Date of Meeting: January 29, 2016
Date of Next Meeting: TBD

Committee Co-Chairs: John McAllister, Peter Bruns
Committee Members: Gail Harmon, Tim Heely, Glen Ives, Larry Leak ’76, Danielle Troyan ’92
Staff Member: Laraine Glidden

Dashboard Metrics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Selected High-Impact Practices (HIPs)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of 2013-15 graduates completing:</td>
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<tr>
<td>At least one HIP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two or more HIPs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three or more HIPs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four or more HIPs</td>
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HIPs: Peer Benchmarks
The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) recommends that students participate in at least two high-impact practices during college.

The 2015 NSSE survey found that 85% of graduating seniors at Carnegie Baccalaureate colleges had participated in at least two HIPs (compare to 99% at SMCM).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation in Selected High-Impact Practices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of 2013-2015 graduates completing a/n:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORE Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service/Experiential Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directed Research or Independent Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internship</td>
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Executive Summary:

**Dean of Faculty Report**

High-Impact Practices: Undergraduates have been shown to benefit from certain types of learning experiences that include working one-on-one with faculty, engaging in senior capstone courses, studying internationally, and completing internships. The dashboards displayed provide data about our students and the likelihood that they will complete these types of practices. For benchmarking, it should be noted that data from the National Study of Student Engagement indicates that 85% of students attending liberal arts colleges engage in two or more high impact practices, in comparison to 99% of SMCM undergraduates.

Middle States and Assessment Progress: Based on the Middle States outcome of failing to meet Standard 14, Student Learning Outcomes, we have initiated activities to facilitate rapid progress. By the end of the fall semester, 100% of courses taught in AY15/16 had learning outcomes entered into Campus Labs, the online system that we are using for our assessment information. These course learning outcomes will now be mapped onto program learning outcomes. In addition, in the last week of January two different external consulting services are on campus to work with faculty and administrators to develop our comprehensive plan for the immediate and longer term improvement of our assessment activities.

Faculty/Staff Hiring: Six new faculty in biology, chemistry, psychology, and theatre are under contract or have verbally accepted offers to begin in AY16/17. All are replacement positions. Five other searches are in process, including the search for a new Director of the Library. Our search for Director of Institutional Research has resulted in the appointment of Acting Director Anne Mare Brady as Director.

Sabbaticals: Seven faculty applied for sabbatical, and five were approved by the Dean of Faculty and the President; three of the five are contingent on successful tenure decisions. They are action items on the Academic Affairs agenda.

Faculty By-Laws: The faculty updated and revised its by-laws in spring 2015, and forwarded them to the Dean of Faculty who approved them with three changes, and forwarded them to the President. They are action items on the Academic Affairs agenda.

Non-IT Equipment: Deferred maintenance and replacement of equipment had resulted in a critical need for upgrading, and $75,000 was carried over from the FY15 budget for this purpose. A call to departments resulted in $160,870 of requests, $91,076 of which was funded out of FY15 carryover and FY16 current funds.

Research and Sponsored Programs: From July 1 to December 31, 2015, submitted grants totaled $2,427,395 in requested direct costs, involving 13 different faculty and staff. Most of these submissions are still pending, but grants totaling $153,731 in direct and $41,991 in indirect costs have already been awarded. During this same 6-month period, 14 faculty and staff worked on active grants.

Environmental Studies Major: The ENST major has been as popular as predicted. We currently have 63 students--20 seniors, 24 juniors, 17 sophomore, and 2 first-years--who have declared the major; also, 35 students have declared the minor. Of the 63 majors, 42 have a second major in 11 other disciplines.

Gambia Closing: The closing of The Gambia program has proceeded as planned. Bill Roberts, founder and
long-term director of the program, traveled to The Gambia during the semester break and was able to oversee the closure of the facility, and finalize operations, including cleaning of computers, donations of supplies to various Gambian institutions, and the return of artifacts that were carried or shipped back to St. Mary's. Final legal papers are completed or in preparation.

