



# WILLIAM & MARY

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## **Faculty Assembly Minutes, January 23, 2024**

**3:30 – 5 pm**

**Location: Miller Hall 2003**

Zoom: <https://cwm.zoom.us/j/7441676700>

*Officers Present:* K. Scott Swan (Faculty Assembly President), David Feldman (Vice President), Nicholas Popper (Secretary)

*Other Members Present:* Mark Brush, Josh Burk, Sara Day, Christopher Del Negro, Jim Dwyer (Zoom), Marjy Friedrichs, John Gilmour, Aaron Griffith, Katherine Guthrie (zoom), Erin Hendrickson, Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, Jessica Martin (zoom), Terry Meyers (Parliamentarian), Evgenia Smirni, Betsy Talbott, Brett Wilson

*Members Absent:* David Armstrong (Faculty Assembly Representative to the Board of Visitors), Chuck Bailey, Randi Rashkover

*Others in Attendance:* Peggy Agouris (Provost), Annie Blazer, Pam Eddy, Adam Gershowitz, Phil Heavilin, Jay Watkins

The meeting was called to order at 3:34.

- I. Approval of minutes
- II. Dean's report:

Provost Agouris reports that the Board of Visitors has approved the New School. Next items include searching for its dean and working with SCHEV towards accreditation. The dean search committee has been constituted with representatives from all four of the units moving to the New School, Advancement, and other units. Associate Dean Kimberly Smith of the Business School will chair it.

Sizable working groups have been meeting to discuss potential metrics for the Key Performance Indicators, as requested by the BOV. Last year the KPIs focused on teaching; this year they will concentrate on research; next year will be service. These groups have also begun discussions with SACSCOC and will remain in communication with them.

The associated working group continues to develop an early retirement proposal.

W&M is moving to R1 status. The standards used by the Carnegie Foundation to classify universities have changed, and R1 status is now determined solely by annual research funding and annual PhD production. W&M qualifies on both criteria and therefore anticipates moving to R1 status in 2025. W&M is significantly over the threshold in terms of funding but is operating with a tighter margin on PhDs produced. Many strong R2 institutions who have long peers with W&M have just been reclassified as R1, and it would be detrimental to W&M's standing to not progress along with them.

Josh Burk is working on initiatives concerning summer semester and student evaluations.

Vice-President David Feldman asks whether we have data on the current pipeline for PhD students. Provost Agouris says it is hard to get data because PhD education operations on long term timescales but that her office is working with Pam Eddy to generate a model.

### III. Faculty Handbook

Adam Gershowitz (chair of the working group) reported that they are doing listening groups across units. There is general agreement that Section 1 of the Handbook, on academic rights and responsibilities, is strong and will be set aside with the approval of the president and provost. The group is working to have preliminary data to report on the intended scope of work for the February BOV meeting. They have reached out to general counsel, PPC, and other integral units. They will welcome thoughts from everyone but would find it more useful to receive feedback before the end of the month to ensure full consideration.

Gershowitz notes that one consistent problem is that different political administrations hand down different regulations. Christopher Del Negro asks how to respond to this. Gershowitz replies that they will try to write to both sets of regulations, but also that in general they will try to write to procedures, which tend to be more consistent across administrations.

President Scott Swan notes the need to incorporate material on NTEs. Erin Hendrickson reminds that there is an FA committee to communicate with faculty handbook group, including her, Feldman, Dwyer, and Guthrie.

#### IV. Other matters

Swan notes that Matt Smith of Provost's office visit FA to provide an update on accreditation in a subsequent meeting.

Talbott reports that the New School Implementation committee sees its work as envisioning and conceptualizing the school. They are trying to figure out how best to ask targeted questions of people who might be involved, to find out where such people might see the school as offering opportunities and to think about how to integrate various elements, such as through Digital Humanities. They might also issue a broader survey. Swan points out the benefit of doing so, as it would not tie the new dean's hands but show the range of possibilities.

Talbott asks Provost Agouris about the timeline for the search. Agouris replies that she is hoping to have candidates on campus before faculty disperse. So the new dean will hopefully be on campus by the summer and spend the next year on implementation.

Swan asks whether the outcomes of the implementation committee would be made available to candidates or only to the dean once they are in place. Agouris replies that the finalists should have a sense of the Implementation Committee's work but that because it is a work in progress, some important things will be shared but others that are more fluid and uncertain will not be. Swan reinforces the importance of this committee by noting that it will be doing lots of listening and work across the campus before the dean arrives, which should help accelerate implementation. Agouris notes the importance of Dean Suzanne Raitt to this process.

A group has been formed to consider the implications of W&M's move to R1. Its FA members consist of Del Negro, Popper, and Talbott, and others from the most affected units will also be asked to participate.

Swan reports that he, along with President Rowe and some others, attended a governor-sponsored event at UVA in which W&M was rated very highly among schools in VA in terms of intellectual diversity. Swan has queried about interest in a group concerned with the "apolitical university," and Griffith has volunteered. There is a BOV member interested as well.

Griffith reports that he has been reading statements by leaders about intellectual diversity from leaders across universities. John Gilmour asks what the major points of concern were about intellectual diversity at the session with the governor that Swan attended. Swan says that it was not overtly ideological but that the underrepresentation of certain political voices was one issue lurking in the background; the other concerned faculty members being allowed to pursue research on their own terms.

Ayfer Karakaya-Stump asks about meaning of the "apolitical university." Swan gestures to the stance developed at the University of Chicago that the university should not be a political being; individual faculty members should speak from within their expertise and can speak politically for themselves, but that the institution itself is something separate from that. Griffith follows up that it consists of two projects: one is to create a statement placing the institution above the fray of partisan politics; the second is accommodating a diversified range of perspective within the

university. Feldman notes that he sees no easy action to take on intellectual diversification on campus. Everyone has anecdotes of various wanted or unwanted changes, but he cannot see something actionable that would arise from say a working group. Swan disagrees and says this is about the need to show a commitment to debate and disagreement.

Agouris asks: how do we prove that we are intellectually open minded? She describes the goal as showing that W&M is open to perspectives even though each member of the community is entitled to their own opinions, and the other question is how to communicate this to students who are often deeply passionate about their own beliefs. She also points out there is a contradiction when the president is expected to give statements about smaller things, but then on to remain quiet on more significant matters.

Popper asks who the expected audience for this statement is and who it will be issued by. He also notes that there are bad faith actors in these terms and that FA should not engage with them. Feldman suggests not having a big controversial event, but rather an event on respectful listening. He also asks what FA's responsibility is. Swan answers that it is to reflect the will of the faculty.

Hendrickson notes that "apolitical" means distinct things to people, and that there is also a policy level which discourages openness, such as NTE status. Agouris notes that the negative effects social media can have on reputations.

Swan reports that he has initiated communication with UVA about their tuition remission scheme.

Brett Wilson reports that his committee to perform the Faculty Survey is about to get going.

Feldman reports that the group looking into the early retirement plan has been delayed by state regulations, but that this is less a major problem than a bureaucratic hurdle to be overcome.

Del Negro, who is chairing the safety committee, reports that he will have an update from the police chief at one of the next few meetings.

Swan notes that the money allocated by the state for the Historic Campus renovation did not cover expenses, so it is on pause.

Popper reports that invitations to attend future FA meetings have been issued to the committees FA oversees and that several will give reports in subsequent months.

John Gilmour reports that he has a plan to establish a more solid basis for COPAR (a subcommittee of FA – the Committee on Planning and Resources).

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55.