

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of April 23, 1997 (approved)

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The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met on April 23, 1997 at 2:00 PM in Capen Hall 567 to discuss the following agenda:

1. [Report of the Chair](#)
2. [Approval of the draft agenda for the Faculty Senate meeting on April 29, 1997](#)
3. [Report on the Graduate School Executive Committee](#)
4. [Faculty Senate Educational Programs and Policies Committee:](#)
[Draft Resolution on Transfer Credit for Undergraduates](#)
5. [Faculty Senate Governance Committee:](#)
[Draft Resolution on Procedures for Department Mergers](#)
6. [University Partnerships with Private Enterprises](#)
7. [Executive Session](#)

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The Chair expressed disappointment that some Faculty Senate committees (in particular, Admissions and Retention, Student Life) remain inactive despite his urging. The Teaching and Learning Committee has finally convened to discuss as their first concern better documentation of teaching, which will have a direct effect on the deliberations of the Committee on Faculty Tenure and Privileges. Most other committees have been meeting regularly.

Progress continues on the electronic version of the *Faculty / Professional Staff Handbook*, due for completion on August 1, 1997. Professor Welch also commended Ms. Wuetscher on her extensive coverage of recent FSEC and Faculty Senate meetings. He then offered some thoughts on the Provost's Hearing Panel:

First and foremost, the Hearing Panel must not be construed as a substitute for Faculty Senate input in plans for the academic future of UB; we have not only the full Senate and FSEC, but also certain committees, such as the Academic Planning Committee, as vehicles for faculty advice. Although the Chair agrees with the Provost that a healthy university requires periodic reconsideration of its organisation, and that current conditions at UB necessitate deep thought and significant --- as well as timely --- action, he voiced serious concerns about the composition of the Hearing Panel, the timetable for a decision on reorganisation, and the seemingly limited role of the full Faculty Senate in these deliberations. He called for a process that is thorough and perceived as fair, one in keeping with "due process" of established, recognized University institutions.

He raised the following specific questions:

- Is it wise to exclude from the Panel's membership certain persons, who, simply by the housing of their academic appointments, are thereby implied not to be open to reasonable discussion and possible persuasion?
- Should the "disinterested" members drawn *only* from disparate parts of the campus?
- What is the trade-off between being narrowly well-informed because of academic home, and being institutionally oriented by coming from elsewhere?
- By exclusion of certain faculty, at least from this particular part of the process, might undesirable "block" thinking be inadvertently encouraged?
- If some are allowed only "input" and no meaningful share of "output", are we needlessly weakening a process that, to be maximally effective, must develop significant constituencies of support, most notably among those affected?

The Provost feels that the Panel's task is not to "create agreement" but to provide "critical evaluation of information and opinion"; the Chair wished it were possible to try and use the process for both, since they are not incompatible.

The Provost has stated that the academic year 1997/98 will be used for planning, following receipt of the report from the Hearing Panel and advice from the Faculty Senate's Academic Planning (APC) and Executive (FSEC) committees. In the Chair's opinion, this falls short of

the Senate's responsibility to *"review, prior to adoption, all formal plans relating to the future of the University {...} [and] all proposals regarding the formation, reorganization, or dissolution of academic units"* (*Charter of the Faculty Senate, Article II, C*). Due to the President's intention to issue a decision by July, the Chair voiced his intent to consult with his successor to convene a special summer meeting of the Faculty Senate in June.

Professor Albini supported the idea, noting that the Provost's planning document is long and "not easily grasped"; the faculty should definitely have more time to digest its contents. Professor Nickerson added that the Senate needs to bring this matter to closure. Professor Malone thought that the Provost was placing "much too much responsibility" on a small and *ad hoc* committee, and encouraged having one additional meeting to allow the Senate to at least state its position.

Item 2: Approval of the draft agenda for the Faculty Senate meeting on April 29, 1997

The agenda for the Faculty Senate meeting of April 29, 1997, was approved.

