

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of April 14, 1999 (Approved)

E-MAIL: ZBFACSEN@ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on April 14, 1999 in Capen 567 to consider

the following agenda:

1. [Approval of the Minutes of March 31, 1999](#)
2. [Report of the Chair](#)
3. [Report of the President/Provost](#)
4. [Report of the Academic Planning Committee](#)
5. [Report of the Educational Programs and Policy Committee](#)
6. [Report of the Personal Safety Committee](#)
7. [Old/new business](#)

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that:

- he attended the April meeting of the Graduate School Executive Committee; by October, 1999, each graduate program must offer the option of on-line application; can't yet pay application fee by electronic credit card transaction, but that capability is coming; UB is considering discounting the fee for on-line applications; fee waivers were also discussed; central planning and decision making for graduate matters can be more informed once application data are in electronic format; there was discussion of incorporating summer school into regular work load; Provost Trigg brought up the issue of the Faculty Senate's interest in overseeing graduate affairs; surprisingly no objections were raised

- Professor Kramer attended the April 13, 1999 UB Council meeting; the UB Council approved changes in the Student Rules and Regulations some of which were driven by Faculty Senate resolutions; additional North Campus housing is being planned; the first stage build-out of South Lake Village should be completed by August 2000; campus beautification and signage projects were described
- FSEC meets in executive session on April 21 with Provost Triggles; the Chair will ask the Provost to discuss his memo on retirement arrangements
- (the Chair's report was interrupted by Items 2 and 3; he concluded with the following) he has requests for faculty members to serve on several committees: this summer Dr. Petro will chair a committee to examine the electronic faculty-staff handbook for accuracy; FSA needs two additional faculty members to serve on the assembly
- the following faculty were awarded the Milton Pleseur Award for Excellence in Teaching: Professor Victor Doyno, Professor Jack Meacham, Professor Czeslaw Prokopczyk, and Professor Claude Welch; FSEC applauded Professors Welch and Meacham who were present and their fellow recipients in absentia
- the following Committees have been active: the Governance Committee met and discussed the status of Millard Fillmore College; the Student Life Committee has divided into two subcommittees; the first discussed issues related to Greek life and the second discussed academic integrity

Item 2: Report of the President

President Greiner announced that this year two UB faculty members will receive Norton Medals. One is Professor Ruckenstein; the other has not yet been notified.

The President then described plans for building new housing units that will curve around Lake LaSalle. When completed the project will add 1700 beds in three story town house format for upper division undergraduates and graduate students. The first component of the

lake side project will be South Lake Village; projected completion is August 2000. If marketing is successful, the build-out will continue. One complication is that by creating Lake LaSalle we turned the area into a flood plain. The next project will be located on Lee Road heading toward the Ellicott Complex.

The strategy is to have student housing circling the academic spine and located near major entrances to the campus to give more sense of life and vitality. Housing will be organized as 500/700 bed villages, each with its own community center for social space. South Campus dorms will be renovated, giving us a chance to rethink student life on that campus. He hopes to have 10,000 beds on the two campuses by 2003/2004. That will change the character of the campus and perhaps even of the student body.

No state money will be used to fund these projects. Our success in renting out the first projects before the buildings were finished makes us interesting to lenders.

Plans for new signage on the campuses are also underway. We will spend about \$2.5 M which, given the number of entrances and buildings to be identified, is not unreasonable. The entry portals will be built of brick for the North Campus and stone for the South Campus; they will be dramatic. On the campus there will be directional signage.

