

Report of Dr. Roth to the Board of Visitors

September 16, 2011

I will repeat the preface to the report that I made yesterday to the Academic Affairs committee: we have a terrific faculty here at Radford University, and I consider it a privilege to count myself among them, and an honor to have been chosen to represent them.

Yesterday in the Academic Affairs Committee meeting, my report focused primarily on two things: one was the objectives of the faculty senate for this year, and the other was last year's faculty satisfaction survey.

Regarding faculty satisfaction, I unfortunately did not have very good news. Faculty morale is not great, and faculty by and large are not very happy with the administration. I tried to put this in a context and related it to the difficulties of several years ago.

Reflecting on this last night, and on my conversations with several members of the Board after the meeting, I thought I might put the message in different terms.

If the faculty are dissatisfied, what do they want?

In my view, faculty want two things:

They want to be left alone, and they want to feel appreciated.

By "left alone" I mean that faculty want to focus on what they see as their job: teaching and learning. It is a challenging job, it is a job that faculty love, and that they feel no one except perhaps their colleagues ought to tell them how to do. One reflection of this is the principle, pretty much universally accepted in academia, that faculty own the curriculum. No one from outside the faculty should presume to tell the faculty what to teach, or how to teach it, or what to research.

So, faculty want to be left alone – supported, given the resources they need, and not distracted by time-consuming tasks like externally imposed assessments, restructurings, and the like.

The second thing is that they want to feel appreciated. I said yesterday that I wanted to save my remarks about faculty salaries until today, but really it's very relevant to understanding the state of faculty morale. Faculty want to feel appreciated. If I go to a conference and my peers in my specialization are making \$85,000 a year, and I'm making \$60,000, am I going to feel appreciated? When the General Assembly does not provide for salary increases for four years

in a row, so that faculty salaries are effectively declining, what does this say about society's appreciation of what faculty do?

So how bad is the salary situation at Radford, and what can we do about it?

As you probably already know, compared to peer institutions, Radford University fares worse than any other state four-year institution. Our 2009-2010 salary average was at the 22nd percentile compared to our peer institutions. [slide] You may also know that the state's goal is for salaries to be at the 60th percentile compared to peer institutions.

It is not just the fact that faculty salaries have been frozen for four years while prices have increased, or that we are very low compared to our peers, but – in terms of faculty morale –it's also the fact that there are inequities in the salary structure across the University. While we realize that funds are unlikely to be available in the near future to get us anywhere near the 60th percentile goal for R.U. faculty salaries, it may be possible to address internally some of the perceived inequities in the pay structure that unfortunately contribute to poor faculty morale.

One of the very important tasks for the Faculty Senate this year will be to develop and recommend to the administration a policy for allocation of additional funds for salaries, if and when they become available. This will be a complicated task. There will be winners and losers no matter how salary increases are allocated. Coming to consensus may be difficult but faculty need to begin grappling with the issue, lest decisions be made for them.

How complicated a task will it be? Here are some of the factors:

All faculty wish to have a raise. It has been four years since we saw salary increases, and the last one was pretty modest.

Certain academic disciplines fare much better in terms of salary (and workload in some cases) than others, for reasons that are hard for many faculty to understand.

Recent hires fare pretty well, but the longer one has been at Radford, the worse one's salary is compared to faculty in the same specialization and rank at other universities. [second slide] There are 45 senior faculty, full professors, whose salaries are below the 10th percentile for their discipline and academic rank compared to peer institutions.

There are faculty that have suffered from salary compression and inversion.

Adjunct pay has stagnated for years. I have heard reports that some departments are having a difficult time finding adjuncts in certain specializations because of the low compensation that we offer.

Again, we understand that we are in a tough fiscal environment. But the FSEC thinks that there is a need to try to come to an agreement on the faculty side as to how to address the various issues surrounding faculty salaries for the time when funds do become available. And perhaps, without additional external funds, there may be opportunities to address some of the most egregious salary inequities. I am very glad to hear Mr. Alvarez say, repeatedly, in the context of the six year plan, that faculty salaries are the administration's highest priority.

