

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of August 23, 2001 (approved)
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The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 10:00 AM on August 23, 2001 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

1. [Approval of the minutes of May 2, 2001](#)
2. [Report of the Chair](#)
3. [Report of the President/Provost](#)
4. [New business](#)
5. Old business

Item 1: Approval of the minutes of May 2, 2001

The minutes of May 2, 2001 were approved.

Item 2: Report of the Chair

The Chair reported on a variety of matters:

1. he asked FSEC members to read a chapter entitled "The Latent Organizational Functions of the Academic Senate" from the ASHE Reader on Organization and Governance in Higher Education; he found it useful in thinking about the role of a faculty senate and quoted: "Blau's finding of a negative correlation between senate participation and educational centralization...led him to state that "an institutional faculty government is not mere window dressing but an effective mechanism for restricting centralized control over educational programs..."; he observed that in talking to the Deans, many of the Vice Presidents and faculty it is clear that UB is highly centralized educationally; he noted that typically a senate is a reactive body, positioned between the decision making of the administration and the reaction of the faculty to those decisions; he would like this Senate to also be

proactive and help in formulating policies in addition to sitting in judgment on administrative decisions

2. he adverted to Provost Triggles' presentation at the January 25, 2000 meeting of the Faculty Senate on the academic state of the University in which the Provost compared UB's rankings on twelve academic criteria with the other members of the American Association of Universities; he suggested the Senate should look at issues raised by those rankings

3. the first issue of the Reporter will feature a Question and Answer segment with the Chair; he distributed a copy of the questions and his responses and asked for comments

4. he will be writing to faculty tenured within the last five years asking them to consider standing for election as Senators or participating in the work of Faculty Senate committees as part of their service obligation; he feels the strength of the University is in its Associate rank faculty who are focused and not jaded

5. he asked for comments on the text of a message he will send by electronic list to all faculty that describes what the Faculty Senate is and what issues it will be discussing

6. he will request that the Deans provide copies of their annual reports and the annual reports of each of the departments within their Schools; these will allow the FSEC a good view of what is going on academically

- in the last few years the administration has not requested annual reports from the Deans; it may be that Deans have asked for reports from their departments (Professor Nickerson)

7. he asked when the membership of the Faculty Senate would be finalized

- varies from faculty to faculty; some have already elected Senators for this academic year; others have not yet held elections (Professor Nickerson)

- the College of Arts & Sciences must amend its Bylaws before electing its Senators since its Bylaws anticipate 45/50 Senators for the College and provide for departmental and at-large representation; elections may be completed by November/December; last year's active Senators will continue to serve until then; amendments to the College Bylaws will also require positive action by a faculty member wishing to be on the ballot to help with the problem of absentee Senators (Professor Baumer)

- how many Senators is the College entitled to according to the Charter of the Faculty Senate? (Professor Cohen)

- the allocation formula recommended to the Senate Bylaws Committee by the FSEC would give the

College about 25 seats (Professor Hopkins)

- last year the College had about 34 seats (Professor Malone)
 - faculty of the College should quickly elect replacements for the inactive Senators (Professor Cohen)
 - the College's Policy Committee could be asked to appoint interim Senators to replace inactive Senators (Professor Fournier)
 - the Policy Committee will be reluctant to do so unless the Senate dismisses inactive Senators (Professor Baumer)
 - the Senate should revive the practice of requiring Senators to register their alternates (Professor Adams-Volpe)
 - this confusion needs to be resolved quickly so that the Senate represents its constituency and can work to energize the faculty (Professor Cohen)
 - the large number of inactive of Senators from the College of Arts & Sciences and the School of Medicine & Biomedical Sciences jeopardizes the ability of the Faculty Senate to operate; last year, most Senate meeting would have failed a quorum call (Professor Malone)
 - quorum dependent on the actual number of Senators; dismissing inactive Senators would decrease the quorum number (Professor Baumer)
 - may solve the quorum issue, but does not address the need for committed, active Senators ready to move forward; Schools should replace those Senators who are dismissed (Professor Cohen)
- There was a motion (seconded) to dismiss those current Senators whose absences exceeded the limits established in the Standing Orders of the UB Faculty Senate, Section 2 (B) and to request Schools to replace the dismissed Senators. The motion carried unanimously.
- The FSEC went into executive session to discuss committee appointments.

Item 3: Report of the President/Provost

President Greiner welcomed the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to the start of a new academic year.

He reported that the 2001/2002-baseline budget approved by the Legislature contains funding provisions critical to SUNY, including money for contractual salary increases. Other funding requests, e.g., funding for increases in energy costs, are still being discussed in the Legislature.

