

**ACADEMIC COUNCIL
MEETING of APRIL 28, 2009
McKenna Auditorium
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

Members present: John Affleck-Graves, Panos Antsaklis, A.J. Bellia, Robert Bernhard, Seth Brown, Thomas Burish, Michelle Byrne, Laura Carlson, James Collins, Greg Crawford, Sarah de Groot, Neil Delaney, Umesh Garg, Nicole Garnett, Nasir Ghiaseddin, Thomas Gresik, Paul Huber, Dennis Jacobs, Lionel Jensen, Michael Jenuwine, Peter Kilpatrick, Daniel Lapsley, Kristin Lewis, John LoSecco, Sean Lyttle, Chris Maziar, John McGreevy, Scott Monroe, William Nichols, Patricia O’Hara, Hugh Page, Don Pope-Davis, Joseph Powers, Ava Preacher, Jim Seida, Cheri Smith, Greg Sterling, Kasey Swanke, Joe Venturini, Jennifer Younger

Members absent: Steve Fallon, Bob Reish, John Welle, Bill Westfall

Members excused: Rev. John Jenkins, Michael Lykoudis, C.S.C., Susan Ohmer, Rev. Mark Poorman, C.S.C., Ann Tenbrunsel, Julian Velasco, Carolyn Woo

Observers present: Kevin Barry, Kathryn Lam, Dale Nees, Brandon Roach, Harold Pace

Observers absent: Daniel Saracino

Guests: Rev. Peter Rocca, C.S.C., Associate Director of Liturgy, Campus Ministry; Paul Mueller, Senior Analyst, Institutional Research

In Fr. Jenkins’ absence, Prof. Burish called the meeting to order and asked Prof. Smith to say the opening prayer.

1. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the March 23, 2009 meeting were unanimously approved.

2. 2011 Spring Break/Ask Wednesday: In advance of the meeting, members received a letter from Fr. Richard Warner, Director, Campus Ministry, describing an issue surrounding Ash Wednesday in 2011 and requesting that the Council allow spring break to be moved in that year. At the request of Fr. Warner, Fr. Peter Rocca, Associate Director, Campus Ministry, addressed the Council about the request and pointed out that Ash Wednesday (March 9, 2011) falls in the middle of spring break, as currently scheduled. Fr. Rocca noted that this conflict will not be a perennial problem as Easter Sunday rarely falls so late in the year; the next time such an occasion may arise again is in 2038. He commented on the importance of Ash Wednesday in the life of Christians and the particularly impressive celebration by students at Notre Dame. He then requested that the Council consider moving spring break in 2011 ahead or behind one week so that Ash Wednesday can be celebrated in the usual and important way.

Prof. Gresik remarked that the Faculty Senate discussed this topic and that it was the Senate’s opinion that the spring break week should remain on the schedule as planned since it provides a

natural break point directly in the middle of the semester. The Senate was concerned that moving the break week would make the semester unbalanced. Others expressed interest in allowing the break to be moved either earlier or later because of the benefits described by Fr. Rocca. Prof. Smith explained that her preference to move it a week earlier because of the impact on one-credit course that start mid-semester.

Prof. Brown inquired about the potential of beginning the entire semester a week later to adjust the spring academic calendar and maintain spring break in the middle of the semester, but avoid the overlap with Ash Wednesday.

Prof. Burish said that the Council could vote and make a recommendation to the President to alter the calendar. He suggested that the Council first vote on whether to change the calendar. By a show of hands, an overwhelming majority voted to change the calendar.

Discussion continued and Prof. Ansaklis asked if there was a way to bring the decision of the Council back to the faculty and constituencies the members represent and ask for their feedback before making the final decision. Prof. Burish suggested that the matter be voted on today and the recommendation made to the President. He asked that members go back to their representative groups and if there are problems with any options that the Council has not discussed, to inform Dr. Pace within ten days. Dr. Pace can relay that information to the President who can consider it in his decision. Dr. Burish said the announcement of the change can be held until the Fall 2009 semester, but given the scheduling impact of the change, it would be best to arrive at a decision during the Spring 2009 semester.

The Council, by a show of hands, then voted on whether to move spring break (either one week earlier or one week later). The option was defeated by a large majority. Finally, the Council, voted on whether to shift the entire spring semester and begin classes one week later on January 18, 2011. By show of hands, the Council voted by an overwhelming majority, to approve the shift of the spring semester.

3. Executive Committee Election Procedures: Prof. Burish introduced the topic of considering changes to the Council's procedures for election of the Executive Committee. He said that at the request of Council members, options were considered that might result in a more efficient way of voting. He appointed Profs. Gresik and Carlson to review ways of voting and make a recommendation to the Council as to how it should proceed. In advance of the meeting, a comprehensive report and executive summary of the report from Profs. Gresik and Carlson were distributed to members.

Prof. Carlson reviewed the existing procedures, noting its limitations: the considerable time it takes, the inability to consider the composition of the whole committee simultaneously, the potential for bias due to strategic voting from multiple rounds of voting, and the current on-the-spot checking of whether a nominee of member is willing to serve. She then explained in detail the Borda count method that they proposed adopting and responded to questions from members.

