

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of September 10, 1997 (approved)

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

1. [Report of the Chair](#)
2. [Approval of the Minutes of August 27, 1997](#)
3. [Report of the President](#)
4. [Student Life](#)
5. [Update on *The Reporter*](#)
6. [Committee Appointments \(Executive Session\)](#)

Item 1: Report of the Chair

Professor Nickerson wished first to clarify a "somewhat misleading" headline in *The Reporter*, "FSEC Staying Out of Music-Ed Discussion". The Chair had sought the advice of the FSEC about the extent of Senate involvement in governance matters within the School of Music. Following discussion of past standards of involvement, it was generally agreed that the Senate should become involved only when invited by a faculty or department.

He reported that the deans' lunch with Provost Headrick was held Monday, September 8, and that in the future, the deans will hold every other meeting in executive session, from which the Chair of the Faculty Senate is excluded. Professor Nickerson said it was his understanding that the deans need some time to talk candidly with the Provost; nevertheless, it will reduce the opportunity for the Senate to have access to this important forum.

Mr. Elias Eldayrie, Director of Financial Aid, gave a presentation at the meeting. There was considerable discussion about when financial aid award notices are sent to students, particularly about the delay in notification for graduate and professional students. It was

agreed that we need to do better (spend more money) on updating our capabilities for providing service, including better access for students through an automated telephone system. At present, our on-line capabilities do not enable students to enter data to determine what financial aid packages are available to them.

Deans Grant and Goldberg discussed diversity and enhancing career development in their faculties. The Chair circulated documents on these two topics among the FSEC members, and intended to forward them to the Committees on Affirmative Action and Promotions and Tenure. In addition, Vice-Provost Goodman discussed Operation Outreach and presented preliminary figures for the Fall 1997 semester.

At the UB Council meeting on Tuesday, September 9, Senior Vice-President Wagner discussed "Streamlining UB", by which business operations would be consolidated. The Budget Priorities Committee is examining the implications of this initiative.

Professor Nickerson represented the faculty at a reception in honor of Professor Mendel Sachs on his retirement, and attended the symposium in his honor.

The Chair tried to implement a number of ways of publicizing the annual Meeting of the Voting Faculty on September 23, 2:00 PM, at the Center for Tomorrow); inclusion of notices with faculty paychecks is possible, but only with notification of one year in advance.

Lettered signs announcing the meeting will be placed at the entrances to the University.

Professional/Staff Senate Chair Michael Stokes asked Professor Nickerson to inquire how many of the faculty would be interested in a training workshop on the details of the Budget, its preparation, and related matters; a sheet was circulated for all interested parties to sign.

The Chair announced the rescheduled first meeting of the Faculty Senate on October 8 in the Talbert Senate Chamber. An orientation on faculty governance will take place in 567 Capen the day before the Senate meeting.

Professor Doyno protested against the deans' planned alternate executive sessions, stating that executive sessions should be reserved for discussion of sensitive issues, and should not be introduced as "an exclusionary gesture". Professor Noble, wondering whether there is any legitimacy in this action, asked how many others were excluded; the Chair replied that

he was not sure. Professor Doyno added that there are other means of private conversation and thus found the exclusion of the Senate Chair unnecessary and suspect.

2. Approval of the Minutes of August 27, 1997

Pending the inclusion of a direct quote by Professor Gates and the correction of a wrong word, the Minutes of the August 27, 1997 meeting of the FSEC were approved.

3. Report of the President

President Greiner reported that, as most were now aware, UB came through the budget cycle without any major damage. He predicted for the election year that the governor would probably "not take another run at SUNY", and that we could expect a "breather" for the next two-year cycle. Although our bottom line shows a slight increase in actual dollars, in terms of "real" dollars we are essentially at a standstill, and we must figure out how to continue within the framework of this standstill budget. The "Streamlining UB" initiative, presented by Senior Vice-President Wagner, will attempt to get the business operations of UB to function as a single corporation, instead of several. Concatenate with this initiative would be the establishment of some sort of Management Information System, the lack of which does not enable us to answer very basic questions, such as how many people are employed at the University.

