintaining the shared-governance system that is central to the College's institutional identity. Those seven committees are the Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights [CAFR], the Committee on Appointments, Promotions and Tenure [CAPT], the Curriculum Committee, the Committee on Educational Policy and Planning [CEPP], the Faculty Development Committee (FDC), the Faculty Executive Committee [FEC], and the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee [IPPC].*

#### Rationale

Skidmore College is an institution with a long history of shared governance wherein faculty committee members and members of the administration cooperate together in the creation and execution of the mission of the College. While there are many important committees that are central to, and in some cases required for, the continued functioning of the College, the elected and appointed governance committees are the critical vehicles that allow the faculty a central role in shaping the future of our institution. In particular, seven elected committees (CAFR, CAPT, CEPP, Curriculum Committee, FDC, FEC, and IPPC) are vital to the shared governance of the College and cannot function properly without strong faculty representation. A diverse pool of faculty expressing a willingness to serve on these committees is essential to a healthy governance process.

In recent years we have had insufficient numbers of faculty expressing a willingness to serve on the seven core governance committees. This has compromised the election process, and in some cases, the work of our governance committees. If the faculty is to continue to have a pivotal voice in college decision-making, we must increase faculty willingness to serve on these committees. While FEC is not proposing that expressing a willingness to serve on one of these committees makes sense for all faculty at all points in their careers, service on these committees should be central in the discussions of service within departments and programs and should be prioritized at appropriate points in a faculty member's development.

FEC's original motion has been revised as per a friendly amendment offered by CAPT.

This amendment entails a change in the location of the proposed new language from Part One, Article XI, Section A, Number 2, b (p. 122) to the section in Part One named above. Additional text (underlined) has been added and one phrase deleted (crossed out).

#### B. New Motion

FEC and CAPT jointly move to insert the following text (italic type) into the Faculty Handbook, Part One, Article VI (p. 106):

**VI. EVALUATIVE CRITERIA FOR CONTINUED SERVICE AND ADVANCEMENT IN RANK**

#### Rationale

This new title more accurately reflects what Part One, Article VI is about.

#### C. New Motion

FEC and CAPT jointly move to insert the following text (italic type) into the Faculty Handbook, Part One, Article VI, Section A. (Tenure-Track Faculty), under Community Service (page 107).

This language would appear right at the end of the new text proposed in the first motion offered. Although *reappointment, promotion, or tenure* should not be considered as a reward for administrative or committee work, the skills, counsel or vision so demonstrated may answer real needs. These and other aptitudes or achievements may strengthen a candidate's cases.

**Rationale**

This additional language brings consistency and accuracy to this section.

## APPENDIX B

### **I. Resolution: 10 Principles of Governance**

Resolved, that the faculty adopts the following principles of governance.

1. Be lean. All things being equal, the smaller a committee is, the better. It is easier to plan meetings and make decisions.
2. Emphasize consultation more and representation less. Different colleagues could be consulted productively in the context of more focused, limited timeframes.
3. Attend carefully to the relative weight of faculty voices on any committee compared to that of other constituencies. We should add or subtract individuals representing different stakeholders with consideration for the right balance in terms of the main goals of the committee in question.
4. Serve and protect the central governance committees in special ways. We must make sure that the faculty's commitment to IPPC, FEC, FDC, CAPT, CEPP, CAFR and Curriculum Committee is always robust.
5. Use ad hoc committees when a particular challenge requires experts focused on a short-term project. Standing committees will be in a better position to attend to their normal operations when such ad hoc committees are utilized.
6. Direct the results of ad hoc committees' efforts through standing committees in the governance system. Important decisions based on ad hoc committees' work should be avoided without substantive consideration within appropriate standing committees.
7. Invite staff and administrators to take on and/or share in work faculty can afford to surrender for which the relevant personnel are qualified.
8. Every committee should assess regularly whether it is using its time and resources effectively.
9. Avoid scheduling committee meetings during the winter or summer breaks as much as possible. Pay special attention to how often and when meetings are held in general.
10. Foster awareness among colleagues about the importance of the faculty's active ownership of and thoughtful participation in college governance.

### **Rationale**

Not all of the problems in committee work arise from structural problems (e.g., too many committee spots per faculty member). The faculty of Skidmore College have long been energetic members of the college community, contributing to its shared governance and assuming many and various roles in campus life. Informal practices have contributed to excessive and inefficient energy spent in work on committees. While the faculty remain committed to the work of the College, their departments, and their programs, increasing demands have been made on the faculty's time and energy. By explicitly acknowledging the value of general goals, the faculty can make a collective commitment to foster a culture more conducive to efficient and effective work in decision making.

## APPENDIX C

### **II. Resolution: 30% Reduction**

Resolved, that the faculty requests that every standing committee on which faculty serve review its function and membership to determine if they can reduce their membership by working with the Faculty Executive Committee and all relevant constituencies with the overall goal reducing number of committee spots (held by faculty and other stakeholders) by approximately 30 percent.

