

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of December 4, 1996 (approved)

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The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM in 567 Capen Hall to consider the following agenda:

1. [Report of the Chair](#)
2. [Approval of the Minutes of September 18 & November 6, 1996](#)
3. [Graduate School Executive Committee](#)
4. [Report of the Provost](#)
5. [Report of the Bylaws Committee](#)
6. [Report of the Student Life Committee](#)

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The Chair announced that he had met with the Provost, and emphasized the need for decanal review; they discussed ways in which this evaluation could be conducted. The Chair also reported that the Provost will give the deans his proposal for future steps to be undertaken, as well as his analysis of the current situation of the University; Professor Welch indicated to him that the Senate would like to play a significant role in the process of consultation. They had also discussed the proposed responsibility center budget methodology at their meeting.

The Chair had sent a memo to the Admissions and Retentions Committee asking their advice on NCAA requirements for eligibility upon matriculation; in essence, these requirements are what New York State already has in place for graduation from high school with a Regents diploma.

He circulated a memorandum with notes on his meeting with Voldemar Innus and Nancy Kielar dealing with the issue of Information Technology, along with some observations by Professor Cowen.

Professor Jameson remarked that Professor Cowen's note that most faculty are not familiar with the "node strategy" was a rather gross understatement; as far as she could discern, the Educational Technology Action Plan seemed to have been devised by one person in the Provost's office with no input from academics. Moreover, the various decanal units responsible for developing the plan have

not done so; as a result, the IT programs are "withering on the vine". No funding is available from the Provost's office because the plan was not carefully thought through in advance.

Professor Welch replied that it did seem to be an initiative from the Provost's office with limited participation. Professor Jameson noted that the full version of the Action Plan is available on the Web ("if you look really hard"), but found it scandalous that the plan had not been discussed at all with the faculty. Professor Malone remarked that such has been the habit for a long time. The Chair asked if he should schedule a follow-up discussion for early January; Professor Jameson averred that he should, and requested that the author of the plan attend.

The Chair sent a letter to Professor Price, Chair of the Intercollegiate Athletics Board, regarding a follow-up report on gender equity in intercollegiate athletics to be discussed with the FSEC next semester. Professor Welch announced he would discuss with President Greiner the nomination of faculty for possible membership to the Intercollegiate Athletics Board.

Other items included the solicitation for nominations to the Calendar Commission, the announcement of Professor Meacham's publication in the American Behavioral Scientist dealing with teaching multiculturalism at the university, and the circulation of President Greiner's approval of the 1997/98 academic calendar.

The Chair then asked whether the FSEC should renew its endorsement of its statement on academic integrity, and whether it should encourage its inclusion in course syllabi. Since the Grading Committee planned to examine the issue of academic integrity in the Spring, no action was taken at this meeting.

The Secretary reported that the statements of the candidates for Chair of the Faculty Senate would be sent out on the last day of classes (December 11), and that the ballots would be due on the first Friday after the winter break.

Professor Miller raised two points of personal privilege. First, he replied that he received a reply from Donna Rice concerning the shortage of time between final exams and the due date for final grades. She had noted that it was a faculty member who felt that faculty did not need three days, since grades could be submitted from individual desks, and because of DARS as well. Secondly, he

remarked that, following the report of his comment at a previous meeting that he had married a student, he and The Reporter had both received copies of hate mail addressed to him.

The Chair announced finally that the Task Force on Quality had submitted its final report to the Provost.

Item 2: Approval of the Minutes of September 18 & November 6, 1996

The Minutes of the meetings of September 18 and November 6, 1996, were approved. Professor Malone announced an upcoming teleconference on proposed changes within the NCAA; since there would be no FSEC meeting on December 11, he asked for advice from the FSEC on what his position should be on behalf of UB. The Chair said the request could be circulated both electronically and in hard copy for any comments.

Item 3: Report of the Graduate School Executive Committee

Professor Nickerson reported that the GSEC had met on November 21. The Committee is moving ahead with certificate programs for both Women's Studies and Engineering. The program is a way of putting together a number of courses for the certification that students have met requirements in certain areas. The program requires little review by the State Education Department. Although there are presently no guidelines for the program, these are in the process of being developed.

In addition, a new sub-committee has been charged to examine the policy on outside readers of dissertations; due to a great variation in the letters from outside readers, some guidelines may be necessary.

Also discussed was the role of the relation between Millard Fillmore College (MFC) and the Graduate School; apparently, there exists no formal mechanism for issuing graduate degrees in MFC, for example in Nursing. Furthermore, several surveys indicate an unfulfilled need for increased graduate study in the evening.

Professor Meacham related that the University of Houston is presently offering graduate courses on weekends, with great success.

Professor Malone asked if the GSEC had considered a report on outside readers, filed some years ago, which indicated certain problems; for example, the readers were not quite objectively chosen.