- is there a legal problem with building more commercial space? (Professor Harwitz)
- Parcel B legislation allows us to commercially develop the east side of Lee Road; such development will probably not be modeled on the Commons (President Greiner)
- hope that whoever does the plantings for these projects will select trees like conifers that can do well in the shallow top soil of the North Campus (Professor Welch)
- what are the rents in these units? (Professor Churchill)
- very competitive with the dormitories; a bed costs about \$400 for a 10 month lease, while the dormitory is \$3,800; would like to offer housing at a range of prices; will have more flexibility in dorm pricing when the bonds are retired in 3/4 years (President Greiner)
- are there any plans for a Presidential residence on campus?(Professor Schack)

- good idea; if it happens, however, it will probably be under my successor (President Greiner)
- will UB Foundation use union labor in these projects? (Professor Holstun)
- must pay prevailing wage whether use union labor or not and comply with all building regulations for state buildings; UB Foundation is being used as an agent because it facilitates private funding (President Greiner)
- has there been student input in design? is there courtesy housing for guests? (Professor)
- students were included in the design groups; there is courtesy housing on the South Campus, using two floors of Clemens Hall (President Greiner)
- are these units making it difficult to fill the dorms?(Professor Sridhar)
- lower division undergraduates are the market for dormitories, so hasn't been a problem (President Greiner)
- are there plans for using the new housing for summer conferences, etc.? (Professor Sridhar)
- as more space becomes available, we will see summer conference use increasing; the units will be air conditioned (President Greiner)

The President concluded by noting that the SUNY Senate/UUP no confidence resolution is being passed on other SUNY campuses. The Central Office is taking the resolution very seriously and will be responding aggressively. One possible outcome is that the President of the SUNY Senate may be given a seat on the Board of Trustees, perhaps non-voting.

Item 3: Report of the Academic Planning Committee

Professor Welch, Chair of the Academic Planning Committee, reported on the Committee's activities for the year. Some issues that were considered are no longer active issues for the Committee: Music Education, the merger of SILS with the Department of Communication, the formation of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, and the integration of the Statistics Department into the Department of Social and Preventative Medicine. Some of these re-organizations were handled well, others not so well.

The Committee continues to be involved with campus mission review and with Health affairs. As to mission review, the Committee had input into the two drafts of a mission review document prepared by Provost Headrick and Provost Triggles' document. It reviewed discussions of FSEC and Faculty Senate on campus mission review. The Committee hopes that faculty from the Senate and the Committee will participate in the SUNY staff's visitation of campus. The Committee believes it is time for the campus to move to the next stages of the campus mission review and include the College and Schools.

As to Health affairs, the Committee will shortly be meeting with Vice President Bernardino. There are a number of issues of interest to the Committee: practice plans, general policy regarding the re-organization of departments, the impact of cuts in capitation, grants, changes in Medicaid and Medicare funding formulas, mergers of hospitals, etc. Health affairs may occupy much of next year, so it would be useful to add committee members with Health Sciences grounds.

The President encouraged the Committee to spend time on Health affairs. The Faculty Senate has not been much involved with the Health Sciences, and it is increasingly important that the Senate build expertise in this area. Faculty discussion of mission review issues and documents was very helpful and resulted in a stronger package going to Albany. He and the Provost will share with the Committee any communications received on mission review.

- at last check the version of the Triggles document on the web was not the completed one (Professor Shack)
- bet a steak dinner that the next Middle States accreditation team will complain we don't do enough planning (Professor Malone)

Item 4: Approval of the Minutes of March 31, 1999

The Minutes of March 31, 1999 were approved.

Item 5: Report of the EPPC Committee

Professor Meacham presented an update on the activities of the EPPC. The Committee is considering three issues.

The first, which was discussed at the April 6 Faculty Senate meeting, is that of limiting independent studies. In response to comments at the meeting the Committee deleted references to a 120 credit hour requirement for graduation and followed up on questions about the adequacy of the sampling of transcripts from which the Committee worked. The Committee decided that it would be difficult to construct a search argument that would identify transcripts demonstrating inappropriate use of independent study. Additionally the Committee felt that whether or not there is wide-spread abuse of independent study it is worthwhile to put regulations in place that would prevent future abuse. The suggested regulations do not prevent a student from taking more than 18 credits of independent study; they just require the student to explain how it fits into his other program.