#### **Rationale**

The College now has roughly the same number of available faculty as we do standing committee spots for those faculty. The previous effort to streamline the committee system by reducing the overall number of committees led to elimination of certain committees and, in many cases, the establishment of new, parallel committees (or subcommittees) to take their place. Given the significant pressures on faculty time and the scarcity of other resources, this is an appropriate time to refocus the energy devoted to governance. In the interest of balance, wherever faculty influence is curtailed, we must also endeavor to proportionately decrease the influence of other stakeholders. The Faculty Executive Committee is the most appropriate body to lead this effort. But the decisions about which spots to eliminate must ultimately be proposed by particular committees themselves with the guidance of FEC and then ultimately determined by the support of the faculty writ large as a whole.

## APPENDIX D

### Voting Rights for Teaching Associates February 5, 2010

#### **Motion:**

FEC moves that full-time Teaching Associates should attend Faculty Meetings and be eligible to vote and moves that the *Faculty Handbook* be amended as follows:

- 1) Insert the following text (red type) into the *Faculty Handbook*, Part One, Article XX (Faculty Governance) (page 131):

Faculty governance is carried out through decisions made at Faculty Meetings and through a system of committees of the Faculty as described in Part Two. Faculty Meetings, presided over by the President, are generally held on the first Friday of each month. All the faculty as herein defined are expected to attend Faculty Meetings and are eligible to vote: all full-time members of the Faculty (including those on phased employment) and faculty holding shared appointments at the rank of Assistant Professor or above, Visiting Instructors, Librarians, Artists-in-Residence, Writers-in-Residence, full-year full-time Lecturers, and full-year full-time Teaching Associates, the President, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of the Faculty, the Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, the Associate Dean of the Faculty, the Dean of Student Affairs, the Associate Dean of the Faculty for Academic Advising, the Dean of Special Programs, the Registrar and Director of Institutional Research, the Senior Associate Director of Admissions, the Director of University Without Walls, the Director of Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program, the Director of Summer Sessions and Summer Special Programs, the Dayton Director of the Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, the Malloy Curator of the Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, and such other administrative officers as may be appointed to the Faculty by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the President after consultation with the CAPT and with the concurrence of the Faculty.

- 2) Modify the current description of the Teaching Associate position in the *Faculty Handbook*, Part One, Article V (Appointments to the Faculty), Section E (Non-Tenure-Track Appointments) (page 105)

Old language:

2. g. Teaching Associate: Full- or part-time appointments that combine teaching and coaching or assisting in the delivery of the curriculum in a department or program. Promotion to Senior Teaching Associate is granted by the department according to departmental procedures and with the consent of the Dean of the Faculty.

Proposed language:

2. g. Teaching Associate: Full- or part-time teaching members of the faculty. Teaching Associates principally collaborate with other faculty in the design and/or delivery of the curriculum in a department or program, and their primary responsibility is teaching. Promotion to Senior Teaching Associate is granted by the department according to departmental procedures and with the consent of the Dean of the Faculty.

3) Strike and insert the following text (in red) in the *Faculty Handbook*, Part One, Article VI (Evaluative Criteria for Continued Service), Section C (Non-Tenure-Track Appointments) (page 108)

3. Teaching Associates

The criteria for reappointment and for promotion are: (1) excellence in teaching and/or coaching; (2) professional growth that maintains currency and enhances effectiveness in the classroom, studio, or laboratory, ~~or on the athletic field or court~~; and (3) service to the department/program and College.

4) Strike and insert the following text (red type) into the *Faculty Handbook*, Part Two, Article I (The Faculty Meeting) (page 201):

C. Eligibility to Vote

1. b. Visiting Instructors, Librarians, Artists-in-Residence, Writers-in-Residence, ~~and~~ full-year fulltime Lecturers, and full-year full-time Teaching Associates,

5) Strike the following text from the *Faculty Handbook*, Part Two, Article I (The Faculty Meeting) (page 202):

D. Eligibility to Attend

1. ~~Teaching associates~~, Departmental assistants, part-time faculty and administrators without faculty status are invited to attend and participate in Faculty Meetings, on a permanent or temporary basis, but without a vote.

### **Rationale:**

Teaching Associates at Skidmore College are full- or part-time appointments to the faculty. When Skidmore's Physical Activity Program moved from Academic Affairs to

Student Affairs in 2005, the Teaching Associate title was reserved for those faculty members who principally collaborate with other faculty in the design and/or delivery of the curriculum in a department or program. Teaching Associates' primary responsibility is teaching, and as is the case with all other full-time members of our teaching faculty, FEC believes that full-time Teaching Associates should attend Faculty Meetings and be eligible to vote.