Chair’s Report
Academic Senate General Meeting
Thursday, 11 November, 2010

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On-line Access to the Senate/Faculty Governance Pages

Hitherto, the Senate and related web pages devoted to faculty governance have been accessible by following links from the College’s public site. With the advent of the new portal, these pages are accessed, after log-in to “My Saint Mary’s,” by clicking on “Academic Senate” or “Faculty Governance” from the left-hand menu.

Special General Meetings of the Senate

Contiguous Special General Meetings of the Senate are scheduled for Tuesday evening, January 11, 2011 and Wednesday, January 12, 2011, the latter immediately following the regularly scheduled General Meeting of that date. Both will be devoted to faculty discussion of the proposed Learning Goals for the new Core Curriculum and of that curriculum’s (proposed) overall shape and administration. All available members of the Senate, UEPC and CCIC will be in attendance—above all, to listen and to respond to undergraduate faculty. The meetings will precede final Senate action on the Core learning goals, which should commence with the General Meeting of 10 February, 2011. The meetings will be live-streamed over the internet and so also captured for later reprise and review. A buffet dinner will be served Tuesday evening, a lunch on Wednesday, for the convenience of attendees. Please save one or both of these dates and hours:

Special General Meetings on the CCIC-UEPC Core Curriculum Proposals

Tuesday, January 11, 2011, 5:00 – 8:00pm
Soda Center, Claeys Lounge
Buffet opens at 5:00pm, business follows immediately

Wednesday, January 12, 2011, 11:30am – 1:00pm
Soda Center, Claeys Lounge
General Meeting, 9:00 – 11:00am
Buffet opens at 11:30am, Special General Meeting follows immediately

Evaluation of an Academic Administrator

For AY 2010 – 11, the regular cycle for evaluation of academic administrators dictates that college-wide evaluation of the Provost should occur during the Spring semester, 2011. The Chair convened the Academic Administrators Evaluation Committee (AAEC) on 5 October, 2010: the ordinary procedures were outlined and the evaluation instrument was distributed for review. AAEC is scheduled to meet 1 December, 2010 to approve the instrument and to elect a Committee Chair, responsible for scheduling the evaluation and presentation of the (confidential) report of results to the Provost and President.
REMARKS ON THE AGENDA FOR 11 NOVEMBER, 2009

In re: 4. REPORTS

C. Undergraduate Educational Policies Committee (UEPC)

At its meeting of 1 November, 2010, UEPC unanimously approved revision of the Art History Major in the Department of Art and Art History; the revision appears as the Senate’s 11 November Consent Agendum. At the same meeting, UEPC began review of the CCIC’s proposed Core Curriculum Learning Goals: preliminary approval—i.e., approval pending final review of the Learning Goals language in toto—was voted for amended language under the goals of Critical Thinking and Shared Inquiry.

The regular UEPC meeting of 22 November, 2010, is scheduled for consideration of a single Agendum, viz.: the CCIC proposal concerning the make-up and charge of the permanent Core Curriculum Committee. If concluded, UEPC action on the matter will constitute a report to the Senate for action at the 2 December General Meeting. In light of the Agendum proposed to the Senate under New Business for 11 November, the composition and charge of the permanent Core Curriculum Committee may acquire—if possible—increased import (please see the discussion below, under New Business). As Senate-UEPC liaison, I shall issue, for the Senators, a careful review of the UEPC’s action and all the arguments incident to it (and I shall ask for critical comment on my report from the UEPC’s Chair and Vice Chair), but I would nevertheless urge the Senators to consider this matter one of those exceptional cases in which each should act as her own liaison, by attending the UEPC proceedings.

