

Amended April 18, 2011

The thirty-second meeting of the Committee of Six for the academic year 2010-2011 was called to order by President Marx in his office at 3:30 P.M. on Monday, April 4, 2011. Present were Professors Basu, Ciepiela, Loinaz, Rockwell, Umphrey, and Saxton, Dean Call, President Marx, and Assistant Dean Tobin, Recorder.

The meeting began with the President providing a brief summary of the meetings of the Board of Trustees that had occurred on April 1 and 2. Topics of conversation had included continuing discussion about the science center project; the need for additional faculty FTEs; issues surrounding support for students and how to meet growing needs in this area, while being conscious of budgetary limitations; and the budget, more generally.

Dean Call noted that a number of circumstances had arisen during the previous week that had, as the members are aware, delayed the review of the Committee's minutes of March 23 and March 28. The process had already been proceeding under the expedited schedule that is always required during the week before a Faculty Meeting, in order to approve minutes in time to distribute them to the Faculty before the meeting. Instead of rushing the approval process, it had seemed preferable, the Dean had decided, with the President's advice, to read abbreviated minutes of the relevant Committee of Six meetings at the April 5 Faculty Meeting. Taking this approach would allow the Committee the time that would be needed to review two complex sets of minutes, and will enable the Faculty to have sufficient time to read and digest these minutes before the next Faculty Meeting, at which time any questions that colleagues may have about them can be discussed.

In the context of discussing possible revisions to the Committee's minutes, the members returned briefly to issues surrounding faculty governance. Since the Committee has had its own minuted discussion about this topic and has now spoken with the Board about it, as well, President Marx wondered how the conversation about faculty governance would move forward.

Under "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Basu requested that the Committee place on its agenda a discussion of release time and other flexible accommodations for faculty who have significant administrative and/or governance burdens. President Marx asked whether this issue might be discussed in the context of other proposals that had been suggested during the Committee's discussions about faculty governance. Professor Basu next asked if the Dean would inform the members of the agenda items that remain for this academic year. After some discussion of these items and the schedule for considering them, the Dean said that he would provide the members with a written draft agenda by the time that the Committee next met.

Continuing with "Questions from Committee Members," Professor Umphrey asked the President if he would provide a general characterization of the finances of the College, since it appears that the Board had some discussion of this topic. President Marx responded that the endowment has recovered about three quarters of the loss incurred two-and-a half years ago, which is positive, but which means that the growth during these years that had been projected before the downturn has not occurred. Dean Call noted that the endowment has performed better than projected for this fiscal year so far. President Marx said that, if the College continues to base its projections on the same set of assumptions and if the return for this year is maintained, it appears that the goal for the endowment spend rate will be reached for the next two years, but that it will be above the targeted limit thereafter. The Board is comfortable, at this time, with an assumption of a 6.8 percent return on the endowment moving forward, President Marx said,

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while noting that there is significant debate, generally, about the degree to which the economy will recover in the near and long term.

Profess Loinaz next asked the President whether there is any sense that changes will be made to the College's faculty housing policy. President Marx said that, while he has encouraged the development of proposals to improve the policy, no proposals have been brought forward. He noted that some discussions of this issue have taken place within the Housing Committee and the Committee on Priorities and Resources (CPR). Dean Call, noting that the Housing Committee had discussions with the CPR about a possible proposal in 2008-2009, said he believes that the economic downturn slowed efforts to bring forward a proposal. He commented that the Housing Committee had met with the CPR earlier this year and that the two committees will meet again this spring. The members then turned to personnel matters.

The Committee next reviewed an additional proposal for a Senior Sabbatical Fellowship and recommended that it be approved.

The Committee reviewed proposals for new courses and voted six to zero in favor of forwarding them to the Faculty. The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory S. Call
Dean of the Faculty