Faculty Senate Report
The faculty is deeply involved in several important College-wide activities, most notably strategic planning and assessment of student learning. The draft strategic plan presented to the trustees at this meeting represents many hours of work by faculty, staff, and administrators serving on one of the five working groups or the steering committee. We look forward to working collaboratively during the spring to hone the planning document in response to trustee and College-wide feedback.

Student learning must be assessed at multiple levels of the curriculum, starting with each class, continuing through the majors and core curricula, and ending at the institutional level. Although the College does assess student learning at each level, it is clear from the recent re-accreditation self-study and unambiguously clear from the reaccreditation team’s evaluation that we have not made it a central part of the College’s regular activities. As I’m sure President Jordan and Dean Glidden have assured you, the College is not waiting for the final decision from Middle States to rectify the problems. Systematic efforts are underway to develop a comprehensive, centralized practice of assessment that will meet the requirements set forth in Standard 14. Assessment is not just a requirement. It is a vital tool the College must use to assure that what students learn is a result of their experiences at St. Mary’s and consistent with our mission as a public honors college.

On the agenda for the Academic Affairs Committee this month was a review and approval of the revised Faculty By-Laws as submitted by President Tuajuanda Jordan. As the supporting documents attest, the document represents the hard work of both the administration and faculty. For all but one issue the administration and faculty are in agreement. It is important that the Board approve the amended by-laws because the current by-laws no longer reflect current practices. For example, the College now appoints faculty to cross-disciplinary programs as well as to traditional academic departments. The current by-laws do not recognize such appointments. Thus we have no codified way to appoint and evaluate faculty with an appointment to a cross-disciplinary program.

At the end of this semester the College will welcome Provost Michael Wick to St. Mary’s. We look forward to working with him upon his arrival, although it will be hard to send Acting Provost Glidden back to retirement.

Action Item(s) related to specific strategic plan goals as appropriate:

Committee Action Taken/Action in Progress:

Recommendation to the Board:
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF JANUARY 29, 2016

OPEN SESSION
AGENDA

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Meeting of October 2, 2015)

II. INFORMATION ITEMS
A. Dean of Faculty Report
B. Faculty Senate Report

III. ACTION ITEMS
A. Revision of Faculty By-Laws
Date of Meeting: October 2, 2015

Committee Members Present: Co-chairs John McAllister and Peter Bruns, Gail Harmon, Larry Leak ’76, Danielle Troyan ’92, Harry Weitzel

Committee Members Absent: Tim Heely, Glen Ives


Executive Summary:
The meeting was called to order by Committee Co-Chair John McAllister at 9:00 a.m.
A motion was made to approve the agenda and the minutes of the April 22, 2015 meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

On October 2, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary’s College of Maryland, Campus Center Room 205, the Academic Affairs Committee held a closed session to discuss faculty personnel items. The motion to close the meeting pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Gen. Prov., § 3-305(b) to discuss these topics was unanimously approved. The topics discussed included faculty appointments and other personnel matters affecting one or more individuals. The following members of the Committee were present: John McAllister, Peter Bruns, Gail Harmon, Larry Leak, Danielle Troyan ’92, and Harry Weitzel. The following actions were taken during the closed session: The Academic Affairs Committee approved all faculty personnel items.

Middle States Review Update
The Self-Study is finally finished and open to all members of the community at https://sites.google.com/a/smcm.edu/2015-self-study/ to read/review before the team visit. It is currently being formatted into a publications-quality document by the Office of Communications. The self-study visit is scheduled to begin Sunday evening, October 25th with a dinner for the team, steering committee, the president's executive council, and other invited guests. The visit will last through early Wednesday when the team will orally present their findings to the campus community. Their report will be sent to St. Mary's following the visit and the College will subsequently respond to their findings. The MSCHE decision concerning reaccreditation should happen at a meeting in early 2016.