- asked for more data believing that since the Committee was supplied with some transcripts a full search of transcripts might already have been done; don't disagree about the reasonableness of establishing a limit even without statistical data (Professor Schack)
- don't understand why you are proposing one limit for number of independent studies which can be taken and a lower limit on the number which can be taken for letter grades (Professor Sridhar)
- amendment to make the two limits identical could be easily incorporated into the resolution at the next Faculty Senate meeting; if set only one limit it should be the 18 credit limit (Professor Meacham)
- at what levels do we believe approvals beyond the student and faculty engaged in the independent study should come in? (Professor Baumer)
- suggest looking at the use of independent study in the last semester; it's often just a desperate attempt to graduate rather than a genuine educational project (Professor Boot)
- no problem with different limit on taking independent studies and taking them for letter grades (Professor Schack)

- did the Committee discuss titling independent studies; particularly important when an independent study is taken in lieu of and covering the same material of a regular course which can not be offered; a transcript heavy with untitled independent studies will not impress many employers (Professor Malone)
- resolution is aimed at courses designated as tutorials, many of which do have titles, but to title every project would be a large work load (Professor Meacham)

The second issue before the Committee is a request from Professor Malone to develop a policy about students with obligations that conflict with academic obligations. For example, an athlete may be obligated to play a unscheduled game at a time during which she must also take an exam. The Committee is having trouble with this issue. What is called for is balance and reasonableness which is difficult to legislate. For two meetings the Committee has tried to develop language of a policy and will give it one more try.

- seems to be a problem of large class size and/or rigid faculty (Professor Harwitz)
- not always; for example, difficult to accommodate an absence from a class or an exam requiring lab set up; when learning occurs through working through exercises exploring one's own attitudes and feeling, it is impossible to recreate the class (Professor Meacham)
- raise a flag in the syllabus warning that classes and exams can't be rescheduled; then it's the student's choice to take the class (Professor Harwitz)
- student may not know about a conflict in advance; for example, a student's work place schedule might be changed or there could be a family emergency (Professor Meacham)
- it is irresponsible to ignore a student's need for accommodation; own policy is to give a reasonable number of make up exams without looking too deeply at the reason why the student missed the exam (Professor Baumer)
- most faculty do have procedures for dealing with absences; the difficulty is finding language that would work for all faculty and all classes (Professor Meacham)
- difficult to ascertain whether a student's excuse is legitimate or not; Committee might look at the issue of verifying an excuse (Professor Sridhar)

- Faculty Senate shouldn't micro-manage how faculty teach by trying to develop a single rule for all situations; consider setting up an appeal process that a student could invoke (Professor Schack)
- looked at policy of other schools and Penn State's seems quite reasonable; agree don't want a rigid rule but rather guidelines (Professor Malone)
- if the Committee can find appropriate language at its next meeting, we'll let it go
- appeal process would require an administrator's telling a faculty member to change a grade which is not going to be acceptable to faculty; urge the Committee to pursue this issue keeping in mind the example of the University policy on religious observances (Professor Baumer)
- what is an acceptable excuse for a faculty member missing a class? (Dr. Coles)
- encourage faculty to include their make up policy in their syllabi (Professor Boot)

Professor Meacham summed up the third issue in one word, assessment. The Committee will be focused on program assessment and in particular assessment of undergraduate general education at UB. At its last meeting the Committee threw out ideas which Professor Meacham will be drafting into a document. This will be a project for next academic year.

Item 6: Report of the Personal Safety Committee

The Chair introduced John Grela, Director of Campus Public Safety. The Chair asked that the Director talk about the Personal Safety Committee, campus crime statistics and the 1998 report on the use of firearms by campus safety officers.

An annual report to the President on the drawing of firearms on campus has been made since 1986. In 1998 there were two reported instances of firearms being drawn. This is the greatest number of incidents in a year since reporting began. On the South Campus a campus officer and a Transit Authority officer drew their guns when a juvenile reached for what looked like a rifle; an internal review found the drawing of the gun perfectly justified. On the North Campus an officer shot and killed an injured deer to avoid danger to traffic. That was also a justified drawing of a firearm, and the first instance of a gun being fired.

Officers receive firearms training and then must qualify with firearms twice a year. They also must pass a written exam annually on the