

**Meeting of the Faculty Senate and College Faculty, Franklin College of Arts & Sciences – September 6, 2005**

1. Call to Order: Presiding Officer Mitch Rothstein called the meeting to order at 3:30pm in 150 SLC. College faculty were invited to debate and discuss two proposed amendments to the by-laws.
  - a. The first amendment to be discussed would be related to the process by which department heads are chosen.
  - b. The second amendment to be discussed would be the modified by-laws for student grade appeals within the college.
  - c. There would be no modification of proposals, only debate and discussion so that departmental representatives can inform their colleagues of issues with the upcoming vote next week.
  - d. This meeting is called under the current Articles, which give power to the College faculty to alter, repeal, or amend the existing by-laws.
2. Dean Garnett Stokes spoke to the present faculty and made some remarks about ongoing changes in Franklin College.
  - a. The Dean's office is working on revisions of their 5-year plans, based on feedback from the Provost and special committees. These revisions are being used by the Provost's office to evaluate budget requests, new faculty lines, and placement of resources.
  - b. New promotion and tenure criteria are being implemented at present.
  - c. Dean Stokes remarked that faculty recruitment is up; 27 new hires have been made in the past year, though 24 faculty were lost to resignation, non-renewal, or retirement.
  - d. This year the College has authorized 39 new faculty recruits; every division will gain some faculty lines. Ten hires will be made in the humanities, 6 in the Arts, 6-7 in social sciences, 9 in physical sciences and mathematics, and 8 in the biological sciences.
  - e. The Dean's role is now to focus on fundraising and improving the College's ability to raise funds. Dean Stokes remarked that successful institutions have great endowments that make the university less dependent on state funding.
  - f. Dean Stokes has hired 2 new Development staff, including a Major Gifts Officer (to identify and cultivate major gifts, meaning \$25,000 or more).
  - g. There is also a goal to increase the number of named professorships, to recognize stellar faculty, generate opportunities to recruit at the senior level. This includes the new Wyatt and Margaret Anderson professorship in the Arts. A named professorship requires a gift of \$250,000 or more.
  - h. In the near future, more work will be done to respond to the report by the Taskforce on General Education and Student Learning.
3. The floor was opened to comments or questions for Dean Stokes
  - a. Bob Ivarie, Genetics – are most of the new positions at the junior level? Dean Stokes confirmed this.

- b. Sandra Wyld, Geology, asked about the rumor that no University people are on the committee to choose the new chancellor; Dean Stokes was unaware of this information.
4. Presiding Officer Mitch Rothstein recommended that the Faculty proceed to discussion of the proposed amendments to the by-laws.
- a. Article IV, section 1 – the Appointment of Head. The current by-law and proposed revision were presented to the faculty at this point; a rank-ordered list of candidates for department head, as requested by the Dean’s office, is the substantive change.
  - b. Sandra Wyld, Geology, submitted the following text to the Senate via email prior to today’s meeting, and reiterated her points at this time:
    - What is meant by the term "acceptable". Who decides which individuals are "acceptable" and by what process? Is it a faculty vote?, and if so, does the "acceptability" vote need to be unanimous, a two thirds majority, or a simple majority?
    - The current wording presumes an earlier sorting process in which "acceptable and unacceptable" individuals were considered together and then distinguished. Thus, there needs to be reference to the earlier sorting in which the pool of possible candidates is presented for consideration. This would presumably be individuals of a certain rank (Full Professor?), etc.
    - The text is unclear as to whether a faculty ranks all candidates or only those that are deemed acceptable.
    - It's not clear why the word "candidate" is used in one part of the second sentence and "nominees" is used in the next. Does this imply that not all candidates are nominees? What distinguishes candidates from nominees, or nominees from candidates? If it's acceptability, we again return to the question of what vote (1/2? 2/3?) is necessary for acceptability and what are the criteria on which such a decision should be made.].
  - c. Mark Farmer, Cellular Biology also recommended that the “acceptability” vote implies that some candidates would be voted as “unacceptable” and yet still be presented on the ranked list, thus causing potential political problems within departments.
  - d. Bob Ivarie, Genetics requested clarification on why the change is necessary; after some debate it was noted that the only change is the formal request of the ranked list of candidates, a process that has varied from one department to another. The idea is that now the Dean is given preferences as well as acceptability information.
  - e. Discussion noted that the revision does not conflict with the current policy; rank ordering is allowed currently and could be ignored by the Dean, but is preferable to different processes in different departments.
  - f. Sandra Wyld, Geology, noted that departments want to be able to rank their candidates in a way that is clearly defined by the bylaws so the Dean would know exactly which was the preferred choice. The current system does not allow this.
  - g. Adam Parkes, English agreed that this is the motivation for the change, and it does not compel the Dean to act on this list. Further discussion noted that many people thought it was the rule that you could not send

candidates with preferences. This is an attempt to homogenize the practice so everybody knows what can be done.

