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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Finance and Service Committee Meeting, Tuesday, March 24, 2009

Arts & Sciences Finance and Service Committee

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Finance and Services Committee
School of Arts & Sciences
Minutes of the meeting of March 24, 2009
(Approved at the Committee meeting of April 28)

Committee members present: Michael Gunter (Presiding), Vidhu Aggarwal, Barry Allen, Larry Van Sickle, Eric Schutz (Secretary).

We began by discussing briefly the IT Master Plan presentation to us at our last meeting. There was apparently some confusion about whether the IT consultant (Mr. Hibbler) brought in to advise the College on its IT needs had consulted any of the faculty while here.

Mostly, however, this meeting was taken up with discussion of our Committee's work on the issue of faculty representation on the Board of Trustees. We began by bemoaning our disappointment in the Executive Committee's response to our proposal for representation and in the Faculty President's brief description of our work at the last A&S Faculty meeting. That done, we proceeded to discuss our plans for a next step in the process of advancing our proposal.

We decided to schedule a general faculty colloquium next September to bring up the various issues involved for faculty discussion: the faculty should be heard from on this issue. Many of us have felt that this issue called for a faculty resolution to be sent to the Board, and at any rate the faculty should be involved in discussions relevant to deciding such particulars as (a) how their representatives are to be chosen for the Board (e.g., in general faculty elections), (b) on what Board committees they should sit (see below), (c) how many faculty representatives there should be, (d) the lengths of their terms, and (d) what their participation on the Board should entail in terms of specific rights (e.g., observing, participating in discussion) and responsibilities (e.g., reporting back to the faculty).

As it stands now, the faculty have been invited by the Board to send representatives to the Board's Education Committee (1-person from the faculty's Academic Affairs Committee), and it will probably be invited to the Board's Business and Finance Committee (1-person from our own F&S Committee). Why not have faculty representatives on all significant committees (probably excluding the Audit Committee and the Compensation Committee), as well as to the general Board itself? Why not have faculty participation be not merely at the convenience of the Board but a routine feature of College governance?

We decided to complete our study of representation at peer and aspirant schools' Boards by getting the information on the half-dozen schools we had yet not finished surveying. We ended by discussing Michael's presentation of our work and announcement of the colloquium at the upcoming faculty meeting.