

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of October 3, 2001 (approved)

E-MAIL: ZBFACSEN@ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on October 3, 2001, in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

1. [Report of the Chair](#)
2. [Report of the President/Provost](#)
3. [Faculty Senate Committee on Public Service – Professor Robert Shibley, Chair](#)
4. [Old/New Business](#)
5. Executive session

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that:

Ø he has scheduled a meeting of the Faculty Senate for October 9; the Voting Faculty annual meeting will be held on October 16; Dr. Lederman, Managing Editor of the Chronicle of Higher Education will speak at the November 6 meeting of the Faculty Senate; the two SUNY trustees from Western New York, Pamela Jacobs and Gordon Gross (not yet confirmed) will speak at the December 11 meeting of the Faculty Senate

Ø Diane Christian, Chair of the Academic Planning Committee, will appoint an ad hoc subcommittee to look issues in the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences

Ø the Provost has suggested several matters on which she would find Faculty Senate input helpful

Item 2: Report of the President/Provost

The Provost outlined issues on which she hopes for collaboration between the administration and the Faculty Senate

Ø UB loses about 16% of the freshman class, a loss rate similar to those of comparable institutions;

academic issues do not seem to be the primary factor in this attrition; Faculty Senate participation in studying freshman attrition and devising strategies for countering it would be helpful

Ø would like to enrich the educational experience for those students who are just below the level of honors program students; Faculty Senate participation in devising strategies for doing so would be helpful

Ø Faculty Senate participation in staffing the many subcommittees needed for the Middle States accreditation process would be helpful

Ø Faculty Senate participation in creating documentation that would help undergraduates choose majors and navigate through the regulations of various Schools and departments would be helpful

Ø continued Faculty Senate participation in developing strategies for assessing learning outcomes would be helpful

- the Faculty Senate Committee on Admissions and Retention has already been charged to look at the freshman attrition issue, and the Student Life Committee should also play an active role; the Educational Programs and Policy Committee has already been charged to look at on-line course evaluation (Professor Cohen)

- the Committee on Admissions and Retention has looked at freshman retention rates and is waiting for data from Vice Provost Sullivan; Committee recommended bringing the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs at North Carolina State University, Dr. James A. Anderson, to speak on strategies for increasing freshman retention but that has not yet happened (Professor Malone)

- last two years' data show the greatest loss of freshmen occurring at the end of the first semester; Vice Provost Sullivan is gathering data for other years to see if that pattern is persistent; this coming year's freshman applications will contain supplementary information forms which will enable faculty to more successfully participate in recruiting higher level students who typically have better retention rates (Professor Fournier)

- first term freshman mid-semester grade reports have been helpful in targeting advisement toward those freshmen who are having academic difficulty; unfortunately faculty participation in this program has been extremely poor; advisors also contact freshman who aren't registering for Spring semester to ask why not (Vice Provost Grant)

- getting freshmen to participate in student organizations would make them feel more involved on campus and help retention rates (Professor Sridhar)

- literature suggests that aggressive advisement and the formation of learning communities are key factors in retaining students (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- having a job on campus also builds a sense of involvement and increases retention; commuter students have a more difficult time developing that sense of belonging to a community (Professor Nickerson)
- block scheduling for freshmen has also been an effective tool in developing a sense of community (Vice Provost Grant)
- shared interest housing in the dorms has also been a good retention tool (Professor Nickerson)
- some departments require faculty advisement for majors, increasing faculty contact with students (Professor Malone)
- students complain that faculty are frequently unavailable for consultation; should look at UB's policy on office hours and how it is enforced (Professor Cohen)
- using faculty to teach UB 101 would give freshmen an early opportunity to work with faculty; should be run on the academic side rather than as a component of Student Life (Professor Fournier)
- Student Life and the academic side work well together on orientation; would be interesting to follow up on Professor Fournier's suggestion (Provost Capaldi)
- better maintenance of classrooms would also improve the quality of student life; loyalty to UB is difficult to build in the midst of physical neglect (Professor Malone)

The Provost reported briefly on the budget. The state budget includes base funding for SUNY. It also included re-appropriations, e.g., \$15 M for STAR research and funding for UB's Center for Advanced Technology. The state budget does not, however, contain provisions for "member items", some of which would have gone to projects at UB, e.g., funding for the New York Center for Engineering, Design and Innovation (NYCEDI) nor funding for the Centers for Excellence.

Tuition revenue is up because of increased enrollments, and that money will support budget increases to departments' base budgets. Indirect cost revenues continue to be generated. Technology transfers, grants, and private giving also produce revenues that supplement state funding. It is the norm for public research universities to produce most of their own revenues, rather than being solely dependent on state funding.