Professor Nickerson replied that it was not mentioned, but that he would bring it to the attention of the Chair of the GSEC.

Professor Miller observed that UB needs to "get moving" on offering more courses in the evening, especially now that Canisius is offering evening courses in Management.

Provost Headrick, upon being asked about the expectations for enrollment goals for the coming academic year, replied that, in the long run, UB will probably become a university in which the departments are responsible for their own programs, and that Millard Fillmore will become a leading edge for exploring new markets for the university, experimenting with distance-learning if the traditional methods do not suffice.

Professor Jameson asked about whether the process for appointing faculty to the Graduate Faculty had been discussed at the GSEC meeting. Professor Nickerson replied that this matter was being referred to a sub-committee.

Professor Meidinger was skeptical about the idea that having outside readers would strengthen graduate programs. In his experience, this was more a formality, and seemed to have little bearing, if any, on the quality of a dissertation. Professor Nickerson replied that quality was the primary reason, but that having an outside reader also enables the student to have his/her work more widely known. Professor Meidinger wondered whether there are more efficient ways for ensuring these.

Item 4: Report of the Provost

Provost Headrick reported on the planning by representatives from the SUNY campuses directed towards creating a new "Resource Allocation Method" (RAM), requested by the Trustees to replace the old so-called "benchmark" method which had become discredited due to tinkering over the years. To make any progress, it was necessary to come to some understanding of the various campuses and their missions within the system. A Task Force for Mission Review attempted to sort out the groupings of the various campuses into categories according to the major characteristics of the institutions. The grouping was designed to constitute "boundaries" for each institution, and consequently to control

"mission creep", i.e. the expansion of an institution into areas not originally within its stated mission. The Provost reviewed briefly the groupings reproduced on a handout at the meeting. Basically, there will be two kinds of university centers: those with first professional degrees, and those without. All university centers -- and no other institution within the system -- will be doctoral universities. The proposal divides the colleges into two groups, namely colleges and comprehensive colleges, both of which will have the capacity to offer Master's degrees, although the colleges will have more restricted programs. The proposal also recognizes three kinds of specialized institutions -- discipline-focussed, medical, and technical -- and a separate grouping for the community colleges. The next step will be the presentation of materials for mission review for each institution. Provost Headrick then welcomed comments on the plan.

Professor Malone asked if the "specialized medical" institutions would award both Master's and doctoral degrees, the Provost said he believed they would. Professor Malone then asked what fell under "discipline-focussed", to which the Provost replied that this rubric would include Maritime, ESF (Environmental Sciences and Forestry), Agricultural Life Sciences, Optometry, and others.

Professor Nickerson expressed concern about the admissions minima ("open", "selective", "more selective", "most selective"), and asked about the status of this aspect of the proposal. The Provost replied that another proposal involved an enrollment streaming system, somewhat similar to the California State system, as a way of further defining the role of each institution. Professor Malone asked what effect this would have on our enrollment targets; Provost Headrick replied that that depends on where the numbers are set.

Professor Jameson wondered whether, in times of low enrollments, we would be prevented from taking measures such as lowering the freshman intake profile intentionally; the Provost responded that that idea had been rejected. Professor Welch remarked that the selectivity criteria applied only to undergraduates, and found this somewhat odd; the Provost replied that that is simply the way SUNY operates, that it thinks chiefly in terms of undergraduates.

Professor Faran asked when the italicized qualifiers ("significant", "critical mass", etc.) would be defined; Provost Headrick did not know. Professor Wooldridge asked about the relative ordering of the

groupings on the handout, to which the Provost replied that this was largely due to SUNY-internal political discretion.

Professor Wetherhold asked what the next step would be after the institutions were categorized. The Provost replied that SUNY would then develop a mission review process, during which representatives from each institution would be invited to further define their missions. Professor Wetherhold asked how much money each would receive, and the Provost said this would be determined afterwards. Allocation of the money depends on the types and purposes of the institutions. When asked how long this would take, the Provost replied that it could be done within six to eight months, but could give no definite answer.

Professor Malone assumed there was no conception that the individual and specific missions of the units within each category had to be the same; Provost Headrick replied that just the opposite applied -- the latest version of the plan included the word "differentiation" in its title, which he considered an important step forward. Professor Malone then asked if the Mesmer report, which suggested relegating general education to the community colleges, was no longer under consideration. The Provost replied that President Greiner never mentioned it, from which he assumed that the idea was dead.

Professor Meacham recalled a comparative study of mission statements, carried out by the Syracuse University's Center for Higher Education, which might provide some helpful materials.

