

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY GOVERNANCE

ANNUAL REPORT 1999-2000

The Committee on Faculty Governance met 21 times, held an open committee meeting for faculty members, and convened the Committee of Committees twice during the academic year 1999-2000.

WHAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED. The CFG notes that the committee included in its annual report for 1998-1999 an agenda of what it hoped to accomplish this year. In terms of that agenda, the CFG performed its assigned, routine business: it proposed a new edition of the Faculty Handbook for 1999-2000 at the September Faculty Meeting that the October Faculty Meeting adopted; it conducted four rounds of elections, made omnibus appointments, and designated sabbatical replacements for faculty members of committees who are going on leaves of absence.

The CFG also examined and implemented electronic balloting for elections for the spring term of 2000 and found that the elimination of the old "nominating ballot" stage and computerized balloting worked well and

effective use of existing committees and of faculty time where possible, and allowing for degrees of flexibility. In the case of the search for a CAO, the CFG requested that the search committee prepare an operating code and share that with the faculty at large.

CFG also met with the "Toronto Five". John Brueggemann, Bob Desieno, and Denise Smith, Mehmet Odekon and Patty Rubio had attended meetings in Toronto, sponsored by the AACU (Association of American Colleges and Universities) and ACAD (Association of College Academic Deans). The meeting stressed themes that related to making college/faculty governance more effective, being respectful of collegial relations, and acknowledging the importance of unique campus culture. All agreed on the need for improved communications and better coordination of efforts. The Committee of Committees holds the possibility of playing a more important role in this regard and may institute several reforms: a beginning of the year meeting instead of the practice of having meetings mainly at the end of each term, establishing an email list for chairs of the member committees, sharing minutes.

Committee of Committee reports to the Faculty Meetings in February and May identified areas that deserve close attention. The May report, for example, included the following:

1. Relations with the administration during 1999-2000 were characteristically cordial and candid. Administrators seemed genuinely interested in listening to faculty express positions on issues.
2. Inherent differences in structure and responsibility between faculty committees that have advisory roles and administration that have decision-making authority and between committees dependent on information flow from the administration and administration in possession of information led to faculty on some committees feeling that their efforts were not as effective as they might have been.
3. Faculty committees are deeply interested in the big issues that loom ahead on strategic planning, allocation of resources between capital and operating budgets, a new core curriculum, phase two of reconfiguration, and the like, and expect to play an important part in addressing these issues.
4. The committee of committees encourages even closer coordination between the chairs of faculty committees and the administration so that the chairs
 - a. are kept informed in a timely fashion on key issues that affect the work of their committees and
 - b. are in agreement with the administration on the procedures that will be followed by the administration and the committees in addressing their common business.
5. The Committee of Committees is concerned with what may be the trend toward having committees work throughout the year, including December holidays, the break between fall and spring terms, and the summer. CFG already has recurrent difficulties enlisting enough faculty members to run for committees; it has eliminated the nominating ballot entirely; it will have to run several special elections for sabbatical replacements in the fall because there are no eligible runners-up in prior elections to fill these vacancies.

On other matters on its agenda, CFG found it did not have the time to move forward on an orientation program for new faculty members that would introduce them to faculty and college governance at the College. However, CFG supports the current initiative of Associate Dean Susan Bender who is considering a year-long series of events for first-year faculty that might well include a session on this topic. CFG and CAPT did not meet during the year to work on incorporating language from the CFG Report on Presidential Searches into the Faculty Handbook in part because the immediacy of the search for a Chief Academic Officer and the loss of a sense of

AGENDA FOR 2000-2001. (1) Propose Faculty Handbook for 2000-2001, (2) conduct four rounds of elections, make omnibus appointments, fill sabbatical vacancies, (3) propose a revision in the Faculty Handbook text on the function of CFG, (4) prepare an Operating Code for Faculty Meetings, (5) work with the Committee on Committees to improve communication and help inform the faculty of the major issues facing faculty governance, (6) address unfinished or deferred work from 1999-2000.