FACULTY MEETING
April 27, 2012/May 16, 2012

Motion

The Faculty Executive Committee moves that the following changes to the Faculty Handbook (Part Two, I. "Faculty Meeting By-Laws") be adopted:

(additions in bold; deletions struck)

In Article I.A,

Faculty governance is carried out through decisions made at Faculty Meetings and through a system of committees of the Faculty. **The primary purpose of Faculty Meetings is to provide a forum for discussion on important college matters and to facilitate governance of college affairs.**

In Article III.A.1,

1. Faculty members should notify **either** the Dean of the Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs **or the Chair of the Faculty Executive Committee** of items they wish included on the agenda ~~at least 24 hours prior to the meeting~~ by Monday in the week of a faculty meeting. The Chair of FEC will convey agenda items to the Office of the DOF/VPAA by 9AM on Tuesday. The DOF/VPAA and the FEC will work together on constructing the agenda.
2. The agenda shall be distributed to the Faculty ~~no later than the morning of the day of the Faculty Meeting~~. **by Wednesday in the week of a Faculty Meeting.**

In Article V,

9. Committee of the Whole discussions will take place during at least two, but preferably more, Faculty Meetings each semester. The topic of discussion will be determined by FEC and the DOF/VPAA, and as directed by suggestions from either individual faculty or committees. Suggestions may be sent to either the DOF/VPAA or the Chair of FEC.

Rationale:

In the past few years, FEC has received an increasing number of requests from faculty urging us to revisit the structure of faculty meetings. Many members of our community have felt that the meetings could be more efficient and more effective in fostering communication and deliberation of important college matters. This year, FEC determined to review faculty meeting structure and then report back to the faculty; that report is the motion you have before you. Specifically, the

changes proposed above aim to encourage faculty input in the shaping of the agenda, to ensure more time to prepare for the meetings, and to make room for discussion as a regular part of faculty meetings. These changes, combined, should make the meetings feel less merely informational and more deliberative and meaningful.

Some background:

This motion and its rationale are informed by our discussions with various members of the community. In fall 2011, we began with a survey of the faculty to gauge faculty sentiment on the matter. We also met with the Dean of Faculty and the Vice President for Academic Affairs (who spoke on behalf of the President as well). We reviewed the history of past attempts (by FEC and CFG) to rethink structure and vetted a few proposals submitted to us that aimed to modify the meeting structure. This semester, we hosted a faculty-only forum on the subject of faculty meetings; we invited Professor Susan Walzer to speak to FEC about faculty culture at Skidmore, and we conferred again with the VPAA and the DOF