

## Faculty Council Annual Report, 2006-07

Nancy Bradbury (Chair), Borjana Mikic, Kevin Quashie, Janie Vanpée, Greg White

2006-07 was an exceptionally strenuous year for Faculty Council. In addition to its mandated annual responsibilities, the committee was involved in all aspects and stages of the strategic planning. The members of Council worked hard to ensure faculty participation and to inform our colleagues about the planning process as it proceeded.

The Council representatives to elected and appointed committees were as follows:

Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation (ACRA): all members of Council represent the faculty on this committee, which advises the President about the operating budget.

Committee on Academic Priorities, which makes curricular decisions and advises the Provost on faculty staffing requests, and this year was also actively involved in strategic planning: Janie Vanpée

Committee on Faculty Compensation and Development: Greg White

Committee on Mission and Priorities, which considers the capital budget (major expenditures such as new building projects and new programs), and this year served as the central planning committee: Borjana Mikic and Kevin Quashie.

### **Initiatives 2006-07:**

1. Raising the level of faculty participation in decision-making. Council continued the efforts begun in 2004-5 to re-establish the faculty meeting as a forum for faculty deliberation. We used our presence on the committee that sets the agenda for faculty meetings to schedule as many open discussions as possible, we continued the practice of circulating administrative reports in advance of faculty meetings, and we used the faculty list-serve to remind our colleagues about strategic planning meetings where important decisions were being made. Council called together the elected members of CAP, CFCD, and CMP in an effort to strengthen faculty leadership on the committees, and also convened meetings of the chairs of the working groups for the new centers for international study, environmental sustainability, and community-based learning. We arranged a lunch meeting of members of elected committees with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. With the Provost's Office, we co-sponsored a Leadership Series on a variety of topics pertinent to curricular reform and faculty participation in governance. At the request of a faculty colleague, we arranged for a well-attended Liberal Arts Luncheon at which Richard Myers and Catherine Rowen informed the faculty about the statistics that determine Smith's place in the *U.S. News and World Report* college rankings.

2. Restoring faculty salaries to competitive levels to ensure continued success in faculty hiring and retention. Faculty Council worked with CFCD and ACRA to secure approval by the Board of Trustees of a 9.2% increase to the faculty salary pool in an effort to meet the competitive salary goals developed by CFCD and approved by the Board in 2004-05.

3. Providing leadership in a year of strategic planning. The Committee participated in both a fall and January retreat with the President's senior staff, the CAP, CMP and ACRA to discuss the planning process and priorities for NEASC reaccreditation. Members of Council were present at each of the President's fall semester planning roundtables. Council organized a series of discussions in faculty meetings about the planning and the proposed new centers. Ms Vanpée chaired the working group on the center for international study, Mr. White served on the working group for the center on the environment, and Mr. Quashie co-chaired the working group on research opportunities.

4. Revising the Complaint Policy. At the request of the President and the deans, Faculty Council appointed a committee to explore the possibility of creating a single complaint policy for the whole Smith Community. It was decided that individual policies would better serve the needs of faculty, students, and staff. Council thanks Marilyn Schuster for chairing this committee, Marc Lendler for serving as a faculty representative to it, and Larry Hunt and Julie Ohotnicky for representing the staff.

### **Annual Responsibilities:**

1. Mandated meetings with faculty, administrators, and the Board of Trustees. An important responsibility of Faculty Council is to facilitate communication and productive working relationships among faculty, administrators, and trustees and to ensure that faculty interests are well represented when important decisions are made. The Committee met weekly throughout the year, including regular meetings with the President, the Provost, other administrators, members of faculty committees, and representatives from the Poetry Center. We met in October, March and May with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, we sat in on the March meeting of the Finance Committee of the Board, and we attended the March meeting of the full Board, where we were asked by the President to make brief presentations and help facilitate discussion. Agenda items for our meetings with the Executive Committee this year included strategic planning, faculty salaries, Smith's mission as a women's college, retirement incentives, and the possibility of increasing the pace of faculty hiring to respond to present needs.

2. Elections. Council oversaw the spring faculty elections and presented the faculty with the results at its May meeting. Nicholas Horton served ably as ballot chair, David Cohen will succeed him in 2007-08, and in 2008-09 Joseph O'Rourke will serve as ballot chair and investigate the possibility of electronic balloting. At its April meeting, the faculty voted to allow CAP to elect a new 6<sup>th</sup> member to a three-year term beginning in 2007-08 and to allow one of its five continuing members to serve for a fourth year in 2008-9; both measures are meant to help restagger the terms of elected members in order to ensure continuity of faculty participation and memory on an important elective committee. In spring of 2008, CAP will elect 3 new members so that the total number of elected members returns to 5.

### Faculty Council 2007-08

Patricia DiBartolo, Elliot Fratkin, Borjana Mikic (Chair), Kevin Quashie, Janie Vanpée  
(Greg White returns in 2008-09)

### The Council representatives to elected and appointed committees are as follows:

Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation (ACRA): all members of Council  
Committee on Academic Priorities: Janie Vanpée  
Committee on Faculty Compensation and Development: Elliot Fratkin  
Committee on Missions and Priorities: Patricia DiBartolo, Kevin Quashie

Possible agenda items for 2007-08: Continued emphasis on faculty participation in decision-making, continued involvement in implementation of the strategic plan, expanding the leadership potential of chairs and directors, working toward increased transparency in CAP's allocation of tenure-track positions, exploring new models for faculty development, working with CFCD on enhancing retirement benefits, and tackling a complex of quality of life issues that may include revising the daily schedule.