- h. A distinction is noted between “majority approval” as currently stated and “acceptability”.
- i. Presiding Officer Mitch Rothstein interjected that there is a clear ambiguity between “nominees” and “candidates” in the second proposal; there will be candidates and there will be a vote of acceptability. It is not clear that a nominee is defined to be a candidate who is voted acceptable. The motion also requires that any vote taken on any person is still sent to the Dean, whether Acceptable or not.
- j. Elham Izadi, Mathematics felt that the distinction between “nominees” and “candidates” must be clearer – is a candidate that is not acceptable not a nominee and thus not on the list sent to the Dean?
- k. Other faculty questioned the overall vote on acceptability – must it be by a certain majority? Greater than half, greater than two-thirds, unanimous?
- l. John Aster, Chemistry, noted that the overall count of support for each nominee should be provided in terms of the acceptability, not just the ranking. Then the Dean can decide, knowing what the overall count is, so if the Dean received the list they would be able to evaluate just how “acceptable” a candidate is on their own.
- m. Ed Sandor, Music, stated that the confusion between “candidates” and “nominee” is a major problem with this amendment.
- n. Mitch Rothstein agreed that there is an ambiguity in the overall language of this proposed amendment; it is not clear from any of the present Faculty Senators how this amendment originated or passed, as it did not spend as much time in committee as the other proposed amendment (if at all).
- o. Elham Izadi, Mathematics, agreed with Prof. Astor, as long as the Dean gets their count and the ranking, all of the information is provided, which resolves the problem of two people getting the same vote count – the preference of the Department could break the tie.
- p. Faculty proposed that this amendment should be voted down and re-written. Presiding Officer Mitch Rothstein noted that faculty should communicate these arguments to our colleagues before the vote next Tuesday, as it is important that this is an informed vote. There is no modification of these amendments today.
- q. Dean Stokes noted that she would prefer to get rankings from the departments to help evaluate these choices. This amendment would formalize the process of requesting a ranked list for the Dean.
- r. At least one faculty member noted that the ambiguity in language in this amendment does not necessarily have any negative impact, and the changes may be only semantic.
- s. Additional discussion revolved around the options of Faculty Senate to revise the amendment if approved, or to return to this business if it is declined. Erwin Bernstein, Psychology, provided the last argument, that we all understand the intent of the current and proposed by-laws, that no

wording is watertight, and thus people should vote to make the changes if they believe the intended changes are appropriate.

5. Presiding Officer Mitch Rothstein recommended that we move discussion to proposed changes to Article V covering student grade appeals.
  - a. Mitch Rothstein noted that this article describes the grade appeals process at the departmental level. Two article sections will be affected by proposed changes.
  - b. The Academic Standards Committee *de facto* currently hears grade appeals at the College level though not empowered to do so. Changes to section III of this Article will give them that power.
  - c. More substantive changes in Article V include the change of timeframe for appeals from one year to one month; to impose a minimum size on the departmental committee appointed to deal with appeals; to state the right of an oral hearing explicitly; to require closed hearings, conducted pursuant to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.
  - d. There is a new section on how the College acts in these situations. Appeals go from the Department to the College. If the Academic Standards Committee wants the department to revisit the matter, it returns to the departmental committee. If there is still no agreement and the student continues the appeal process, it goes to the University level.
  - e. Richard Morrison, Chemistry, noted that in previous by-laws the college could not overturn the grade assigned by instructor, this power was assumed but never granted. The amended by-laws explicitly say that the College does not have this power. These changes clarify the role of the Academic Standards committee. Grounds for appeal should be based in bias or unprofessional conduct.
  - f. Other faculty asked if it is a problem to take away the ruling power of Academic Standards because departments will defend their colleagues. However Prof. Morrison then reminded the present faculty that the committee never had that power. There was a unanimous vote by the Senate last year in favor of these revisions, because the decision for grade appeals should be made by the faculty working in the subject and the faculty most affected by the decisions, rather than at a more remote level by a committee that is in place for 2-3 years at most and may have no institutional memory of previous decisions.
  - g. Presiding Officer Mitch Rothstein corroborated this, noting that the Senate discussed this matter at length and is implicitly recommending by this proposal that these changes be made.
  - h. A faculty member from the English department noted that some of the proposed changes negatively impact teaching in courses where hundreds or thousands of students (*e.g.* the university writing program courses) take the class each year, and thus dozens of appeals each year. There is no 'wobble room' for department-level adjustments to the process in the current stipulations, *e.g.* a 3-person panel must now be convened for every appeal without full documentation being first provided. The added specificity in the appeals process actually may add ambiguity to the

process, as written. Specifying a uniform process that cannot be varied is problematic, particularly for particular segments of the College teaching staff.

- i. Multiple faculty members noted that section 4 of the amended by-law is very difficult to work with. The changes in the timeframe are also a problem, particularly for study-abroad students. The conflict between College and departmental procedures may not be fully addressed by these changes.
  - j. Primarily, it is noted by multiple faculty members that there should be an allowance for “tweaking” of the rules; the Presiding Officer noted this and recommendations were made for this business to be added to the Senate agenda if this proposed amendment passes.
6. Comments were closed at 5:05pm; there was a motion to adjourn, seconded; Presiding Officer Mitch Rothstein ended the meeting at 5:05pm.