

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of October 1, 1997 (approved)

E-MAIL: ZBFACSEN@ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on October 1, 1997 in 567 Capen Hall to consider the following agenda:

- [1. Approval of the minutes of September 10, 1997](#)
- [2. Report of the Chair](#)
- [3. Report of the Provost](#)
- [4. Issues on Admissions and Retention](#)
- [5. Approval of the agenda for the Faculty Senate meeting of October 8, 1997](#)
- [6. Committee Appointments \(Executive Session\)](#)

Item 1: Approval of the Minutes of September 10, 1997

Pending the correction of a misspelled name, the minutes of the September 10, 1997 FSEC meeting were approved.

Item 2: Report of the Chair

The Chair had attended the Fall planning session of the SUNY Senate in Albany as both a governance leader and as a member of the Public Information Committee. He found out that SUNY will be celebrating its fiftieth anniversary in 1998. The question arose as to how the various campuses would participate; several governance leaders expressed the view that this might not be a popular event on some campuses. Among the scheduled university-wide

events are a session for all previous Fulbright Award winners and the recognition of all professors with distinguished rank and winners of the Chancellor's Award.

New questions on the centralized SUNY application form ask whether the applicant has ever been convicted of a felony, or ever been dismissed from an academic institution. Because the issue is directly related to Student Life, the FSEC will need to consider it carefully.

Professor Nickerson circulated a document containing new guidelines for the selection of campus presidents. The document, which gives faculty a greater voice in the process, is likely to pass at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Professor Baier attended the Graduate School Executive Committee (GSEU) meeting in place of the Chair. He reported that the GSEU first discussed the enrollment figures and concerns, then devoted the rest of the meeting to discussion and debate of the outside reader system at the university.

Item 3: Report of the Provost

The Provost circulated a communication from Professor Felder, Chair of the Department of Music, to Dean Grant, which reported that the Department had voted (on September 15) to plan its future without the Music Education program. The reasons for this move included:

- increased budget flexibility;
- a sharper focus for the department;
- an increased potential for higher quality graduate programs;
- a better ability to provide a broad undergraduate program;
- the solution to a long-term divisive matter within the Department.

The Department sought the endorsement of the FSEC and the administration for this plan. Provost Headrick stated his own strong inclination to approve, and asked for counsel from the FSEC before making a final decision. Professor Nickerson noted that the matter

raises the question of how the Faculty Senate is to be involved in this (and similar future matters) from a procedural point of view.

Professor Schroeder expressed concern that the University would no longer serve undergraduates who intended to become music teachers, and wondered whether the administration would be so favorably inclined if some other department --- Mathematics, for example --- would also move to eliminate its program to train undergraduates for teaching careers. President Greiner replied that UB had made a decision some thirty years ago *not* to offer a B.Ed. degree, but rather to train students in a discipline and to offer a certification program at the Master's level (through the Graduate School of Education), consistent with New York State requirements for permanent certification. Music Education remained the only Bachelor-level education degree at this institution. Both President and Provost thought the best solution was to rationalize the programs at UB, and do in Music what is done in all other departments.

Professor Meacham added that it would be difficult for the Faculty Senate to review, at the disciplinary level, every proposal submitted for reorganization; the Senate's responsibility is to ensure that certain procedures are followed and certain principles upheld ---- in particular, faculty consultation and support, along with consideration of any impact on other units at the University. Professor Malone commented that appropriate procedure had been followed in this matter.

Professor Wooldridge countered that the issue *should* be processed through the FSEC, since occasionally the dissolution of a program may have implications and repercussions which extend well beyond the department concerned.

Professor Chisolm asked whether students can in fact learn to teach music education; if not, there is no way for the University to serve students interested in this field. Provost Headrick replied that there has been no decision to phase out the current program, but rather "to plan the future of the Department without the current program of Music Education". Administration has no intention of retrenching the three faculty members in the program; the Department has chosen not to continue the program, but administration would try to

find s means of continuing the program, at least at the graduate level, probably in the Graduate School of Education.

Debate then centered on whether or not the FSEC should refer the matter to the Academic Planning Committee (APC) to ensure that there has been appropriate consultation. Professor Faran thought the APC should also consider the necessary steps to be taken for similar cases in the future. Professor Wooldridge added that it is important for the APC to make it publicly known that the Faculty Senate is not abandoning the Music Education Program. Professor D'Elia asked whether the Senate has the responsibility to review the substance of the recommendation, instead of the process alone. President Greiner also suggested the FSEC submit the recommendation to the APC for its observations and comments.

Professors Malone and Baier found it unnecessary to refer the document to the APC; the Faculty Senate should merely note that due process has been followed, after which point the Senate and the FSEC "are out of the picture".

Professor Chisolm disagreed; since the issue is whether a program in Music Education will be offered anywhere at the University, the appropriate Committee should investigate the implications of terminating a program. Professor Meacham also favored referral to committee, but with the limited charge of checking whether a fair process had been followed; it is not the duty of the APC to determine how a department conducts its programs. Professors Schuel and Schroeder believed the APC should investigate whether the University would indeed continue to offer a meaningful music education program somewhere else within the institution.