Prof. Garg commented that the proposed procedures were not significantly simpler than the current procedures used. Prof. Sterling noted concern about the need to determine a single

voting stratification dimension. Prof. Bellia pointed out that if the sex of the faculty member is considered as the voting stratification dimension, the Office of General Counsel would likely want to consider its comfort level in using that dimension.

Profs. Gresik and Carlson recommended trying the proposed procedures for the next two years and in year three (2011) vote to decide whether to continue using the new procedures, or to revert to the previous election procedures.

Prof. Carlson moved to vote on whether to use the proposed procedures for a two-year trial period, or to continue using the existing procedures. By show of hands, the motion was defeated and the current system remained in place.

Prof. Burish thanked Profs. Gresik and Carlson for the time and effort they put in to their proposal. At Prof. O'Hara's request, Prof. Burish agreed that in advance of the first meeting of the year, a call for nominations for the Executive Committee will occur.

4. Annual Gender and Minority Equity Study on Faculty Salaries: Prof. Maziar reviewed the annual study on faculty salary equity which monitors Notre Dame teaching and research faculty salaries for gender bias or minority status bias. She explained that the review is done employing widely used statistical techniques to detect bias. She encouraged members with specific questions about the statistical model used to consult with Paul Mueller, Senior Analyst, Institutional Research.

Prof. Maziar noted that only teaching and research faculty have been included in the model. It does not include other regular faculty because of the small size of the cohorts associated with other faculty groups or, in the case of special professional faculty, the broad dispersion of types of work performed. She said other groups might be included in future studies as secondary titles are established with the change of the Academic Articles.

Prof. Maziar explained how the study was conducted. Based on the results, she concluded that in none of the dimensions reviewed could statistical significance of salary dependence on either gender or minority status be found. She thanked Dr. Mueller and Eva Nance, Director, Institutional Research as well as staff from the Provost's Office for their work in cleaning the data and modeling the data.

5. Year-End Committee Reports

Undergraduate Studies: Prof. Collins said the overarching focus of the Undergraduate Studies Committee was the Advanced Placement (AP) policy. As they investigated the policy, the committee recognized the complicated set of issues involved. The committee realized the potential positive effects that might come from a new policy that requires students to take a higher level course in a given requirement instead of "exempting out" of a required course. He outlined the process by which the committee gathered information on the possible impacts and priorities of a new policy (Phase One). He said that during Phase Two, the committee will gather information on the usage of AP credit and the impact on faculty resources.

Prof. Collins explained that the committee decided to revisit the question regarding dual degrees only after the committee has reached a conclusion regarding the use of AP credits since any such changes would likely have an enormous impact on dual degrees.

Prof. Collins said that after hearing a report on the state of the revisions of the Academic Code from the committee charged with the task, it appeared that substantial deliberation is still needed in regard to a number of complicated issues. He said that the Undergraduate Studies committee recommends that a new working group be formed in Fall 2009. The new committee can be composed of members of the Undergraduate Studies committee and other relevant parties (e.g., General Counsel). With a voice vote of the Council, the recommendation to constitute a new working group in Fall 2009 was approved.

Faculty Affairs: Prof. Garnett said the Faculty Affairs Committee focused on two projects for the year. The first and primary project was to revise the provisions of the Academic Articles governing Tenure, Reappointment and Promotion and appeals of unsuccessful Tenure, Reappointment and Promotion decisions. The Council completed its consideration of the revisions in February 2009 and the Board of Trustees is scheduled to consider and approve the recommended changes at its May 1, 2009 meeting.

The committee's second project considered whether to recommend post-tenure review at Notre Dame. A subcommittee of the Faculty Affairs Committee formulated a proposal and reviewed it with the full committee. Although the committee did not reach consensus on the proposal at that meeting, it agreed that the issue of post-tenure faculty development is a critical one for Notre Dame and should continue to be considered by the Faculty Affairs committee next academic year.

Advanced Studies: Prof. Carlson said the Advanced Studies Committee focused on interdisciplinary work in the following ways: 1) defining interdisciplinary research, 2) understanding the place of interdisciplinary research alongside disciplinary and multidisciplinary research, 3) identifying the barriers to interdisciplinary research, and 4) examining efforts to foster interdisciplinary graduate programs. She said that the committee recommends the Offices of the Graduate Studies, of Research, and/or of the Provost create the necessary structures to investigate how to overcome the barriers to interdisciplinary research at Notre Dame so that faculty research and graduate programs may flourish.

Prof. Burish informed members that a committee [Task Force on Collaborative Hiring], chaired by Prof. Garnett, studied the issue of interdisciplinary hiring (including the barriers to it) and issued a report. He met with the Task Force to review the report and will now send the report to the deans and then department chairs for consideration. Prof. Burish said that the hope is to have a discussion on the topic among the faculty next semester.

6. Adjournment: Prof. Burish thanked Profs. Collins, Garnett, and Carlson for their work as chairs of the Council's three committees. Having no further business to discuss, Prof. Burish adjourned the meeting.