Minutes of the Faculty Congress, 4/9/02] --------------------------------------------------------------------- Minutes of the Faculty Congress Tuesday, April 9, 2002 4:00 PM The Cinema The Connelly Center Present: Elaine Beletz, Lillian Cassel, Sohail Chaudhry, Walter Conn, Gertrude Graves, Lowell Gustafson, Michael Hones, Edward Jaworowski, Janice Knepper, Edward Kresch, Robert Langran, Chair; Howard Lurie, Susan Mackey-Kallis, Emmet McLaughlin, Julia Paparella, Nancy Sharts-Hopko, Joseph Schick, Robert Styer, Burke Ward, and Joyce Willens. Absent: Moeness Amin, Wayne Bremser, Walter Brogan, Linda Copel, Rick Eckstein, Edwin Goff, Karyn Hollis, Jeffrey Johnson, James Klingler, Eugene Kroch, Kenneth Kroos, Philip McLaughlih, Robert Murray, Douglas Norton, Evan Radcliffe, Rex Saffer, Janice Sipior, Harry Strack, Rodger Van Allen (NIA), and Peter Zaleski. Dr. Langran introduced Dr. Johannes, Vice President of Academic Affairs, who had been invited to attend. Dr. Johannes began his remarks by noting that the Faculty Congress is very important to the university. He wanted to take this opportunity to share his thoughts regarding the general feeling of frustration expressed by the faculty. He believes that the root cause is fundamental change being experienced in all aspects of university life, such as the physical changes that technology has brought about, the changing persona of the student body and the change in the nature of the professional faculty member. Along with these changes are changes in expectations. The students are smarter and expect a lot more than in previous years. The university must adjust to the marketplace in order to attract premier students and to take a competitive stance in these times of rapid change. Strategic planning is much more important. The universities are growing in complexity. There is need for a greater division of labor and more specialization; academic decisions are affected by all these forces. Faculty influence is needed in order to arrive at an appropriate model to deal with the changes. The VPAA stressed that it is absolutely crucial to build confidence and trust in each other, and to have the administration share information with the faculty. He stated that in the past the faculty was not empowered enough. The system is much better now, but he has a sense that the faculty is not aware of the key issues. After the opening remarks, Dr. Johannes accepted questions from the floor. Burke Ward raised the issue that with the new programs being proposed, the faculty carries the additional burden but does not share in the direct benefits. General discussion regarding salaries took place. The matter of involuntary or voluntary scheduling was also brought up, with the VPAA stating that scheduling is the province of the institution. Susan Mackey-Kallis brought up the fact that perspective makes a big difference in how the various groups approach a problem. The time line for the students is four years; for the faculty, 25-30 years; while the administration is looking 50 years or so down the line. The faculty member sees the pinch, but is not geared to the larger vision of the university. The budget committee decides to put money into quasi-endowment while the faculty have to accept a greater workload. The 1997 Strategic Plan was discussed. The deans continue to review the major categories. The immediate goals are to improve the quality of the undergraduate program, to go more aggressively into graduate education, to increase salaries, to hire more faculty to address the heavier class load, to attract better quality students, to strive for increased diversity and to have administrative support for the programs. Dr. Chaudhry asked about the progress being made to achieve the goals in the strategic plan. Dr. Johannes stated that areas successfully dealt with so far include the Study Abroad program, technology, social responsibility, interdisciplinary objectives, and environmental matters. Walter Conn brought up the matter of the Greater Villanova model being discussed. Since planning and strategic goals are going to be worked out in terms of the model, he wanted to know why the Faculty Congress had not been informed about it. Dr. Johannes said that in its initial stages, three models were brought before the APC for review, but it was only in the brainstorming phase at that time. Susan Mackey-Kallis stated that the whole discussion is endemic of the larger problem of faculty governance. If there were faculty representation on APBC, it would serve as a working model for faculty involvement. She noted that the retirement discussion carried out by Rodger Van Allen was a good model. There were faculty members in important positions of governance, and the faculty knew there was faculty input throughout the discussions. She emphasized that there are ways to establish trust. The matter of the two-line budget item was mentioned. It was stated that the University's resistance to sitting down face to face to talk about salary issues with the faculty is a source of contention. Dr. Johannes agreed that the faculty should have more input where salary matters are concerned, but the deans get first consideration when salaries are up for discussion. Janice Knepper noted the lack of faculty representation and administrative response. Dr. Johannes said that the business of sharing information is partly one of timing. If matters on the drawing board are too widely discussed at the brainstorming level it is injurious to the whole process. Susan Mackey-Kallis said that the faculty does not have the key information for asking the big questions. Dr. Johannes agreed that the faculty does not have the big picture; it is caused by a difference in perspective. Dr. Knepper reiterated that committee members should be trusted enough to discuss matters with colleagues. After this productive exchange, Dr. Langran reminded the Faculty Congress members to consider another term of office for the new Congress. The meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM. Respectfully submitted, Robert Langran Chair