Item 3: Report on the Graduate School Executive Committee

Professor Nickerson reported that the GSEC had met on April 17. It had discussed the extent of the problem of administrative resignation from courses (resulting in an "R" grade), the issue of enrolling in undergraduate courses for graduate credit, and the Athletics fee.

The major item of discussion was the outside reader for doctoral theses. It has yet to be resolved how to deal with a negative review, since the GSEU did not want the outside reader to have any veto power over a dissertation.

Item 4: Faculty Senate Educational Programs and Policies Committee:

Draft Resolution on Transfer Credit for Undergraduates

As a preface to the draft resolution, Professor Metzger explained that the EPPC had sent a survey to the Undergraduate Directors in all departments and schools; after tabulation of the responses (only 30% of the directors had responded), the EPPC realized that program/degree requirements vary widely among the units, which made it virtually impossible to assemble a uniform policy on transfer credit. The resolution tries to take into account the implications of the survey, while at the same time attempting to fulfill two functions: First, to recognize the previous work of transfer students, and secondly, to ensure "a UB curricular role in the degree programs".

Vice-Provost Goodman, noting the tension between wanting students to transfer to UB on the one hand and the desire to have them meet the objectives of our programs on the other, called for the need for flexibility within all programs; thus the resolution proposes that transfer students be allowed to apply courses taken at another institution towards at least one third of a program's graduation requirements.

Responding to a few questions by Professor Malone, the Vice-Provost said that the proposal deals only with courses which count directly towards a major, and not General Education requirements, and Professor Metzger noted that the notion of "satisfactorily" completing courses is open to the individual programs. Professor Malone suggested that the language of the resolution be crafted to reflect these points more accurately.

After further discussion of certain ambiguities in the proposal, the FSEC remitted the proposal for re-wording prior to its presentation at the upcoming Senate meeting.

Item 5: Faculty Senate Governance Committee:

Draft Resolution on Procedures for Department Mergers

Professor Albini presented two resolutions, the first urging the President not to make a final decision on the reorganization of Arts & Sciences (and possibly Engineering) before October 1, 1997, and the second urging the faculties of various units proposed for merger to prepare careful analyses of the potential consequences of a merger. Both resolutions requested an allowance for sufficient time for the faculty to consider each case and have a fair hearing. Allowing administration to make such important decisions over the summer break, and without sufficient time for the faculty to react, he argued, could establish a dangerous precedent.

Professor Malone commented that the Provost has known all along that the faculty would like more time to review his planning document, has considered this carefully, and decided against it, since he needs to begin to take action soon. Professor Malone doubted that the first resolution is one both the Provost and President would accept, and questioned whether the Senate should adopt a resolution which would immediately face outright rejection. He suggested that the Senate *advise* the Provost in this matter, rather than try to *resolve* something.

Professor Ramesh asked if the Governance Committee planned to conduct an analysis of reconfigurations of academic units, and if not, what is the goal of the Committee in advising the administration? Professor Albini replied that the goal is simply to advise the Provost how to proceed, to assure due process.

Professor Meacham opposed the resolution and spoke against any further delay; the faculty's behavior so far has indicated that it will make no difference whether we have more time, that the faculty will give the document the same amount of attention regardless of when the deadline is set. He argued that we have already had enough opportunity for input, and that one delay will only engender others more harmful.

Professor Farrell warned against allowing a decision of such magnitude to be made during the summer, since this could establish a dangerous precedent. He remarked also that the Hearing Panel has on it not one member from units which will be affected; yet there should be some structure through which the units to be affected could channel their concerns. He suggested smaller groups be assembled for each unit to collect information about the unit's particular concerns, since the larger public forum of the Faculty Senate usually allows only the "squeakiest wheels" to be heard.

