

March 12, 2019

To: Campus Community

From: Raynard Kington, President, and Patricia Finkelman '80, Chair of the Board of Trustees

Re: Winter 2019 Board of Trustees' Meeting

The Board of Trustees had its winter meeting on campus Feb. 7-9, 2019. The following is a brief summary of the meeting.

Information

- *President's Report* – **President Kington** presented recent accomplishments of and awards to members of the faculty. **Charlotte Christensen** in physics received a prestigious and very competitive CAREER Award, including nearly \$500,000 in funding from the National Science Foundation to study the evolution of galaxies. **Susan Ferguson** in sociology received a collaborative research grant as part of NSF's Improving Undergraduate STEM Education program. She is a national leader in sociology curriculum innovation. **Danielle Lussier** in political science received a book-writing fellowship from the Global Religion Research Initiative at Notre Dame University. **Andrea Tracy** in psychology and neuroscience is part of the collaboration with the University of Iowa College of Public Health and Colorado College to study obesity, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. Former governor of Iowa Tom Vilsack, who reached out to Grinnell specifically to gauge interest, spearheaded the initiative. **Monessa Cummins** in classics won the 2018 Excellence in Teaching Award from the Society of Classical Studies.

- *Chair of the Board Report* – **Chairperson Finkelman** reported that the board has extended the president's contract for three years, demonstrating their confidence in President Kington's leadership and his ongoing success in moving the College forward. She also thanked board members who participated in the College's recent re-accreditation process. Lastly, as a follow up to documents previously shared with the board, Finkelman elaborated on her reflections that will position the next board chair for success.

- *Dean's Report* – **Mike Latham**, dean of the College, reviewed international initiatives and programming. He noted that the Global Learning Program offered opportunities for course-embedded travel in the following courses: Global Health Systems in Cuba and Costa Rica, Tolerance and Intolerance in Europe, Disability in Society in Japan, and U.S. Global Medicinal Practices in Japan and UK. Dean Latham also highlighted advanced summer language training (made possible with Bucksbaum support), international internships (collaboration between IGE and CLS), and faculty-student research abroad: Germany, India, and Russia. Latham also stated the HSC is proving to exceed expectations in creating interdisciplinary collisions and explorations. DASIL has new quarters, and faculty are working on data science introductory courses and capstone courses. Faculty are also working on potential majors in both global studies and media studies.

- *Staffing Announcements* – **Eric Wood** has been selected the new dean of health and wellness. Eric earned his bachelor of arts degree from the University of Texas at Dallas, his master’s in counseling from the University of North Texas, where he went on to complete his Ph.D. in counseling psychology.

- *Trustee Philanthropic Leadership* – The board engaged in discussion about trustees’ leadership role in building a culture of philanthropy within the Grinnell College community. **Caleb Elfenbein**, associate professor of history and religious studies, facilitated the discussion in partnership with Chris Clark of Bentz Whaley Flessner.

- *Branding Update* – Board members learned that the website has been relaunched and designed to enrich web visitors’ experiences. New [videos](#) of faculty sharing their *Why Grinnell?* testimonies were shared and well received. More videos are being produced to be posted on the website.

- *Accreditation Update* – Mike Latham and **Mark Levandoski**, associate dean of the College and professor of chemistry, shared the results of Grinnell’s accreditation review. The reviewers recognized and applauded Grinnell’s programs and plans. Of the 21 core components in the review, only one component, the nature of learning assessment, required more attention. The use of assessment data to inform pedagogy has been uneven across the campus. The reviewers recommended developing a project template, supported by guidance and “best practices” exemplars in response. In addition, a report on Grinnell’s progress to define a clear pathway for improvement must be made to the Higher Learning Commission four years from now.

Campus climate was another area that was marked for attention. It was not a criterion “met with concerns,” but rather an impression of the accreditors. The Office of Analytic Support and Institutional Research will be administering a nationally benchmarked climate survey in the spring to begin to better understand the review team’s observations and provide information to address the issue.

- *Officer Election* – A new board chair will be elected during the board’s annual meeting in May 2019. **Hal Fuson ’67** shared with the board the process for election. Fuson commended Chairperson Finkelman on her exemplary work as the board’s current chair, and stated that her reflections on the role of the board chair, as well as her thoughts on upcoming board challenges, will be a helpful part of the election considerations. Nominations will be due the early part of March.

Action Taken

- **BOARD RESOLUTION: APPROVAL OF INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT COMPANY DOCUMENTS**

The board approved the organizational documents necessary for the creation of the new investment management company: the Certificate of Organization, the Interorganization Agreement, the Bylaws of the Exit 182 Group, LLC, and the revised investment policy.

- **BOARD RESOLUTION: CONSENT AGENDA**

The board approved the consent agenda, which included the minutes from past board meetings.

Activities

- *Board Leadership* – Prior to the start of each board meeting, the chair and vice chairs of the board meet with their counterparts for campus. They value meeting with the Faculty Executive Council and Student Government Association leaders.

- *Gallery Talk* – Members of the board and campus community were invited to attend a Gallery Talk by trustee **Angela Onwuachi-Willig '94**. Angela is the dean and professor of law at Boston University School of Law. Her talk was on the concept of cultural trauma resulting from a long-established expectation of routine harm experiences in African-American communities.

- *Memory of Trustee Barry Huff '73* – During the meeting, President Kington shared his appreciation for Barry's remarkable dedication to the College. At the board's dinner on Friday evening, **Trish Fitzgibbons Anderson '80** read a resolution honoring Barry and reminisced about Barry's tremendous affection for Grinnell College. The resolution will be shared with his widow Becky and daughter Halle.

- *Union of Grinnell Student Dining Workers* – During the last half hour of the meeting, the board welcomed 40 students who arrived unexpectedly to protest outside the board meeting in subfreezing temperatures. Chairperson Finkelman invited the students to address the board. A student addressed the board with a brief statement, the chair responded, and then the group sang and chanted. When asked to exit at the end of their allotted time, the students sat on the floor and refused to leave. The board chair adjourned the meeting at that time.

- *Admission and Student Financial Services Building (ASFS) and Humanities and Social Studies Center (HSSC) Dinner and Tours* – The board enjoyed social time in ASFS before dinner Friday evening. **Joe Bagnoli**, vice president for enrollment and dean of admission, was on hand and offered guided tours of the building. For dinner, the board members walked across the street to the HSSC and enjoyed dining in a third-floor classroom. Optional building tours were also conducted.

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