In re: 5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Resolution in re: Senate Action S-10/11-1

Senators are in receipt of the Resolution determined by Senate Action S-10/11-1 in the matter of the recommendation from the Graduate and Professional Studies Educational Policies Committee (GPSEPC) that the College inaugurate the position, Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies (VPGPS). The full text is also posted under the Agenda for 11 November on the Senate page (see above, under ANNOUNCEMENTS). The ad hoc committee (cf. Minutes, 9 September, 2010, 7. under Old Business)—Tom Poundstone, Past Chair, Academic Senate; Bethami Dobkin, Provost; Laurie Edwards, Chair, GPSEPC; Keith Ogawa, Senator, School of Science; and the Academic Senate Chair—have proposed amendments to the Handbook which, if adopted, would inaugurate the position, define it, and situate its incumbent according to Handbook criteria on faculty status. Some points of potentially special interest (in no particular order):

- the description of the position (proposed: Handbook 1.4.2.2. Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies) is—with minor editorial revision—the same as the Provost’s June 2010 draft (which was appended to the Chair’s Report for the General Meeting of 9 September, 2010).
- no addition to Handbook 1.5 (ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS) is proposed, since no collegiate unit’s administrator will report to the VPGPS;
• VPGPS is expressly included under Handbook 2.1.4. (ADMINISTRATORS WITH FACULTY RETREAT RIGHTS) among those positions whose bearing on the academic enterprise demand that they be “normally filled via national searches resulting in multi-year appointments . . . etc.”
• VPGPS is expressly included under Handbook 2.6.3 (ADVANCEMENT, TENURE AND PROMOTION OF ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATORS) at 1., as a position carrying faculty rank, and at 5., as a position whose incumbent “will be reviewed [sc. for tenure or academic promotion, as necessary] by the Rank and Tenure Committee,” which shall “use its discretion in finding means to conduct the fullest possible evaluation . . . etc.”
• with the expressed, prior consent of the President, Handbook 1.6.1.2.2 (Responsibilities of the Academic Senate and Relationship to the Campus Community) at 4. is altered to “The actual appointment of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academics, and of the Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies, are made by the Provost in consultation with the President . . .”

The resolution will be introduced by GPSEPC Chair, Laurie Edwards. Thereafter, it will require a motion and second from Senators ad libidum.

In re: 6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Core Curriculum Implementation Committee (CCIC) Proposal to Amend Model 1

(i) The Senators are in receipt of three documents concerning CCIC’s proposal to amend Model 1: “CCIC to Academic Senate: Options 1 & 2,” “CCIC Proposal to the Senate: Regarding the New Core’s Integration of Area Requirements and Learning Goals,” and “CCIC to Academic Senate: The Disciplinary Expertise requirement for Core Curriculum courses.” These same three documents are posted on the Senate web page with the Agenda for 11 November.

Of these three documents, the first-named, “CCIC to Academic Senate: Options 1 & 2,” is the action item under New Business for 11 November. The Chair will entertain an initial motion from any Senator to remand the document to the UEPC for consideration and a recommendation to the Senate [see below at (iii)], or a motion to adopt Option 1, or a motion to adopt Option 2, by way of immediately amending Model 1 (Senate Action S-08/09-17). Of the remaining two documents, “CCIC Proposal to the Senate . . . etc.” outlines the CCIC’s reasons for seeking an amendment of Model 1, discusses the advantages and disadvantages accompanying two modes or Options for amending Model 1, and identifies the second mode, Option 2, as the option preferred unanimously by the CCIC membership. This document is not an action item for 11 November: it may inform, but it will not be the subject of, deliberation. The document “CCIC to Academic Senate: The Disciplinary Expertise requirement . . . etc.” is also not an action item, but is intended to aid deliberation over Option 2 by indicating how the CCIC will propose that the permanent Core Curriculum Committee “operationalize” the notion of “disciplinary expertise” that is indispensable to (and regulative of) Option 2. Again, this document may inform deliberations, especially over Option 2, but will not be the object of debate. It may later constitute a part of the CCIC’s proposal to UEPC on the permanent Core
Curriculum Committee’s charge and function, should the Senate amend its Model 1 charge to CCIC and UEPC in the way of Option 2.