President Greiner warned that, if the APC is to consider the recommendation and to advise whether any important points had been neglected, it must do so "with celerity".

The motion to refer the matter to the APC passed, with a vote of 10 to 6.

Item 4: Issues on Admissions and Retention

Vice-Provost Goodman reported that the Office of Undergraduate Education had hired a management-consulting firm, Noel-Levitz. The firm is providing software programs to improve student recruitment, retention, and to help with financial aid leveraging. It is also advising and assisting in market research, conducting regular interviews with focus group in its efforts to determine the University's competitive position.

Professor Malone asked if the consultants offer any advice on improving retention. Vice-Provost Goodman replied that they have provided a diagnostic tool with which to evaluate students' responses on questionnaires and identify problems the students may have. To Professor Schuel's inquiry of whether there are any plans to survey students who have left the University and to determine the reasons, the Vice-Provost answered that his office had conducted extensive surveys in the past, in various formats, without significant results. He expressed the hope that Noel-Levitz would help focus these efforts in order to obtain more meaningful results.

Mr. Connelly suggested eliminating any useless surveys, and instead establishing a student counseling program.

Professor Chisolm asked what kind of competence the consultant firm possessed that is not available here, and how much their advice costs. The Vice-Provost answered that we are buying from them "an extensive modernization of our recruitment efforts", primarily through tools of information technology, including the software mentioned above and an effective student-tracking system. He is, however, less persuaded that the firm's advice will prove as useful. Provost Headrick said he is not as skeptical about the firm's advice, since its track record for other institutions shows expanded application pools, as well as increased quality and numbers of students enrolling. The price is approximately \$350,000.

This University, Professor Meacham argued, needs to know what it can start right now, so that in five years we can lead the other SUNY campuses and perhaps some out-of-state institutions in enrollment. He offered a few concrete suggestions, such as student housing and intern sites located downtown which relate to Urban Studies and Public Education.

Concrete programs for improving students' experiences at UB would prove more effective than analytic software, or the materials we send off to students to "sucker them in".

Professor Wooldridge urged it be made clear for the record that part of what we are buying from the consultant firm is the improvement of retention through the improvement of our students' academic success --- "a pearl beyond price". Professor Schuel said the charge to the Admissions and Retention's Committee should include the investigation of which factors might be changed to make UB more "user-friendly", so that we might effectively mount an aggressive campaign to recruit students particularly from out-of-state.

Professor Harwitz briefly reviewed the Faculty Advisement Initiative, an experiment based on the random assignment of a group of students to assigned faculty for pre-major advisement. Through this initiative, which is set to begin shortly, he hoped to get some idea of how effective pre-major advisement might be in our retention efforts.

President Greiner mentioned that improved retention will take "a lot of effort on a lot of different fronts", and stressed that we must turn the University into more of a community or neighborhood. Efforts in this direction include the revitalization of the University Heights area, the construction of the student housing complex at the entrance to the University, and the planned (and approved) construction of additional housing units on campus. The key is to make both campuses more attractive.

Responding to a question about the faculty role in recruitment, Director Toomey mentioned first their participation in the development of policy in terms of the selection of students. Secondly, we must find a way to facilitate and maximize faculty interaction with the students.

Mr. Connelly recommended peer advising among students, along the lines of a Big Brother/Sister program, since students feel more comfortable talking with other students. Director Toomey agreed and welcomed any help in recruiting student assistance, but added that other intricacies of advisement make it necessary to train these students so that they do not give wrong advice.

Professor Meacham proposed that the Admissions and Retention Committee consider what the admissions and retention issues might be five to ten years from now --- for example, in terms of demographics and current trends in higher education. In other words, what should we think about now, so that we will be in a better position in the future to recruit and keep students. Professor Wooldridge added that we should track what techniques work best.

Item 5: Approval of the agenda for the Faculty Senate meeting of October 8, 1997.

With the inclusion of discussion of an expedited resolution on the SUNY Press, the agenda for the upcoming meeting of the Faculty Senate was approved.

Item 6: Committee Appointments (Executive Session)

After a brief executive session, the meeting was adjourned at 4:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert G. Hoeing,

Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Present: Chair: Peter A. Nickerson

Secretary: Robert G. Hoeing

Architecture & Planning: Sherri Wallace

Arts & Letters: Larry Chisolm, Martha Hyde

Dental Medicine: Robert Baier

Graduate School of Education: Thomas Schroeder

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini, Herbert Schuel, Cedric Smith

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Melvyn Churchill, James Faran

Nursing: Powhatan Wooldridge

Pharmacy: Nathan

Social Sciences: Jack Meacham

SUNY Senators: John Fisher, Dennis Malone

University Libraries: Marilyn Kramer

Guests: Nicolas Goodman, Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education

Regina Toomey, Director of Admissions

Mitchell Harwitz, Chair, Faculty Senate Admissions and Retention Committee

Special Interest Housing: Christopher S. Connelly , Richard Elliott, Stephanie Guerriero

Sue Wuetcher (*The Reporter*)

Excused: Engineering & Applied Sciences: Michael Ryan

Health Related Professions: Judith Tamburlin

Management: Ramaswamy Ramesh

SUNY Senators: Maureen Jameson, Claude Welch

Absent: Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Ronald Batt