

*Minutes*  
*Faculty Senate Meeting*  
*March 4, 2009*

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Professor Stephen Silvia called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

Present: Professors Stephen Silvia, Gary Weaver, Randall Blair, Wendell Cochran, James Girard, Robert Karch, Kiho Kim, Ira Klein, Nanette Levinson, Andy Pike, Gwendolyn Reece, Leigh Riddick, Anthony Riley, Jerzy Sapieyevski, Stacey Snelling, Michael Wilkerson, Dean Mardirosian, and Provost Scott Bass.

**Welcome and Introduction, Stephen Silvia**

Professor Silvia welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Prof. Silvia announced that the minutes from the February 18 special Faculty Senate budget meeting that have been provided for Senators today had been amended in one respect versus those that had been circulated a week ago. Prof. Silvia added a revision suggested by Professor Leap stating: “Professor Leap asked the Provost to give the Senators his assurance that if budget cutbacks became necessary he would use the process employed to build the budget as the mechanism for budget reduction which included involvement of the Faculty Senate Instructional Budget and Benefits Committee in order to ensure that a faculty voice would be involved in any reduction process. The Provost indicated that he would do that.”

The Senate **VOTED** to approve the minutes for the February 4 and 18 meetings.

**Report of the Chair, Stephen Silvia**

Professor Silvia announced a departure from the agenda. There will be no report by the Committee on Faculty Relations today. He mentioned that the CFR had finished draft revisions to sections 8 and 13 of the manual during the previous week and that the Senate executive committee, the Senior Vice Provost and the Provost were in the process of reviewing them. Prof. Silvia also explained to the Senate the steps for revising the manual. The manual will go through the Senate, to the provost and ultimately to the Board of Trustees for approval. The Provost will consult with the President. The Senate may wish to create an ad hoc committee to work further on manual revisions before a draft is discussed at the Senate itself. Senators should keep in mind that the Board would only be likely to approve revisions that the faculty, the Provost and the President all can embrace without reservations. A realistic target date for submission to the Board would be for the November 2009 Board meeting. To meet this target, the Senate should take up a revised manual at its October meeting in order to be able to submit it to the Provost in time to be put on the agenda for the November Board meeting.

**Report of the Vice Chair, Lyn Stallings**

*Budget*

Professor Stallings announced that the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the new University budget. She noted that the Board felt comfortable approving the budget because all of the campus constituencies, including the Faculty Senate, supported it, and it had built into it four levels of defense designed to protect the University against any adverse economic developments. Prof. Stallings also noted that vice-president for finance Don Myers has restructured all of the University's debt, which has made a substantial contribution to keeping the University on a sound financial footing.

### *Strategic Plan*

The Board of Trustees approved the Strategic Plan. The Provost presented a preliminary set of metrics for measuring progress toward achieving the plan's goals over the next two years. The Board asked the Administration to produce a detailed set of metrics by the May 2009 Board meeting. Individual colleges and schools will also be producing strategic plans during the spring semester. The Board recognized the importance of moving decisions down from the Provost to the faculty, and supports simplifying policies that impede progressive actions. Dean LeoGrande reported to the Board on the structure and accomplishments of the School of Public Affairs. The Board will continue to hear reports from the Deans of the other academic units at subsequent Board meetings.

### *Other Committee Reports*

Professor Klein mentioned that Campus Life discussed improving recreational activities on campus for students.

Professor Karch mentioned that the Athletic Committee discussed improving athletic facilities and locker rooms. He added that all student athletes have a G.P.A. of 3.0 or better.

## **Report of the Provost, Scott Bass**

### *Faculty Summit*

Dr. Bass thanked everyone for their participation in the Faculty Summit. Over 270 faculty attended. He felt that it was very successful and would like to do it again. Reports from the 'break-out sessions' will be shared as soon as they are available.

### *Budget*

Dr. Bass expressed his happiness that the every item of the budget was approved. He noted that there is now \$40 million in new money, on top of the \$28 million in reserves and the base budget. This is unusual in such hard economic times, and it allows American University to recruit new faculty. He emphasized that this is a time for rapid and exciting growth. Provost Bass highlighted some areas on which the University can move forward now that the budget has passed.

### *One Stop Center*

This will be a way to explain and coordinate academic and financial services available to students at the University.

*Frederick Douglass Scholarship Program*

Dr. Bass would like to start this program at American University.

*Center for Teaching Excellence*

Professor John Richardson has undertaken a comprehensive review of the Center for Teaching Excellence in order to identify areas which need improvement.

## **Committee Reports**

*Committee on Instructional Budget and Benefits* (Jim Girard, acting chair)

- Family Medical Leave Policy:

Professor Girard presented the Senators with the revised version of the *Family Medical Leave Policy*. The resolution included a number of suggested revisions to the policy. After a brief discussion, the Senate **VOTED** unanimously (19 to 0) to pass the resolution.

- Committee Name Change:

Professor Girard announced that the name of the Committee on Instructional Budget and Benefits will be changed to the Committee on Academic Budget and Benefits. The Senate **VOTED** unanimously (19 to 0) in favor of the name change.

*Faculty Senate Executive Committee* (Steve Silvia, chair)

- Ad hoc Faculty Salary Equity Committee:

Professor Silvia presented a resolution to create a Faculty Senate Equity Committee. Several professors discussed the pros and cons of creating this committee, as well as the scope of the committee. Provost Bass said that this proposal originated when a group of faculty headed by the Chair of the AU chapter of the AAUP, John Willoughby, met with him to request such a committee. Professor Silvia said that the ad hoc committee's charge would be to undertake a broad analysis of the patterns of faculty compensation. He added that it was essential that this committee work in a way that preserves the privacy of individual faculty members. He noted that the work of this committee would differ from that of the standing Faculty Senate Equity and Grievance Committee. The standing committee handles individual grievances.

Cathy Schneider, SIS, said that there is a strong need for an independent ombudsman or equity officer who works full-time on such issues. In her view, the current arrangement by which the Dean of Academic Affairs also services as the chief affirmative action officer creates a conflict of interest

because it makes it impossible to have an independent review the decisions made by the Dean of Academic Affairs in the field of equity.

Professor Silvia suggested that the proposal should be withdrawn today and revisited at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

### **For the Good of the Order**

Professor Silvia reported that Prof. John Douglass (SoC) is recovering and is on track to return to performing all his duties in the fall.

The Spring Emeriti Luncheon will be on Monday May 4. Prof. Bob Gregg (SIS emeritus) will be the speaker. In his retirement, Bob has been writing a series of mystery novels set in the Finger Lakes region of New York State. Bob will talk about his experiences as a novelist.

The Faculty Senate Elections will be coming up soon. There are spaces available for university-wide seats, at-large seats, and committee chairs seats. There is a four-year term limit for any Senate seat.

Professor Snelling announced that the Periodic Review Report focused on three areas: Enrollment, Strategic Plan, Learning Outcomes and Assessments.

Professor Klein mentioned that he is happy that the Senate voted at its last meeting to form a University Book Services Committee, but there needs to be a convener to facilitate the committee's work.

Professor Weaver encouraged everyone to attend the basketball playoff games to support the athletes and school.

**The meeting adjourned at 4:15.**