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Annual Report, Arts & Sciences Faculty President, 2014-2015

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A&S President of the Faculty Report
Carol Lauer

This year was much more productive than last year. The Executive Committee was able to solve problems quickly because President McAllaster was a regular attendee at our meetings. His presence was also enormously helpful at our monthly faculty meetings in that rumors and misinformation could be addressed before they took up time and energy.

INB and BSE

The big discussion of the fall was the fate of International Business and Business and Social Entrepreneurship as separate departments. After much discussion with faculty and the interested parties, or their representatives, President McAllaster decided that they should become one department that offers several majors and that the department will be housed in CPS. A&S had hoped that, as part of this discussion, the status of CPS would be clarified this year but that determination was put off until the new president starts his term. It was clear in many faculty meetings that A&S would prefer for CPS to rejoin A&S since having two colleges for undergraduate day students does not make sense in an institution of our size. The governance issues alone warrant this change. Since we share the same student body, multiple committees have to pass the same legislation. Barring a merger, A&S's second choice would be for the two colleges to share a dean.

SACS

This was also the year for our SACS review and the EC was involved with meeting with the SACS team when they were on campus this spring. The hard work of many faculty, staff and administrators was rewarded in that their were only a few recommendations from SACS and the college was reassured that these could all be handled and settled by the end of the summer. The most involved recommendation was for the undergraduate faculty to make clear why courses that meet for 150 minutes a week are worth four as opposed to three credit hours. As part of our SACS response, A&S Faculty resolved to include the following statement in every syllabus for a 150 minutes course.

Credit Hour Statement for Rollins Courses Meeting 150 Minutes Weekly for Four Credit Hours during 15-Week Semesters

This course is a four-credit-hour course that meets three hours per week. The value of four credit hours results from work expected of enrolled students both inside and outside the classroom. Rollins faculty require that students average at least three hours of outside work for every hour of scheduled class time. In this course, the additional outside-of-class expectations are [please fill in what this course requires, e.g., fieldwork, research, experiential education, small-group projects, etc.]:

Presidential Search Committee

As President and Vice President of the A&S faculty Thomas Ouellette and I were called upon to serve as members of the search committee for the new president. This committee consisted of students, alumni, trustees and representatives of A&S, CPS and Crummer. It was a remarkable committee of people deeply committed to the college who were willing to spend a great deal of time checking background information and meeting with candidates. We were all impressed with the size and quality of the candidate pool and were able to recommend Dr. Grant Cornwell to the Board of Trustees as our next president. The committee could not be happier with their approval of our choice. Faculty were able to meet with Dr. Cornwell before his introduction to the BOT, to see his CV and to ask him questions. We held the A&S Bylaws required vote on his candidacy and the vote was overwhelmingly positive. Since Dr. Cornwell's selection, he has visited campus several times and Thomas and I have met with him during each of these visits to discuss the challenges and opportunities the college will face as he begins his term.

Improved BOT relations

Another major initiative of the year was to build better relationships between faculty and the Board of Trustees. Thomas coordinated a series of Friday afternoon meetings that were attended by President McAllaster, BOT members and faculty. We held three in the fall and two in the spring asking faculty of different ranks to attend different sessions. The number of our colleagues and Board members who were willing to devote hours late on a Friday afternoon to such discussions was impressive. We could see the level of discourse change as the year progressed and by the last meeting the discussion was lively, respectful and involved real give and take. We also invited the BOT to our holiday party in December as another attempt to build bridges.

President elect Cornwell suggested a pilot program where a group of faculty will meet with a subgroup of the BOT as part of each of their regular meetings. The EC recommended, and the A&S faculty approved, a resolution that the faculty should be the members of the Executive Council.

The faculty also passed the following resolution on attendance at BOT committee meetings:

To enhance communication and understanding across the College, the Arts and Sciences faculty respectfully invite the Board of Trustees to allow the chairs of the Academic Affairs, Finance and Service, and Student Life committees to attend their corresponding sub-committee meetings of the Board, and that the vice president of the A&S faculty attend the Development sub-committee meetings. The faculty also requests that one faculty member attend meetings of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Both President elect Cornwell and Chairman of the BOT David Lord approve of this resolution.

Bylaws Changes

The college has no written policy on dismissal of tenured faculty. The All College Bylaws state that if we have no policy we follow AAUP recommended procedures. In a dismissal case that concluded during this academic year the EC felt that these AAUP procedures had not been followed. We recommended to the A&S faculty a bylaw change that reiterated our commitment to AAUP standards and that specified the make up of the faculty committee to be involved in such proceedings. The AAUP does not discuss the make up of the committee. The faculty approved of the following language for inclusion in the A&S bylaws:

In cases concerning the fitness and possible dismissal of a tenured faculty member, Arts and Sciences shall follow the 1958 AAUP Statement on Procedural Standards in Faculty Dismissal Proceedings. The ad hoc Hearing Committee in charge of these procedures shall consist of four tenured faculty members with the rank of Professor. To select the committee The Executive Committee of the Arts and Sciences will present a slate of faculty names to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences for approval. The committee will be convened for the duration of the procedures.

Suggested location of this statement

Article VIII Faculty Evaluations Section G (at end)

Since this vote, President McAllaster has circulated a draft of a college policy on dismissals outlining causes for dismissal and a procedure. This policy would go in the Faculty Handbook and not be subject to a faculty vote. Faculty expressed concerns about the details of the policy and President McAllaster is currently revising it in light of best practices and the discussion will continue in the fall.

The BOT also would like the A&S Bylaws on approval of presidential candidates, provosts, and deans to be changed. They argue this vote is in conflict with the Trustee bylaw section that gives the trustees the right to hire and fire whomever they choose. Thomas and I met with a subcommittee of trustees and a college lawyer and argued successfully against this change for this academic year. We believe the BOT will raise the issue again.