Item 6: University Partnerships with Private Enterprises

Senior Vice-President Wagner presented first a context for entrepreneurial activities of UB. Traditionally, efforts have focused on activities related to the day-to-day operations of the University, e.g., purchase orders, payment vouchers, contracts negotiated by the State. As funding has been reduced, and activities which expand and enhance our mission are identified, we need to identify new, cost-efficient, and creative ways to operate. Some of these involve partnerships with the private sector in ways the Vice-President's office is still exploring. Two concrete examples are an existing and binding contract with Coca-Cola for exclusive soda-vending rights on campus and a memorandum of understanding with Xerox. In return for the benefits these companies receive, they help support student activities and internships, among other things. Forming partnerships is still rather new, and the University has yet much to learn in this arena.

He distributed an outline listing the most important aspects of the University's entrepreneurial activities. Among the guidelines used in deciding on partnerships are the following:

- Partnerships must be consistent with University mission as well as compliant with State and Federal laws, or State and University policy.
- They should maximize University resources consistent with the objectives of the University.

- They should foster good relationships with outside constituencies; for example, it would be inappropriate to seek unfair competitive advantage over private business by using subsidized operations.
- The partnerships would minimize exposure to insurance, legal, tax, environmental, health or safety risks.
- They would operate on a self-sustaining basis, including the coverage of variable overhead costs.
- All necessary staffing must be available to provide the service, or be covered by revenues generated by the activity.

Vice-President Wagner then welcomed questions and discussion.

Professor Noble expressed concern that we do not over-commit ourselves to a partnership which may have undesirable consequences; she cited as an example the agreement with Follett's, which has proven unfortunate for many at UB. The Vice-President replied that there is probably no assurance of preventing this, but that his Office will be more careful of the process by which agreements and partnerships are executed.

Both Professors Jameson and Welch noted that one fundamental question, included at the end of the outline and yet to be answered, is how faculty can provide input into the process, or identify potential revenue-generating entrepreneurial activities.

Professor Baier commented that the Provost's plan calls for more centers and institutes, which are intrinsically entrepreneurial activities and require certain business freedoms; from personal experience, he noted the extreme frustration in not having a facilitating process for doing business. He asked whether the Vice-President's office would look into this problem. Vice-President Wagner replied that, first, "we have picked up some operating flexibility from the State of New York"; the present system will change, but in a modest and paced way. His Office is working on finding "mechanisms which are outside the State of New York but within the SUNY corporate umbrellas"; these, he added, have their limitations as well as

complications. he reported also that in July 1997, SUNY will decentralize to each campus the responsibility of any charges for Income Fund Reimbursible activities.

Professors Meacham and Frisch suggested that the Vice-President's Office first examine the complex relationship between public and private employment at the University and establish some policy before launching a partnership. Professor Noble added that we should keep track of which arrangements prove satisfactory and which do not. On a more positive note, Professor Baier pointed out the enormous potential gain in cash flow through partnerships, particularly in areas of research.

Item 7: Executive Session

The FSEC held an executive session to nominate candidates to the President's Review Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert G. Hoeing,

Secretary of the Faculty Senate

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Present:

Chair: Claude E. Welch

Secretary: Robert G. Hoeing

Architecture & Planning: G. Scott Danford

Arts & Letters: Michael Frisch

Dental Medicine: Robert Baier

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Robert Wetherhold

Graduate School of Education: James Hoot

Health-Related Professions: Atif Awad

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Management: Ramaswamy Ramesh

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini, Bernice Noble

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: James Faran

Nursing: Powhattan Wooldridge

Social Sciences: Michael Farrell, Jack Meacham

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

University Libraries: Marilyn Kramer

Guests:

University Officers: Robert Wagner, Kenneth Levy, Nicholas Goodman

Michael Metzger, *Chair, Educational Programs and Policies Committee*

Jennifer Gottdiener, *Director of Transfer and Articulation Services*

Sue Wuetscher, *The Reporter*

Justin Hopson, *Graduate Student Association*

Z. Ibrahim, *Undergraduate Student Association*

Excused:

Arts & Letters: James Pappas

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Stanley Bruckenstein

Absent:

Law: Errol Meidinger

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Herbert Schuel