- in the past \$100 M of SUNY's operating budget was supposed to come from revenues generated by the SUNY hospitals; because the hospitals have been losing money, they have not been able to meet

that obligation for the past several years, creating a budget hole for SUNY; this year that \$100 M is part of SUNY's budget independently of the hospitals; additionally, this year SUNY's base budget includes money to fund contractual increases (Professor Nickerson)

Item 3: Faculty Senate Committee on Public Service – Professor Robert Shibley, Chair

The charge to the Committee on Public Service requested that the Committee develop a policy on and definition of public service that would allow such service to be considered in promotion cases. Professor Shibley, Chair of the Committee, noted that he personally had "been around the track" several times on this topic and had resisted accepting the charge. He felt that he and his Committee needed clarification and direction from the Executive Committee on what goals it should pursue, what would be persuasive methods of doing so and what product should be generated.

Professor Shibley defined public service as "a form of scholarship that includes the generation, transmission, application and preservation of knowledge for the direct benefit of other communities in ways consistent with our university and academic unit missions". In earlier attempts to shape a policy on service, several key issues were identified:

- Ø the support of the President and Provost are critical
- Ø financial and promotional rewards are necessary
- Ø methods of assessing the relative importance, impact and scholarly significance of service must be developed
- Ø public service often requires the collaboration of several disciplines, each with its own traditions to be harmonized for successful problem solving of complex, real life issues; a related problem is the preference of academe for single author work
- Ø lack of university structures to do and to assess interdisciplinary work
- Ø administrative refusal to support the engagement of junior faculty in service learning until all the above issues are resolved
- Ø service learning is more easily accommodated in the professional schools than in the disciplines; this split causes public service to be viewed skeptically
- Ø students perceive a lack of congruence between their participation in service learning and the formal curriculum they study; they also point out that too few faculty are engaged in service learning; they

do not find the epistemological warfare between scholarly traditions to be helpful to them
Notwithstanding these problems, much good public service is being performed. The question is whether that service is rigorously enough done to be the basis for advancement in the scholarly ranks.

Professor Shibley asked whether the charge to his committee contemplates faculty doing more public service, better public service or both? He also asked if the problem is structural or one of needing better public relations to make the outside community aware of the range of service UB is already providing.

He understands from the Committee's charge that is to recommend tenure and promotion language and make recommendations on the facilitation of multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary work. Other products may be appropriate if better public relations are needed.

Professor Shibley understands that the development of a firm intellectual foundation for the Committee's work will be required because of the sensitivity of tenure and promotion. Examples of public service from other institutions should be provided. Practical details of implementation must also be thought through.

- should find out how the Presidential Review Board currently treats public service (Professor Cohen)
- recently revised dossier checklist includes a service component (professional, University, and public), but indicates that less weight will be given to service than to research (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- several years ago the Committee sent a document on service to the then Chair of PRB, Professor Nyberg, who incorporated it into a larger package of changes; the Deans rejected the Nyberg document; the Provost then signaled the Senate that further discussion of public service should focus on assessment strategies; the Committee could strengthen that component of its document by stressing academic values and including examples of how other institutions handle public service (Professor Nickerson)
- do not have a copy of the Committee's report, but Vice President Gresham promised to provide a copy (Professor Shibley)
- would be useful for the Committee to look at the reasons the Deans rejected recognizing public service (Professor Sridhar)
- no faculty representative was present at the discussion of the Nyberg document by the Deans and the Provost nor was the Senate informed of the proposal's rejection or the reasons therefore

(Professor Nickerson)

- am appointing Professor Hopkins as the Senate archivist and ask her to coordinate the search for the Committee's report (Professor Cohen)

- the mission statements authored by Provost Headrick and Provost Triggles each contained a discussion of public service; would be useful to look at those documents as well (Professor Malave)

- my understanding is that the Deans don't like public service because they don't know how to evaluate what is significant service; to attain the rank of Distinguished Service Professor, one must document the impact of one's service and the Deans seem comfortable with that; public service that is based on one's discipline is also easier to evaluate, but not all disciplines lend themselves easily to public service applications (Professor Malone)

- School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences has a promotional rank not tied to tenure which requires nationally recognized public service, and is independent of a requirement for a research product, viz. Professor of Clinical Medicine (Professor Cohen)

- other universities have policies that result in high quality public service that generates publications (Professor Malave)

- will ask Dr. Lederman to address service learning and scholarship (Professor Cohen)

- what I am hearing from the Executive Committee is that we do service learning as a vehicle for scholarship, we profess that scholarship in all the ways scholarship should be professed, and we recognize and reward it accordingly; if that is true then public service is not inherently different from other manifestations of scholarship and requires no special status (Professor Shibley)

- requiring public service for promotion and tenure would pose problems for the classic arts and sciences disciplines and I could not support that requirement (Professor Baumer)

- recently participated in a public service project that produced a classic study of the history of cross border relationships on the Niagara Frontier; that study was published and will be subject to the same scrutiny as any other piece of historical scholarship; the formula that has emerged from this discussion would see the public service aspect as merely added value to traditional scholarship, requiring no special consideration; if we frame the problem that way, then the Committee should establish paths, structures and organizations that make available opportunities with the potential for generating traditional scholarship out of public service; that is very different from focusing on how to assess the significance of public service (Professor Shibley)