Professor Miller asked whether the categorization would be tentative or absolute, and wondered what, if any, the appeal process would be. Provost Headrick replied that the groupings would be definite, and that it would take some time for the process to solidify, to be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Professor Awad asked what the term "critical mass" meant. Provost Headrick replied that the term was vague, that it had been changed from "significant" in order to acknowledge that the Binghamton campus belonged to the university, and not the comprehensive college, group.

Professor asked how this process would impact the mission statement which has been hammered out over the past few years. The Provost said it has had no impact at all.

Item 5: Report of the Faculty Senate Bylaws Committee

Professor Hopkins, Chair of the Bylaws Committee, reported a textual change in the Standing Orders to reflect a more precise calculation of senatorial seats -- namely, the specification of an upper limit of 25% of the seats, instead of 25 seats. After a brief explanation of the change, no discussion arose.

Item 6: Report of the Student Life Committee

Vice-President Palmer began by saying that the people engaged in Student Life enhance the academic mission of the university, and in some ways enable that mission to take place. Those in Student Affairs have a major responsibility in contributing to the quality of student life; the programs in place determine to a large extent how well we are able to serve our students in the context of advancing our academic mission.

He introduced the "key players" in Student Affairs: Dennis Black, Associate Vice-President and Dean of Students; Barb Ricotta from the Office of Student Life; Joseph Krakowiak, Director of Residence Halls; Joseph Mook, Chair of the Student Life Committee.

Mr. Krakowiak reminded the FSEC that the buildings of the residence halls in themselves mean nothing; more important are the people who live in them. Educational programs (over 100 events, over 4000 attending in both September and October) within the halls serve to help the students make the transition to university life and find their niche therein. The interest in the total development of the students is a collaborative effort, involving various schools and faculty to help establish new programs. He also mentioned the faculty dining program, which has grown to be very successful over the past few years. He then quoted from a book to underscore the point that the amount of learning that occurs outside the classroom is phenomenal, that a student's character is molded through the interaction with their peers as well as with their role models. He hoped to implement and experiment with the exciting opportunities and potential described in the book, and to structure activities with the faculty.

Associate Vice-President Black added mention of Nelson Townsend, Director of Athletics, to the group most responsible for the quality of student life. He cited out two national research findings: First, students who are involved in their institution tend to continue at that institution; thus the quality of

student life has a direct bearing on retention rates. Secondly, interactions and relationships with faculty members are critical for student satisfaction with the institution.

Ms. Ricotta briefly reviewed some of the main opportunities for faculty involvement. Most common are the Orientation and September Welcome programs; she included also the leadership development programs and life workshops. The Office of Student Life is also responsible for the Student Union, through which about 14,000 students pass on a typical day; the Union, she added, hosts between 8,000 - 10,000 events every year. Students visit the Union to find out what is happening on campus, as well as for different types of student involvement. The point is not trivial, since a large percentage of students are commuters, and need to be made to feel they belong to the university community.

Another way of encouraging development outside the classroom is the "Student Activity Transcript", a way for students to record, in a formal way, their involvement outside the classroom -- something which could prove helpful in assembling resumes and in their job searches.

Professor Mook, Chair of the Student Life Committee, noted the Committee was resurrected about three years ago; although it lacked a clear mission and got off to a slow start, it now has a clearer vision and focusses on student issues which relate to academics in a very tangible way. In the past year, the central concern had been academic integrity. The Committee has recently been asked to nominate outstanding Student Life programs; the Committee voted unanimously to endorse the eight programs nominated by Dennis Black.

The issues occupying the Committee's attention for the foreseeable future are:

1. The Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). Professor Mook observed a problem in timing in awarding the funds.
2. Problems in undergraduate advising. He mentioned that the advising that is being carried out is being done well, but that there are certain "holes" in the system which leave some students out completely.
3. Establishing a Web page advertising the activities of the Committee and inviting comments.

The floor was then opened for discussion.

Professor Malone pointed out that one reason for the delay in TAP awards is that often, students have not paid their bills. He also asked Director Krakowiak whether he had any data relating the choice of residence hall with a student's success. Mr. Krakowiak mentioned that an upcoming study will investigate a similar correlation.

Professor Welch related a personal experience about attending a recent UB basketball game, and wondered why the faculty and other who attended made little noise. This made him suspect that there may be more faculty who attend the various events and programs than one might suppose, unless there is a sense that these are, in a sense, distractions from our primary duties of research and teaching. He asked for faculty reactions to this remark.

Professor Nickerson said he never had a faculty member refuse, when invited, to take part in the faculty dining program.

