Presentation to Board

March 22, 2013

E. Derek Taylor (Faculty Representative)

I'm coming to realize that the proper enunciation isn't "it's the March meeting." Rather, it's "It's the *March* meeting."

True story: About a year and a half ago, I was at church with my family, and it was time to pick up the kids from Sunday school. So I went and grabbed my youngest from her pre-K class and, as we wandered toward the sanctuary, I asked her, as I'm wont to do, "So, what was class about today?"

To which she replied, with no little exasperation, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus—it's *always* about Jesus."

As best I can tell, March meetings are something like this—except for "Jesus" insert the word "money."

And I have, once again, brought my figurative collection plate with me.

Let me be clear: I and my colleagues truly, deeply appreciate the commitment this board made one year ago to addressing compensation deficiencies at Longwood. The first round of compensation adjustments put into place by President Connelly and her VPs and Deans have literally changed the landscape of Longwood—for the better. Indeed, it's precisely *because* this board has been so supportive that I feel obligated to do my best to relate to you where things stand now with respect to faculty pay.

So: For every hard working, productive, dedicated, woefully underpaid faculty member who received a raise last fall, there are roughly 3 other productive, dedicated, woefully underpaid faculty members who did not.

And this does have implications for morale. You may be familiar with the adage about the difference between knowledge and belief—everyone "knows" that he or she will die. But none of us can quite believe it. My sense is that intellectually, the faculty to a person "knew" that the first round of compensation adjustments could only address a fraction of the overall problem; and yet, you can imagine how difficult it might be for someone who has been working diligently at Longwood for four years with no salary adjustment to quite *believe* he/she wasn't selected for a raise.

I use that example both pointedly and deliberately. I did a bit of "spot checking"—which essentially involved tracking down faculty I thought I wouldn't offend by asking "Hey—how much money do you make?" The three people I asked had, I knew, stellar records as scholars and teachers—I chair the Promotion and Tenure committee in my department, and so I'm quite familiar with these people's records and with the glowing evaluations they've received over the years. It is no exaggeration to say that these faculty, and those like them, represent the future of our institution.

Which is why the results are, if not surprising, nevertheless alarming: to a person and to the penny, each is currently making the same money he/she made when he/she arrived (all somewhere between 2008-2010)

My "discovery" is, of course, really not one—it is perfectly in keeping with what we learned from the salary study commissioned by President Finnegan several years ago and what we heard from my colleague Bill Abrams this morning: if one charts faculty compensation over time, one is left with a "flat line" (a disquieting description, I know, but also a resonant one).

Let me conclude with a note I received from a colleague with whom I shared my plans for this meeting. This person sent me a note that read, "What timing—my significant other and I were just having a very real conversation about whether we can afford for me to continue to work for this salary. Of course," this person concluded, "it's hard for me to imagine *not* teaching these students."

I know you know all of this; I know that I am preaching to the choir—this is the board that stuck its neck out for faculty and staff a year ago. It didn't have to—but it *did*—and we truly appreciate it. But it's the *March* meeting. And some sermons bear repeating.

Thanks for your patience—and for your efforts on behalf of Longwood. I'm happy to take any questions you might have.