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memo_to_fac_re_meeting_with_president_2009

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Date: January 26, 2010

TO: Faculty Assembly

FROM: FACSB committee representatives attending meeting with Sister Jane on December 7, 2009 (J. Quinn, C. Gibbons, J. Chace)

On December 7, 2009 we had a productive meeting with Sister Jane. She had clearly read the memo (attached) and seemed very intent on listening to our concerns before making comments. What took place was a conversation. It was not adversarial.

Sister Jane noted the spirit and concern expressed in the memo. She acknowledged that our analysis was reasonable and logical. It was clear that we presented some information of which she had not been previously aware (e.g., TIAA-CREF data).

We addressed the list of comparative institutions first. This will be a process that will evolve over the spring semester with a goal of accepting a new list by May, 2010. We are starting with the entire list of 67 tier II New England programs – we emphasized that this is the AAUP standard and that a large list avoids arbitrary decisions we would have to make to include or exclude another college or university from our list. She will call us for a meeting on this, probably in January. Matt Ramsey on FACSB is leading this effort.

We addressed pension contributions second. Sister Jane's intention is to restore the contribution partially in 2010; we said that this would be disappointing to the faculty for reasons we, FACSB and faculty, have discussed. We pointed out the vote on the issue. We also requested that the loss of 2009 contributions be addressed in the budget process. Sister Jane elaborated on how the funds from operating budget indirectly funded the chapel project as part of a typical contingency plan gone awry in a down year, where in a normal year the funds would support the endowment. We urged Sister Jane to explain the relationship between the operating budget and capital budget to the faculty and that, in the future, when dire circumstances create such a drastic change to faculty salary and benefits that the faculty be addressed specifically on the matter at hand.

Sister Jane seems intent on increasing salaries next year, enrollment dependent, so that, in her words, we don't fall farther behind the old list. We discussed the tier II list again and pointed out the significant gap in all ranks but especially full professors. We suggested that, if possible, the salary increase be partitioned to give that rank (full professor) the largest boost. John and Carol pointed out that this has been done before. We made a case for an at least 3% increase next year, and she didn't question the number nor provide an alternative %. From Sister Jane's comments the future salary dependent on enrollment.

We made an argument for the travel budget increases and restoration of some form of professional development funds. This appears to be in the works already. No specifics, but the response was positive.

We think it was important for FACSB to be involved early in the budget process. Sister Jane will get back to us in January on several issues, including the list. Sister Jane would like to meet with the faculty in February. She expects to be able to give us an idea of what the 2010-2011 budget will look like, as it relates to faculty salary and benefits, in March.