Let me conclude by saying that despite the fiscal situation and the gloomy prospects, at least in the short term, for any great improvement in faculty salaries, I am optimistic about the future of Radford, and I'm optimistic about the direction of faculty morale. I am completely in agreement with what the Rector said yesterday, that the difficult period we went through a few years ago is past and there's nothing we can do about those events. But I think there are things we can do, working together as a team, to improve faculty morale. I think we do this by creating better understanding between the Board, the administration, and the faculty. I am heartened by the conversations I have had with Board members, from which I take the message that the Board, and the administration, support the faculty and are behind the faculty. As Faculty Senate president I will absolutely commit to working with Provost, the President, and the Board as a team to move this University forward.

Appendix: Slides Accompanying Report



Higher Education Opportunity Act

2009-10 Faculty Salaries Compared to 60th Percentile Peer Group Goal

Inst.	Virginia Appropriated Salary	60th Percentile Peer Group Goal	Va Percentile Ranking to Peers
CNU	\$69,066	\$77,529	30th Percentile
CWM	\$92,703	\$100,466	29th
GMU	\$80,531	\$89,542	27th
JMU	\$73,833	\$80,696	40th
LU	\$67,573	\$70,116	43rd
NSU	\$64,948	\$67,401	47th
ODU	\$74,851	\$83,816	28th
RU	\$66,562	\$77,589	22nd
UMW	\$72,728	\$71,491	65th
UVA	\$95,608	\$103,607	35th
UVAW	\$69,076	\$65,418	79th
VCU	\$82,720	\$90,200	31st
VMI	\$72,326	\$83,901	32nd
VSU	\$63,857	\$70,741	31st
VT	\$89,215	\$96,731	32nd
4-Year Avg			38th
RBC	\$57,181	\$54,852	69th
VCCS	\$59,593	\$69,712	40th

Total Cost to Achieve 60th Percentile Goal:
\$81 million

Peer data comes from IPEDS SA 2009.

Recent Faculty Salary Increases				
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Cumulative
Virginia	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
National	3.4%	1.2%	1.4%	6.0%

National data comes from the AAUP's 2010-11 Report on the Economic Status of the Profession.



Virginia Public Four Year Institution Average Salaries (2009)					
Institution	Average	Professor	Associate	Assistant	Instructor
University of Virginia-Main Campus	\$104,557	\$135,241	\$95,315	\$75,147	\$53,778
George Mason University	\$89,027	\$125,238	\$82,933	\$69,676	\$55,208
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State Univer	\$87,367	\$111,492	\$83,094	\$70,186	\$44,852
College of William and Mary	\$86,204	\$116,252	\$80,429	\$66,500	\$45,676
Virginia Commonwealth University	\$74,802	\$104,813	\$78,177	\$59,468	\$45,946
Virginia Military Institute	\$73,629	\$83,897	\$64,587	\$56,611	\$39,509
Old Dominion University	\$73,475	\$102,921	\$73,758	\$64,446	\$43,945
Christopher Newport University	\$68,138	\$97,514	\$74,682	\$57,802	\$48,887
James Madison University	\$68,073	\$86,490	\$67,263	\$57,453	\$50,011
University of Mary Washington	\$66,761	\$84,438	\$65,102	\$53,209	\$56,135
Virginia State University	\$65,552	\$78,026	\$64,746	\$61,543	\$52,012
Norfolk State University	\$65,196	\$80,739	\$68,932	\$57,417	\$50,543
Radford University	\$63,709	\$77,347	\$63,846	\$57,209	\$49,596
Longwood University	\$59,295	\$74,310	\$63,104	\$52,504	\$49,045
The University of Virginia's College at Wise	\$56,791	\$77,478	\$58,292	\$53,792	\$43,310
Average	\$73,505	\$95,746	\$72,284	\$60,864	\$48,564