UB did very well in enrollment, exceeding its target by about 800 students which will generate \$5/\$6 M in extra revenue. The freshman class numbers 3,000. Additional class sections have been added and currently 90% of the freshman class are registered and have class schedules. The quality of the freshman class has increased significantly. Marginal student admissions have been limited and are very individualized.

UB will turn its focus to student retention. Vice Provost Grant and Vice Provost Sullivan are both involved in developing retention strategies.

The Governor and the Legislature remain interested in economic development initiatives based on the research missions of the University Centers. UB has been very successful in competing for the dollars funding these initiatives; for example, UB has been assigned 25% of all NYSTAR funding, UB's Center for Advanced Technology has been re-established, and the Center for Excellence in Bio-informatics will be a major enterprise. However, since the state's baseline budget did not fund these development initiatives, it is not clear when UB will receive the money.

The President has finished reviewing this year's tenure and promotion dossiers. They were outstanding and reflect UB's success in recruiting promising new faculty.

President Greiner expressed concern over the state of the teaching hospitals affiliated with the School of Medicine and Biomedical Science. Like other Buffalo hospitals, they are facing grave financial difficulties. They must, of course, be concerned about the bottom-line but also about quality and the interests of the community and the University in research and teaching programs. At present the hospitals are focusing only on the bottom-line.

A major unresolved issue in the current State budget negotiations is a proposal that the State spend \$.5B on the three State owned hospitals that support the other University Centers to address the same financial difficulties facing Buffalo's hospitals. UB hopes to convince Albany to invest a far smaller sum in UB to ensure that our model of affiliated hospitals continues to work. If UB could bring financial resources to the table, we would be a more effective player in helping the affiliated hospitals deal with the issues facing them.

- on a positive note, the School of Medicine has inaugurated its new curriculum which seems to be working very well (Professor Spurgeon)
- the main problem the School of Medicine is facing is structural, not budgetary; the faculty has not been, but needs to be, involved in solving it; Buffalo has no world class medical programs because we

do not have a strong programmatic focus (Professor Cohen)

Item 4. New Business

The Chair has arranged for Douglas Lederman, managing editor of the Chronicle of Higher Education, to come to UB on November 6 to speak to the faculty at an open meeting of the Faculty Senate. He will offer reflections on issues facing higher education.

The 2001/2002 Annual Meeting of the Voting Faculty is scheduled for September 11. The Chair will outline issues that will be discussed by the Faculty Senate and its Committees during the coming academic year. Included are:

1.

the upcoming visit of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

on October 5 John Ericson of the Commission has asked that selected members of the Faculty Senate meet with him from 1:15 PM to 2:00 PM; the FSEC will represent the Faculty Senate

2. disparate graduate student stipends

- amount that graduate stipends exceed the state mandated floor of \$8,400 is determined by the willingness of a department to convert some graduate student lines to increase the stipend for the remaining lines; the amount of research money available for RA's and the market value of the graduate students (Professor Malone)

- all departments would like the stipend base to be increased; the Provost is working to convince the state to provide more funding for graduate stipends (Professor Baumer)

- if departments convert lines to money, they will not have adequate graduate students to cover undergraduate courses; because departments have lost faculty lines, assigning faculty to these courses is not possible; the number of students have increased while the faculty has decreased and graduate assistants have remained stable (Professor Bono)

- this may not be an issue for the Senate to discuss after all (Professor Cohen)

3. use of undergraduate teaching assistants

- in February 1996 the Faculty Senate passed a resolution approving the use of undergraduate students as teaching assistants under strict guidelines; the most pressing issue in regard to

undergraduate teaching assistants is that the Department of Economics is not observing those guidelines; issue should be discussed with the College of Arts & Sciences (Professor Boot)

- undergraduate teaching assistants seem completely inappropriate in a research university setting (Professor Cohen)

- because of market demand, the Department of Economics cannot get sufficient numbers of competent graduate assistants and so rely on undergraduate assistants to staff recitation classes (Professor Baumer)

- in our unit the undergraduate TA's are more knowledgeable and conscientious than the graduate TA's; in most programs the undergraduates do a good job and themselves receive educational benefit (Professor Fournier)

- would not send my child to a school that uses undergraduates to teach undergraduates (Professor Malave)

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn McMann Kramer

Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Present: Chair: M. Cohen

Secretary: M. Kramer

Parliamentarian: D. Malone

Arts & Sciences: W. Baumer, J. Bono, C. Fournier

Bioinformatics: J. Ellison

Graduate School of Education: L. Malave

Health Related Professions: G. Farkas

Management: J. Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: B. Noble, A. El Solh, S. Spurgeon

SUNY Senators: J. Adams-Volpe, J. Boot, H. Durand, P. Nickerson

University Libraries: J. Hopkins

University Officers:

W. Greiner, President

Guests: W. Coles, Chair, Professional Staff Senate