- more important than persuading the administration of the value of public service is persuading the faculty that there is value for their discipline in public service; for example, in the Biology Department junior faculty who worked and published on Love Canal did not get tenure because of the negative vote of their colleagues (Professor Fourtner)
- need to better publicize the public service UB is currently doing; might be good to focus on a few projects and publicize those aggressively rather than just producing a list of all public service projects (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- Committee should look beyond reward issues to whether faculty have an obligation to perform public service (Professor Cohen)
- some traditional humanities disciplines produce work that can benefit the community, e.g., work on medical ethics, applying narrative theory to understanding the experiences of groups within a community, etc., but should make public service an option, not a requirement (Professor Bono)
- hope the Committee would produce a statement of philosophy of where the University is and where it should be going (Professor Cohen)
- ask that the Committee begin by summarizing the definitions of public service contained in the Committee's earlier document and in Professor Nyberg's proposal and then present those to the Executive Committee (Professor Malone)
- important for the Committee to recognize that within a discipline, some applications could be used locally, but other applications will have broader impact (Professor Sridhar)

Item 4: Old/New Business

Under old business, the Chair noted that he had asked the Committee on Research and Creative Activity to continue discussing and developing recommendations from its Spring survey of the faculty. He also noted that he received a letter from Professor El Solh, urging that the voice of the assistant professors in the School of Medicine also be heard about issues affecting the School; he has passed the letter on to Professor Christian, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee.

As new business the Chair informed the Executive Committee of a request made by the School of Nursing's two Faculty Senators that they be allowed to split the duties of being the School's Executive Committee's representative because of the heavy burden of attending weekly meetings. He asked for

the advice of the Executive Committee.

- unless they talk to each other there will be a loss of continuity (Professor Malone)
- the burden is just as heavy for all Executive Committee representative and we are all busy (Professor Fournier)
- terrible precedent which I cannot support (Professor Baumer)
- too bad they asked rather than just doing it (Professor Boot)
- without accommodation the School will lack any representation; might consider changing the Standing Orders (Professor Nickerson)
- the Standing Orders specifically ban the use of alternates in the Executive Committee; nothing to stop one Senator serving one semester and resigning with the second Senator agreeing to serve for the second semester (Professor Baumer)
- our rules should accommodate today's reality; should allow alternates (Professor Malave)
- Standing Orders allow representatives unlimited excused absences; one approach would be to have a very liberal policy as to what constitutes an excused absence (Professor Kramer)
- better to have varying representatives present than no representative present (Professor Malave)
- is there any rule that limits the number of times a unit selects a representative? (Professor Sridhar)
- no (Professor Kramer)

The Chair will write the Senators, informing them of the option of serving one semester and then resigning.

Professor Kramer asked whether to begin enforcing the Standing Orders' attendance policies beginning with the meeting of October 17. The Chair agreed she should do so.

There are two new issues involving the College of Arts & Sciences: the use of undergraduate teaching assistants by the Department of Economics and a proposal to lower from two to one the number of composition courses required for graduation. The matter of graduation requirements has been sent to the Educational Programs and Policy Committee. The Chair asked what should be done with the undergraduate teaching assistant question?

- the report of the ad hoc committee (consisting of Professors Malone, Farkas and Bono) appointed by the Executive Committee last Spring has already been received; there are rules governing the use of undergraduate teaching assistants, and those rules should be enforced; invite Dean Stinger to speak to us on the matter (Professor Boot)

- as Chair I wrote to Dean Stinger about the report and he responded; that correspondence should be in the Faculty Senate files (Professor Nickerson)
- since the issue is being raised as a broad question of enforcing existing rules, and not as a question involving only one faculty member, the Educational Programs and Policies Committee should look at the issue, rather than bringing it directly to the Executive Committee (Professor Fournier)
- issue is too urgent to be referred to another committee (Professor Boot)
- Dean Stinger should explain his position to the Executive Committee before sending the issue to the EPPC (Professor Bono)
- re-circulate the report of the Ad Hoc Committee and Dean Stinger's response to Peter's letter to the Executive Committee (Professor Baumer)
- also circulate the policy on undergraduate teaching assistants (Professor Adams-Volpe)

The Chair will arrange for Dean Stinger to speak to the Executive Committee. After Dean Stinger has done so the Executive Committee can decide on appropriate further action.

After a brief executive session, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn McMann Kramer
Secretary of Faculty Senate

Present: Chair: M. Cohen

Secretary: M. Kramer

Parliamentarian: D. Malone

Architecture: R. Shibley

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

Engineering & Applied Sciences: R. Sridhar

Graduate School of Education: L. Malave

Health Related Professions: G. Farkas

School of Informatics: J. Ellison

Management: J. Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: C. Granger, B. Noble, A. El Solh

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

University Libraries: J. Hopkins

University Officers:

E. Capaldi, Provost

Guests: K. Grant, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

K. Levy, Senior Vice Provost

L. Stewart, Director, Office of Equity, Diversity and Affirmative Action

S. Wuetcher, Reporter

S. Alaimo, The Spectrum

W. Coles, Chair, Professional Staff Senate

R. Patel, Graduate Student Association

Excused: School of Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: S. Spurgeon

Absent: Dental Medicine: J. Zambon

Law: I. Marcus

Pharmacy: A. Luzier