The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m.

1. **Presidential Courtesy**

   No items.

2. **Report from the Secretary of the General Faculty**

   Nothing to report.

3. **Report from the Executive Secretary**

   a. R. DeWitt moved to approve the minutes of February 6, 2006. Rakowitz seconds. Given no substantive changes and few typo corrections, a vote to approve was called. Vote on the **MOTION: to approve the minutes. MOTION PASSED 14-0-0.**

4. **Council Committee Reports**

   There were none to be presented.

5. **Petition for Immediate Hearing**

   Secretary Irene Mulvey distributed a handout and explained that the Executive Committee of the Academic Council requests a Petition for Immediate Hearing so that the Academic Council can direct the Committee on Conference with the Trustees to put on their agenda for their next meeting with the Academic Affairs Subcommittee of the Trustees (scheduled for March 23) the two motions passed by the General Faculty at their meeting on March 3rd.

   R. DeWitt (Executive Secretary) **made a**

   **MOTION: to reorder the agenda and to put this Petition for Immediate Hearing as the second item under New Business.**

   S. Rakowitz seconds the motion. Given no discussion on this motion it is voted upon.

   **Vote on the Motion: 14 – 0 – 0. MOTION PASSED.**
Old Business

a. **Three faculty-approved items for the Journal of Record rejected by the Administration.**

AVP O. Grossman stated that two of the items (Master of Science in Accounting and Master of Science in Taxation) had been rejected by the administration, because the description of them had contained provisions about the pay of adjuncts. The administration had found such conditions in the approval of new programs inappropriate for the Journal of Record. The issues surrounding these conditions have since been resolved. He noted that the Journal of Record is vague about the listing of new programs and the conditions that are stipulated about them. He referred to a Journal of Record entry from 4/25/1988 saying that only programs with conditions attached to their acceptance be included in the Journal of Record.

Since the issues that had caused the initial rejection by the administration have been resolved, R. DeWitt made the following

**MOTION.** “Issues surrounding the provision that adjuncts be paid in accordance with the Memo of Understanding have been resolved.”

This motion was seconded by P. Lakeland. O. Grossman stated that placing some provisions (conditions) on the acceptance of new programs are warranted in some cases but in others they are not. He views some of these conditions as akin to riders that are added to national legislation. This is not to say that conditions should never be included when approving new programs but in some instances they may be excessive. He mentioned several scenarios. G. Lang commented that in many cases the conditions are certainly warranted and usually they are not as bizarre as the AVP suggests. O. Grossman agreed.

D. Greenberg calls the question. D. Keenan seconds. The **vote to call the question passes 15-0-0.**

**MAIN MOTION PASSES 15-0-0.**

S. Rakowitz stated that the Journal of Record entry from 1988 that O. Grossman mentioned concerning new programs needed to be altered. She proposed the following motion:

**MOTION.** Amend the 4/25/1988 Journal of Record entry regarding the listing of new programs to say that “the approval of all new programs should be entered into the Journal of Record.”

Seconded by R. DeWitt. D. Greenberg asked if this motion is out of order given that it is not an agenda item. After a short discussion F Dohm rules that the motion can be considered and due to a lack of further discussion a vote on the motion occurs.

**MOTION PASSES 15-0-0.**

The third rejected item, concerning the “Guiding Principles for Faculty Compensation,” was not discussed.

7. **New Business**

a. **Interdisciplinary Minor in Catholic Studies.**
P. Lakeland explained how, over the past three years, this proposal has moved through the appropriate faculty committees and it has been approved by each of them. In this program students will have to take five courses. It follows a traditional Catholic Studies approach. It already has an advisory board in place. W. Abbott asks whether it would consider all varieties of Catholicism or just Roman Catholicism. Lakeland replied that the university does not use Roman on any of its documents so neither will this new program, even though its focus will be on Roman Catholicism.

**MOTION** [Keenan/Rakowitz]. To accept the program for an Interdisciplinary Minor in Catholic Studies.

**MOTION PASSES 15-0-0**

* Petition for Immediate Hearing*

The Council took up the Petition for Immediate Hearing concerning the two motions passed by the General Faculty at its meeting on March 3, 2006.

