Chair’s Report  
Academic Senate General Meeting  
Thursday, 9 September, 2010

Announcements

Senate Membership

In my 24 August, 2010 report to the Senate, I noted that Professor Larissa Genin had declined appointment to the Senate’s SEBA seat, owing to the press of her continued involvement in the administrative transition to the School’s new Dean, Dr. Zhang Li. I undertook to fill the seat in time for the 9 September, 2010 General Meeting. Since 24 August, I have approached every tenured member of the School who meets the following criteria: is (1) qualified *prima facie* under Handbook 1.6.1.1.4., and is neither (2) coming off 2009-10 membership on a “high-workload” (e.g., Rank and Tenure, UEPC) faculty committee, nor for AY 2010 – 11 is (3) already elected or appointed to any Senate/faculty committee. Each of the group of five that meets these criteria has declined appointment. Two other members of the tenured SEBA faculty, whom I approached *ad hoc*, have also declined. I am now in process of contacting the members of the (somewhat larger) group of SEBA faculty who are (1) qualified *prima facie*, are (2) not coming off “high-workload” assignments from 2009-10, but are (3) presently elected or appointed to Senate/faculty committees not designated “high workload.”

Committee Memberships

Please join me in welcoming Professor Monica Fitzgerald (Liberal and Civic Studies) to the seat for an untenured member on the Faculty Welfare Committee.

In view of the close communication on implementation of the, “Model 1,” core curriculum, initiated among the Chairs of the Senate, the UEPC, and the CCIC, on Academic Planning Day (and on-going), it seems redundant to name a further liaison Senator to the UEPC; I shall therefore assume those duties. I shall also resume the Chair’s *ex officio* seat on the Campus Facilities Planning Committee.

I am seeking a tenured member of the graduate faculty to fill a seat on the Library Committee, in this, a year when that committee will pursue planning for a new library building, and may play a leading role in the search of a new Dean for Academic Resources and Director of the Library. Interested ranked—not necessarily tenured—members of the graduate faculty are cordially invited to apply.

Remarks on the Agenda for 9 September, 2009

Reports

First, I would call the attention of Senators and the faculty at large to the report from Chris Jones, Chair, Faculty Welfare Committee. This report will come without advance text, owing to the late development of some of the data on which it depends. It will be concerned with the state of College contributions to TIAA-CREF—the retirement plan—with the troubling implications of the on-going reduced contributions (please the Chair’s Report for 24 August, 2010: Prospectus I, p. 2), and with Committee’s plan for addressing the issue. This report touches on a present, serious erosion of faculty welfare.

Second, I would call the attention of Senators and the faculty at large to the report from CCIC Chair, Zach Flanagan, which will outline CCIC’s on-going designs for introducing faculty to the
first group of four Core learning goals and their associated, newly drafted, outcomes, and may also offer an initial assessment of the success of “drop-in conversations” with faculty. The first set are scheduled between 11:30AM and noon (9/7) or 1:30PM (9/8 – 9/10) in the faculty dining hall, on the draft Shared Inquiry and Social, Historical, and Cultural Understanding outcomes. Please recall: the outcomes are addressed to the faculty as guides for formulating the curricula, and some extra-curricular pursuits, that students may offer in fulfillment of Core requirements. As they must shape what will be, emphatically, common among Saint Mary’s undergraduate, educational works, they ought also to be, most emphatically, the objects of diligent, common examination.

Old Business

The Executive Committee judge that Senate deliberations (cf. Minutes, General Meetings of 22 April and 13 May, 2010, nos. 14, pp. 9–10, and 17, pp. 7–8, respectively) over whether to endorse the March 16, 2010 memorandum of the Graduate and Professional Educational Policies Committee in re: “Proposal to Create a Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Programs,” have, at length, determined conditions necessary to bring the matter to a vote. The resolution offered by the Chair (with the able assistance of the Past-Chair) under Old Business aims to meet those conditions: (1) a position description in Handbook language; (2) an account of changes in the Handbook that would be consequent on the addition of the position so defined—however it may be titled. Past Senate deliberations suggest that, (1) and (2) in hand, Senators should be able—and, so, willing—to resolve, on the merits, the sorts of fundamental, dispositive questions which have been raised by Senators and the faculty at large: Why are the Deans—viz., of SOLA, SEBA and KSOE—not already (in principle, if not in fact) that “voice in the institution’s major decision-making bodies” desired (for strategic, advocacy, and symbolic reasons alike) by the GPSEPC? Should the College rather re-think the role of Deans than attach the title “Vice Provost” to two (largely) heterogeneous baskets of functions? Would the meaning of the GPSEPC’s arguments be altered were every instance of “Vice Provost” replaced by “Dean of Graduate and Professional Programs”; that is, is the memorandum an implicit call for a retreat (perhaps a phased retreat) from the “vertical” integration of graduate and professional and undergraduate programs, in Schools, under Deans responsible for the School in toto? Is this—or any—“administrative expansion” justifiable in the present budgetary climate?

For the more immediate purposes of the resolution (should it pass as drafted), I shall include, in the charge to the Senate commissioners, the Provost’s Memorandum of May 8, 2010, with its supporting, detailed “Job Description: Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies (DRAFT APRIL 30)” [both accessible at the Senate website under Academic Senate Agendas, 2009–10], and a subsequent summary draft (June 2010), which is appended by permission to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

S. A. Cortright, Chair
Academic Senate
Appendix

Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies  (June 2010)

The Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies coordinates the activities of programs in graduate and professional studies in consultation with Deans and the Provost, providing strategic and operational support for policies and procedures related to graduate and professional education, including: recruiting, funding, and retaining well-qualified graduate and professional students, maintaining the student handbook, web site, and catalog, coordinating support among career services, housing, counseling, health center, and library, advancing the development of and support for hybrid and online education, overseeing the graduate and professional program review process, and assisting with WASC substantive change processes. The Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies serves as the College liaison to Council of Graduate Schools, assists the Provost in developing industry and community relations through partnerships, research, and programming, facilitates the development of grant requests, academic centers and institutes, and interdisciplinary collaboration, and works with other Vice Provosts, Deans, and the Academic Senate in designing and implementing student policies, such as the Academic Honor Code and the Student Code of Conduct. The Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies is tasked with bringing a College-wide perspective to graduate endeavors, supporting interdisciplinary activities and advocating for student services and best practices across the units of the College that support graduate study.