(ii) The proposal will be introduced by CCIC Chair, Zach Flanagin, seconded by his Vice Chair, Jim Sauerberg. I will not, here, anticipate Professor Flanagin’s explication of the reasons for amending Model 1 so as to harmonize structurally the “sides” of students’ two-fold task under the new core, namely: to fulfill, simultaneously, a set of distribution requirements and an extensive set of learning outcomes, and that under the constraint of the 4 – 1 – 4 format. Rather, I first wish to comment on the procedure by which this business has reached the Senate Agenda—in this case, with the unanimous agreement of the Executive Committee. At the “Planning Day” joint, full meeting of the Senate, UEPC, and CCIC, consensus—without dissent—was reached on a protocol for handling substantive questions over the implementation of Model 1. The Chairs respectively, of the Senate, UEPC and CCIC would confer to determine, first, whether the matter in question were of trivial moment and thus susceptible of informal resolution by agreement of the Chairs. If there were dissent on the first question, or agreement that a substantial—non-trivial—point were involved, the Chairs would agree to which body the question should be referred. This protocol was explicitly calculated to avoid moving every point, among the indefinite number that might come into question, through “full dress” referral up through CCIC, UEPC to the Senate, then down from the Senate to the UEPC or CCIC.

In this instance the Chairs were agreed that the matter should be referred directly to the Senate, precisely because it involves substantial amendment of Model 1, which is a charge from the Senate to the UEPC and to the CCIC. The question is not one of procedure: the flow of business among the CCIC, UEPC and Senate will continue unaltered. Nor is it a question of interpreting Model 1 or of interpreting the Senate’s resolution on implementing Model 1. Rather, CCIC unanimously judge that implementation of Model 1 is infeasible—that CCIC cannot fulfill the Senate’s charge creditably—unless Model 1 is amended; that the Senate must alter its charge if it would see its charge fulfilled. This, if anything, seems a matter for the Senate, first and last.

(iii) Second, I wish to thank the six Senators who, with the Executive Committee, attended the Executive Meeting of 2 November and attended to CCIC representatives, Jim Sauerberg and Zach Flanagin, as they laid out the Implementation Committee’s reasoning and responded to Senators’ questions. And I wish to acknowledge that the Senators present did not find the account given above, for moving the CCIC’s proposals directly to the Senate Agenda, uniformly persuasive; cogent arguments were offered for the view that the proposal could properly come before the Senate only via the UEPC.

I would call to the attention of the Senators that the jurisdictional question, if still alive at the General Meeting, need cloud neither deliberation nor a vote on the merits. While the Chair thinks it unnecessary (and inadvisable), nevertheless a motion to remand the CCIC proposals to the UEPC for consideration and a subsequent recommendation to the Senate would be in order, and the Chair would rule that a motion to remand must take precedence over a motion to adopt either proposal. Should the Senate majority deny a motion to remand, the minority might then feel free to consider, and to vote strictly on, the merits. I am certain all Senators will agree that the matter is of such import as demands a transparent vote on the merits.
(iv) Finally, as to import: (1) a strong case can be made (and the Senate and faculty at large will hear it made on November 11) that coherent implementation of the new core curriculum—that is, elaboration of requirements our students can grasp readily and meet efficiently through a well-planned, 4 – 1 – 4, 36 course curriculum—depends upon amending Model 1; (2) if amended according to CCIC’s unanimous recommendation, the “new” Model 1 will multiply the scope and the weight of the curricular authority to be vested in a permanent Core Curriculum Committee, the subject of planned Senate action at the 2 December General Meeting. We are now well into a season of consequential curricular decisions with which this undergraduate community of learning must learn to live for the foreseeable future. Members of the faculty at large, consider: the season—like the future—belongs to those who show up.

Respectfully submitted,

S. A. Cortright, Chair
Academic Senate