I. Mulvey quickly reviewed the two motions passed by the General Faculty. The executive committee of the Academic Council thought it was appropriate for the AC to discuss these two motions and decide what the next step should be. R. DeWitt makes the following motion:

**MOTION**, [DeWitt/Greenberg]. The Academic Council instructs the Committee on Conference with the Trustees to put on the agenda for the 3/23 meeting with the Academic Affairs Subcommittee of the Trustees the two motions passed at the General Faculty meeting on 3/3 and to include the Faculty Salary Committee at this meeting as appropriate.

P. Lakeland, a member of the Committee on Conference with the Trustees says he believes this is important but will likely happen in any event.

**MOTION PASSES 15-0-0**

b. **Two Proposals from the Faculty Research Committee**


M. Wallace, Chair of the Faculty Research Committee, explained how there is an inconsistency in the Guidelines for Summer Research Stipends and Guidelines for Senior Summer Fellowships. The former disallows applicants for either summer contiguous to sabbatical leaves. The Senior Summer Fellowships do not have this stipulation. The Research Committee wants to change the wording of the Senior Summer Fellowships to make the two guidelines consistent. Thus they suggest the following wording in the Guidelines for Senior Summer Fellowships:
MOTION. Faculty members approved for sabbatical leave will not be eligible for a Senior Summer Fellowship for either summer contiguous to the academic year of the sabbatical leave.

I. Mulvey pointed out that there are some wording changes that are needed in the documents but the aim of the request is to achieve consistency in the two documents and this can be done. There was some confusion as to the summers that would be affected. For instance, what happens to an individual that has a two semester sabbatical leave spanning the spring and fall semesters of different academic years? (O. Grossman pointed out that these are very rare.) Are two summers affected by a one semester sabbatical leave or just the summer that is contiguous to the sabbatical leave?

MOTION PASSES 15-0-0.

Proposal #2: Handbook changes in Sabbatical Leave Policy.

The Faculty Research Committee suggests the following change in the Faculty Handbook (Ninth edition, 2002; page 29 II.B.2.a).

MOTION. [Keenan/DeWitt] Replace the first paragraph under a. Sabbatical leaves with the following: “Sabbatical leaves are reserved for tenured faculty members. Tenured faculty who have not been awarded a pre-tenure research leave are eligible for their first sabbatical after 10 semesters of active service at Fairfield University. Tenured faculty who have been awarded a pre-tenure leave are eligible for their first sabbatical after 10 semesters of active service at Fairfield University following their pre-tenure leave. Tenured faculty are eligible for any subsequent sabbatical after serving twelve semesters since their last sabbatical leave.

AVP O. Grossman pointed out that the phrase “at Fairfield University” is a key aspect of this proposal. Often people come to Fairfield and expect to count service at other institutions as part of the time needed to be accumulated to be eligible for a sabbatical leave. Also, the amount of time one needs to be at Fairfield before one is eligible for a pre-tenure leave is not specified and this is open to interpretation. G. Lang stated that the present Handbook revision does not address that issue. D. Sapp agreed. This proposal deals only with sabbatical leaves and not pre-tenure leaves.

MOTION PASSES 15-0-0.

Irene Mulvey suggests to M. Wallace that the Research Committee should look at the language concerning pre-tenure leaves and, if needed, make proposals for changes.

c. New wording proposed by the Rank and Tenure

MOTION. [Lang/Haug] Amend the language in the Rank and Tenure Guidelines timetable section 11 as follows: (new language is underlined).

11. By April 1

The Committee recommendation for or against the appeal will be forwarded to the applicant. The Committee recommendations for all applicants will be presented to the President. The Academic Vice President
will make his/her recommendation to the President and provide the Committee with a copy.

The rationale for the change is to bring the wording in the document into line with the current practice.

MOTION PASSES: 15-0-0

d. FDEC proposal concerning the privacy of teaching evaluations.

At its Feb 15, 2006 meeting the Faculty Development and Evaluation Committee passed the following motion, which they bring to the Academic council for consideration.

MOTION. [Greenberg/Buss] That the statistical and qualitative results of the student evaluations of individual faculty members’ teaching be sent directly to the individual faculty member without being viewed by anyone else, unless and until the individual faculty member chooses to make those results known.

Professor P. Behre made a brief presentation explaining how the FDEC is concerned about inappropriate use of student evaluation forms over the long-run. These evaluations are the property of the faculty and the use of these evaluations should be determined by the faculty. Admittedly what is needed is a more valid means of evaluating teaching effectiveness and the FDEC members are engaged in that process. They have attended conferences and surveyed other schools. It is important to realize that before a new form is developed the current forms should not be put to uses they were not intended for and that they be used at the discretion of the individual.