Professor Meacham, although pleased with the reports, disagreed with one of Vice-President Palmer's opening remarks, that our involvement with Student Life was merely to support our academic mission. He suggested instead that the primary mission of Student Life has to do with the development of younger people, which is a higher mission; we as faculty should be willing to subordinate some of our activities for this mission. Vice-President Palmer agreed, noting that the mission must be viewed holistically. Professor Meacham mentioned that this directly bears on our mission, how the faculty spend our time and energies. Vice-President Palmer countered by saying that UB has been primarily faculty-centered, having concentrated on academics, facilities, and the like. UB left the issue of student life behind; one obvious indication was the lack of a Student Union for years, which he considered "unheard of". He hoped that we now have a better realization of our mission to the students, and believes we have made great strides. Several events occur every night -- not big events, he noted, but these would be coming. He also pointed out that UB is the only major public university in the country lacking any form of graduate housing. Nevertheless, we do well with what we have. He stressed the need for all faculty to be involved.

Professor Frisch asked what we are doing for international and non-traditional-age students, and how we are to develop them as real resources for the University. He also addressed the issue of diversity

and multiculturalism among the student population, and asked how we could develop this important resource as well.

Ms. Ricotta responded that her staff is looking for ways to program for that diversity; she added that a lot of the programs come from the students themselves. Vice-President Palmer noted that they are aware that the environment is changing, and that they created, several years ago, the Office of Multicultural Affairs. UB was one of the first in the country to establish such an office, and others in the country have followed the lead.

Michael Stokes, the Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, reported that his office had developed an advisory board of student leaders who meet on a monthly basis. The members collaborate on ideas for activities and educate the campus community about their activities. Professor Frisch observed that there are possible connections in terms of academic programs which could be linked to activities in the Student Union.

Director Krakowiak, addressing the issue of international students, said that the programs at the International Living Center in the Richmond quadrangle were designed specifically for enhancing the interactions between the largely foreign student population there with the native students. He cited similar programs at other quadrangles.

Professor Wetherhold remarked that we need not be apologetic if some of the programs do not have direct educational benefits, since they are important in their own right to the life of the university.

Associate Vice-President Black, addressing the issue of non-traditional students, said that, in a sense, we no longer have "traditional" students in any sense; as a result, they often do not have the same levels of commitment to the institution in terms of time, level, and energy. Professor Mook added that the faculty should be doing more, particularly in advising.

Professor Miller agreed with the idea of increasing involvement in the whole university, and argued this to be one reason why we need a faculty club, and why such a club is not a luxury as Albany would have us believe. He then asked what we do for international students during the winter break, after

we shut down. Director Krakowiak answered that two residence halls remain open during this time, and that there will be additional space on the South Campus.

Professor Meacham applauded Professor Frisch's comment about integrating academic courses with Student Life programs, and noted that this could involve the World Civilization sequence as well. He then raised the parking problem issue as it affected student life, and suggested as a solution car-pooling (which, he added, was more prominent at other schools). To encourage this, UB could offer a package of incentives, including special parking, coupons for special events, and so on. Vice-President Palmer said there are plans to do precisely that, and he will keep the FSEC posted on its activities.

Professor Malone related a study which investigated the reasons students leave a university. The study revealed that one of the principal reasons was that students did not know how to cope with failure; many, rather than seek help, opted to leave, but gave different reasons for leaving. He asked whether we inform students at orientation that they can seek help before they fail.

Associate Vice-President Black replied that Orientation begins with a correction of students' expectations; the new students are told that they should not expect to receive, indeed would not receive, nearly as many As they did in high school. This particular aspect of the orientation program, important to acclimatizing new students to the university, is one he would like to expand.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert G. Hoeing

Secretary of the Faculty Senate

THOSE PRESENT:

University Officer: Robert Palmer

Chair: Claude Welch

Secretary: Robert G. Hoeing

Arts & Letters: Michael Frisch, Nathan Grant

Dental Medicine: William Miller

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Robert Wetherhold

Graduate School of Education: James Hoot

Health-Related Professions: Atif Awad

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Law: Errol Meidinger

Management: Ramaswamy Ramesh

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Bernice Noble

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: James Faran

Nursing: Mattie Rhodes

Pharmacy: Nathan

Social Sciences: Peter Hare, Jack Meacham

SUNY Senators: Maureen Jameson, Dennis Malone, Peter Nickerson, Claude Welch

University Libraries: Marilyn Kramer

Guests:

Graduate Student Association: David Toscana-Cantaffa

REPORTER: Sue Wuetcher

Professional Staff Senate: Michael Stokes

Other Guest(s):

Judith Hopkins, Chair of the Senate Bylaws Committee

Dennis Black, Associate Vice-President and Dean of Students

Barbara Ricotta, Office of Student Life

Joseph Krakowiak, Director of Residence Halls

Nelson Townsend, Director of Athletics

Student Life Committee: Joseph Mook, Chair

Excused:

Architecture & Planning: G. Scott Danford

Medicine and Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini

Absent:

Educational Opportunity Center: Areta Buchner

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Herbert Schuel

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Stanley Bruckenstein