Dean Alison Morrison-Shetlar opened the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Alison’s opening remarks included a welcome and thanks to all for a smooth opening of school. She applauded Department Chairs for handling all challenges associated with the start of another academic year.

Alison spoke briefly about several important initiatives for the year:

1. Continuing to meet with the many important groups within Elon College including departments, Department Chairs, Program Coordinators, Program Assistants, etc. in order to facilitate conversations about accomplishments, opportunities and challenges.
2. Making changes to the Elon College brochure to strengthen the academic focus, the integration of experiences with academics, to promote the whole college and to convey a strong message that the arts and sciences prepare students well for many career paths.
3. Bringing international scholars to Elon to enhance diversity and enable departments and students to benefit from international teacher-scholars (one or two semester visitors who will teach courses while here). Departments may start to identify potential international scholars and submit ideas to the Dean’s office.
4. Supporting a cohort of faculty in a grant-writing opportunity in the spring of 2011. Alison is working with Bonnie Bruno and Tim Peeples to develop a cohort grant writing series opportunity for 10 faculty.
5. Considering the possibility of creating one or more advisory boards for Elon College. An advisory board would provide the college with additional ways to promote itself and to benefit from outside perspectives, support, and opportunities. The college faculty and staff were asked to consider whether to develop one college wide advisory or two advisory boards - one for Arts and Humanities and one for Social, Behavioral, Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Computer Sciences.

Alison briefly reviewed the collective and specific roles of the Dean Team with emphasis upon the collaborative nature of the office and that the office is there for the faculty.

Maurice Levesque spoke briefly about the important ongoing work with departments to assess student learning. A main point was that this is not just for SACS, but is valuable for departments, for Elon College, and for the University. Student-learning assessment should be integrated with a department’s 5 year plan and also be reflected in a department’s annual reports, providing evidence of how we are doing and leverage for change.

Alison briefly spoke of the importance of 5 year planning at the College level. Department 5 year plans are needed so that a comprehensive plan for the College can be produced.
Alison asked the faculty how the College could best use the semester faculty meeting. Responses included:

1. Possibility of using one of the two annual College meetings as a divisional meeting to enable faculty in related departments to meet and share ideas and challenges.

2. Suggestion that we talk seriously about facilities at one of the meetings.

3. Suggestion that we avoid using these meetings to convey information that can be handled by email. Perhaps we should discuss one significant topic per meeting such as the general studies review.

4. Suggestion that the College needs a place to meet that provides it with an identity.

Alison agreed to send as much information as possible in electronic form (email, Listserv, website). She then opened the floor for Q & A or statements. The following ideas were shared:

1. The need to be informed relative to the move of the DPT program out of McMichael Science Center so that proper planning for this change can happen in a timely fashion.

2. Suggestion that the College consider additional interdisciplinary initiatives to bring us together academically.

3. Need to clarify the role of Department Chair as the institution changes. Alison responded that the role of Chair is taking on more of a mentoring function to help faculty be successful and that Chair support and development is being put in place at multiple levels.

4. Suggestion that Elon College be very proactive in the upcoming search processes to try to identify and recruit a more diverse faculty. Alison responded and conveyed her strong support of strategies to be more proactive in seeking diverse faculty.

5. Concern about having faculty in the same department housed in different buildings and suggestion that we have conversations about this issue at a university level.

6. Suggestion that faculty are not directly involved in discussions related to facilities planning.

7. Comment that the volume of email at Elon has become problematic and should be addressed.

Karl Sienerth from Academic Council provided an update on policy changes relative to Shared Governance. He described the structures of faculty meetings in the new model (regular faculty meetings, school meetings and town hall meetings). There was a comment from the floor urging the Academic Council to get information out quickly so that relevant points may be incorporated in discussion within school or town hall meetings.
Karl then described changes relative to University Curriculum Committee and School-based Curriculum Committees that had been discussed and disseminated to the university last semester. A comment from the floor suggested that the transition had been rushed.

Jeff Clark, representing the University Curriculum Committee then proceeded to direct the divisions of Elon College to get together to finalize their individual curriculum committee structures.