Faculty Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2007

I. Call to Order
Warren Rogers called the meeting to order at 3:35.

II. Devotion
Russell Smelley gave the devotion.

III. Introduction of New Faculty Member
Scott Anderson introduced himself.

Warren Rogers invited Deborah Dunn to conduct the business of the faculty.

IV. Approval of Minutes from January 19, 2007
The minutes were approved.

V. Committee Report – Admissions
Joyce Luy presented the report.
   o She thanked the faculty for their participation in the Admissions Office’s
     endeavours.
   o She noted record numbers at the two Fall Preview Days.
   o The Admissions Office is in the process of a market research study.
   o She recommended Samuel Schuman’s *Old Main*, a book on liberal arts colleges
     that mentions Westmont.

VI. Election to Faculty Council
Ballots were passed out and the faculty voted.
Results were announced later in the meeting (see below).

VII. Proposed Handbook Changes

   Deborah brought back the revisions the faculty had voted on concerning section
   2.2.1.4 of the Faculty handbook.
   The Academic Committee of the Board of the Trustees had expressed concern last
   Spring that the increased transparency of the process might lead to a lowering of
   the standards for tenure and promotion. Their concerns related solely to points 9
   and 10 under 2.2.1.4.
   Shirley Mullen had at that point said that she would bring it back to the faculty for
   further discussion, and the Faculty Council is now initiating that discussion.
   Deborah asked for input from faculty; there was no proposal on the table for this
   meeting.
   Mary Docter asked how the current proposal compares to what similar colleges
   do. Susan Penksa, who had investigated this question for the Personnel
Committee last year, said that the proposal is middle-of-the-road as regards transparency.
Deborah encouraged the faculty to send their suggestions to Faculty Council.
Eileen McMahon asked about the form the reports take.
Michael Sommermann, the current chair of the Personnel Committee, elaborated on the procedures used by recent Personnel Committees for writing reports.
Susan Penksa commented on the need for better coding of the qualitative data.

Deborah gave the grateful faculty a chance to stretch their legs.

B. General Education Committee
Faculty Council is proposing to reduce the number of faculty serving on the GE Committee from six to three, with the understanding that the GE Committee would not be responsible for assessment of anything other than GE.
The proposed handbook change is as follows:

1.4.3.4.8 General Education Committee

a) Membership:
1) Provost (or representative)
2) Six tenured faculty, two from each division, two elected annually in divisional rotation as follows, e.g.: one apiece from Natural and Behavioral Sciences and Social Sciences in year 1, one apiece from Social Sciences and Humanities in year 2, and one apiece from Humanities and Natural and Behavioral Sciences in year 3. Three tenured faculty, one from each division, one elected annually to a three year term.
3) Registrar
b) Officers:
1) Chair will be elected from among the faculty members. The Chair will be elected by the committee from among the voting committee members.*
2) Secretary shall be appointed by the chair.
c) Responsibilities:
1) To oversee the implementation of the general education program of the College according to the criteria approved by the faculty.
2) To review and approve new course proposals to ensure that they adhere to the general education criteria approved by the faculty. Depending upon the category in general education, these criteria might include such items as:
   (a) attention to writing and speaking in class assignments;
   (b) attention to concerns of diversity and interdisciplinary integration in readings;
   (c) technological competence;
   (d) attention to methodology, and
   (e) the presentation of enduring, rather than trendy, themes.
   Above all, general education classes should not merely be introductions to disciplines.
3) To facilitate conduct regular program review and assessment of periodic reviews of the general education program, as well as course content and methodology of courses previously approved as fulfilling general education criteria.
4) To recommend change in the general education program to the Academic Senate, with proposals that would significantly alter any general education requirement being forwarded to the full faculty for action.

Ken Kihlstrom asked whether the Program Review Committee would be given more clout as part of this set of proposals.
Tom Fikes asked whether the GE Committee has the power to remove a course’s approval for a GE category. Ray Rosentrater said that this was implied in point 3 of the handbook rubric for the committee. Ray also said that the committee needs to be moving away from a focus on inputs—does the course claim to achieve particular GE goals?—to assessing whether the courses are actually achieving these goals. In response to a question from Mitchell Thomas, Ray noted that faculty could appeal to the Executive Committee of the Senate if they felt that the GE Committee had judged a course unfairly. Deborah added that faculty in such a circumstance could also appeal to Faculty Council. There was discussion of whose responsibility it is to assess GE courses—the committee’s or each faculty member teaching a GE course? Mary Docter raised the question of whether three people were enough to do the ongoing work of the Committee. Marianne Robins expressed the concern that departments’ assessment in GE courses are overseen by two separate committees (GE and Program Review), which leads to frustration and undue stress on departments unless there are strongly personnel links between the two committees. She also spoke of the danger of replicating work. Glenn Town expressed concern as a department chair lest GE spread its influence into the broad scope of a department’s work. Rick Pointer spoke on behalf of the absent Andrew Mullen, who wanted to express that the work required to do program review well was enormous, and that any changes should take account of that. Rick suggested that there is enough work in program review for at least a half-time position, and perhaps a full-time one.

The motion to change the GE Committee was passed unamended and with a clear majority.

Faculty Council Election
Rick Pointer announced that the faculty had elected Chris Milner and Lisa DeBoer to the two three-year positions on Faculty Council, and Bruce Fisk to the one-semester fill position.

C. Program Review Committee
The faculty did not discuss this motion.

VIII. Announcements & Updates Regarding General Education
Ray Rosentrater made three announcements

Firstly, the senate will be taking up a proposed change to the H/P/NC grading option on Tuesday. Ray encouraged anyone interested in the issue to visit the
senate web page (via the Provost's page) to review the proposal, and communicate any concerns/suggestions to the senate via his/her department chair.
The second announcement was that the GE Committee was now working on more precise descriptions for GE categories.
Thirdly, he noted that the first class under the new GE will graduate next Spring, advising the faculty that students will soon be coming to them with a revised version of the Application for Degree form.

IX. Dean’s Reflection
  o Warren commented on arrangements for Thomas Friedman’s visit to campus next week, and on last week’s Westmont Downtown conversation on Friedman’s book.
  o Warren then asked Rick Pointer and Glenn Town to bring in two cakes, which he invited the faculty to share in celebration of the work everyone had done for the WASC visit. He expressed especial thanks to Billy Wright, Andrew Mullen, and the Assessment Coordinators (Brenda Smith, Marianne Robins, Laura Montgomery, Cheri Larsen-Hoeckley, and Mary Docter).

Warren adjourned the meeting at 5:20.