Faculty Senate Report
Much of the work of the faculty last year was in response to the Board’s request that the Faculty By-Laws be
reviewed, streamlined, and brought into congruence with current practices. Last spring the faculty approved a streamlined version (the “Foundational” version) and then nine amendments dealing with issues such as tenure for librarians, a sabbatical policy, and the appeals process for faculty evaluation. Two issues failed in front of the faculty: external letters for tenure reviews and the ability to defer a tenure decision. The proposed revisions to the Faculty By-Laws were submitted to the Provost in April. The faculty is awaiting a response from the administration on these proposals. This year the faculty will be engaged fully in the strategic planning process, the Middle States reaccreditation review, and selection of the Provost.

**Dean of Faculty Report**

**Curriculum Highlights**—The Environmental Studies major was approved by MHEC and launched during the first week on campus with intensive advising for interested students. As of 9/18/15, ENST had 32 declared majors—10 seniors, 10 juniors and 12 sophomores. Recognition should go to faculty members Sue Johnson, Bob Paul, Kate Chandler and Barry Muchnick who were instrumental in developing the major, and to all the staff in Academic Services who spent many hours in effective student advising along with the faculty.

**Innovation Proposals**—With the aid of the Gail and John Harmon and William Seale, faculty development and curriculum innovation funds, individuals and teams of faculty worked over the summer on curriculum development and assessment projects. One of these projects, a collaborative effort among faculty from the disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Computer Science, Mathematics, Physics, and Psychology, focused on the development of a B.S. degree, in addition to the B.A. degree. Their progress report clearly lays out a range of possible options, an analysis of what our peer, peer-aspirant, and Maryland competition institutions currently do, and a timeline of next steps. This issue has been referred to the Faculty Senate and will be discussed by two Senate committees this semester: Academic Planning and Curriculum Review. Other projects that will be coming before us include majors in Global Studies and Neurosciences, a Materials Science minor, a Human Factors concentration, a certification project in SAS (statistical software), a variety of assessment initiatives, as well as collaborative agreements with University of Maryland, College Park, and UMBC with regard to a pharmacy degree and a graduate degree in public policy, respectively.

**Grant Awards Highlights:** Three grant awards announced this summer demonstrate the activity and success of faculty and staff in this domain: Aileen Bailey, Professor of Psychology, received a grant from NIH for behavioral research on stress and depression; Betül Başaran, Associate Professor of Religious Studies, received a grant from the National Endowment of the Humanities to direct a four-week seminar—“Transcending Boundaries: The Ottoman Empire, Europe and the Mediterranean World, 1500-1800”—for college and university professors in the summer of 2016; and Sabine Dillingham, Director of Research and Sponsored Programs, received an NIH grant for diversifying student-centered research at SMCM. It will help us expand our support for undergraduate research directly, as well as for the faculty working with them as research mentors. The importance of the Foundation in supporting this Office of Research and Sponsored Programs should not be underestimated.

**Faculty/Staff Recruitment:** FY16 has already been and will continue to be a very busy recruiting year. We hired four new coaches this summer, and we have more than a dozen faculty and staff positions in academic affairs that we know we will be recruiting.

**Strategic Planning:** We have continued to make progress with the refinement of the document, the constitution of a Steering Committee, and the identification of faculty, staff, and students who are willing and able to serve...
on the subcommittees.

**Action Item(s):**

**Action Item II.A. Endorsement of 2015 Performance Accountability Report**
The Performance Accountability Report (PAR) is a report required by the State of Maryland that assesses the College’s progress on a variety of goals and objectives.

**Committee Action Taken/Action in Progress:**
All proposed action items were approved by the Academic Affairs Committee at its October 2, 2015 meeting.

**Recommendation to the Board:**
The Academic Affairs Committee recommends approval by the Board of Trustees of the action items noted above.