J. Lange asked how an individual can use the current evaluations to document continual improvement in teaching effectiveness. P. Behre responded that the current forms are used in a variety of ways; to aid the individual in their own development as a teacher, to provide evidence of teacher effectiveness to Rank and Tenure, to support one’s case for merit, to aid the university in its assessment efforts, and to re-hire adjuncts. Is the current form adequate for these uses? The current evaluation form is a student satisfaction survey not a teaching/learning assessment tool.

Professor Lakeland asked how the present motion would change things. Currently no individual is forced to submit their evaluations to anyone else. However, if you do not submit them, it is implicitly assumed that they are not very good. You can submit an alternative. There is a need to move to a new evaluation and to move administrators away from using the current form. D. Greenberg asked if anyone gets to see the evaluations without the faculty member’s permission. Apparently through the system developed by C. Naser, department members can see the evaluations of others in their department but without any names attached. D. Greenberg said that many faculty believe that when their evaluations are sent electronically to the Dean without explicit permission for others to use this data, this may not be what is happening. People just assume that when they have not given their permission when they send the evaluations electronically that these evaluations will not be used by persons other than the Dean.

O. Grossman expressed his pleasure that the FDEC is looking into developing a new evaluation instruments. Given the technological changes that are taking place, with the ease of transferring data, changes in practice must occur. One can hope that use of evaluations remains voluntary but
technological changes rule against this. There are two Journal of Record entries relating to
teaching evaluations; one in 1981 and the other in 1985. The 1985 entry specifies that
evaluations were to be done in every section of every course in every school.

I Mulvey also looked at the Journal of Record and archived minutes of General Faculty meetings.
In 1981 when the evaluations were first introduced, there were two implicit assumptions. First,
after the tallies were completed no data would be kept. Data was supposed to be destroyed.
Second, according to minutes of the General Faculty, the implementation of the evaluations was
fairly “loose” whereby faculty were expected to add or delete questions, as appropriate. Now it
appears that the registrar “owns” the data and it can be used in many different ways.

W. Abbott noted that even though evaluations are to be given in every class this is not the
practice. Consequently the scores are biased on the high side. K. Steffen commented that an
inadequate instrument is being data mined without letting the faculty know how it is being mined.
The faculty no longer controls its use. Does the motion create a moratorium on this practice? P.
Behre replied that it should stop the automatic transfer of the data. Its use for merit is still going
to occur. The motion will not stop that, but a faculty member will have to agree to submit the
data.

G. Lang recalled the faculty vote back in 1981 and how contentious it was. There is no question
that the evaluations were to be informative only. To be used by individual faculty to improve
their teaching. Over time it became part of our culture. Dean Snyder does review the teaching
evaluation forms. They are part of the merit system. Dean Snyder replied that the evaluations are
needed to supplement evidence of effective teaching. We need to have consistency across
departments. Also, for reaccreditation, documentation of teacher effectiveness is needed. If the
current form is all we have, what else can be used? C. Naser has developed a system to analyze
the data. Some of the features in his program are good. Other features are not so good. He is
trying to show departments what can be done with the data that is available. Each department can
work with him to help analyze the data in useful ways.

P. Lakeland agreed that we need data for accountability. But what we have is “creeping
accountability.” At the start, the evaluations were for faculty use only. Today we have moved far
from that point. However, the faculty was never asked collectively if we would approve of these
other uses. While you do not have to submit your evaluations to the Rank and Tenure
Committee, you still must provide evidence of effective teaching. If neither the teaching
evaluations nor some alternative to them is sent to Rank and Tenure, then evidence of teaching
effectiveness has not been substantiated so the candidate is not likely to get promoted.

K. Steffen raises issues about use of the data. C. Naser’s approach is “here are some uses that can
be made with the numbers.” Instead, the faculty should decide collectively what it wants from
the data. The faculty has lost control on how the data should be used. The question was put to a
vote and the

**Motion Passes:** 14-0-1.

**Motion** [Greenberg/Abbott] to adjourn.
**Motion Passes:** 11-1.

Respectfully Submitted
J. Buss
Acting Secretary
[Approved by the Academic Council on April 3, 2006]