The President reported also that Provost Headrick is preparing the second version of the planning document, based on the extensive discussions he conducted throughout the Spring 1997 semester.

Finally, he addressed the issue of looking beyond mere enrollment numbers to see whether we are meeting our students' intellectual needs and helping them with their social development. He said that this, especially from the faculty perspective, must be the real test of our own performance. But also, he continued, the whole of the organization should be thinking more in a "service orientation". While the Provost, with the help of the faculty, is working to improve the academic aspect of the University, we must also be concerned with student quality of life on campus. Among other things, we must find a more rational arrangement for the two campuses, including the erection of the Mathematics building on

the North Campus. (He added that this would be relatively inexpensive at about \$6 million, or 2% of the State capital budget). This would, in turn, open further possibilities for the re-development of the South Campus, projected to amount to \$100 million of work over the next decade. However, the addition of the Mathematics building would also force us to find additional space for teaching on the North Campus. Also in the plans are a Student Services Building, which would most probably be located in the open space directly across from Capen Hall.

Professor Meacham suggested that the corridor between the "Spine" and the Ellicott Complex be developed; although it might be difficult, the addition of two or three buildings in this space would make the Spine seem closer and help the students in Ellicott feel less isolated. President Greiner agreed that the campus needs a sense of community; the only architectural coherence so far, he said, is its "rectilinear vocabulary". Administration is planning to develop the space leading toward Ellicott with medium high-rise buildings, with student apartments in the upper floors and Commons-type commercial space below. Addressing the approaching turnover in faculty and the increasing diversity of students, Professor Jameson asked whether there were any plans for a day-care center on the North Campus, and whether there was a commitment to this separate from the success or failure of the housing project? President Greiner replied that there is indeed a commitment, but that the space problem is "not insignificant"; tying it in with student housing would probably be the most feasible solution.

Professor Doyno observed that our expenditures for instructional undergraduate FTE were considerably lower than those at comparable universities, and asked whether it would be reasonable to predict that more money will be spent on this two or three years from now. The President suspected that normal inflation would do that, but that it largely depends on how the State allows us to finance ourselves. Professor Welch asked whether we would see any redistribution over the next few years, such as in the balance of graduate, undergraduate, and professional instruction, or in instructional spending relative to other spending at the University. President Greiner did not believe SUNY contemplated any radical redistribution. What UB is looking for is more flexibility in financing, most particularly in financing post-baccalaureate professional education. The Provost's planning document also

foresees "fewer and better", more consolidated Ph.D. programs; this would most likely involve a smaller (20%) investment in doctoral candidates, accompanied by an expansion at the Master's level. One source of funding we might use in this respect would come from increased out-of-state enrollment --- as is the case at comparable institutions.

Item 4: Student Life

Interim Vice-President for Student Affairs Dennis Black announced that his office formed a working group composed of all the health and wellness components --- Student Health Service, the Wellness Center, the Counseling Center, Disability Services, etc. --- within University Services. The various programs, funded through a mandatory Student Health fee, have in the past operated separately. In addition, Student Services has begun a self-evaluation of its programs to determine professional standards and the roles of the various units within the University mission. At the conclusion of its self-study, each program will give a presentation, to which the FSEC will be invited for comments and suggestions.

Student Services projects for the Fall semester include:

- promoting the theme "Putting Students First", beginning with an educational training program for Student Services staff;
- a series of open roundtable discussions on issues of University and student interests, the first of which will take place on September 23 (12 PM, 210 Student Union) on the issue of "North Campus Child Care";
- a series of coffee hours to which Student Services staff would invite individual members of the faculty and administration to talk about their work and about themselves;
- the "Pathfinder" program (named after the Mars mission, successfully executed in a "better, faster, cheaper" manner than previous missions), the goal of which is to encourage individuals to be pathfinders in recognizing individuals who help us serve our student population.

- Mr. Cliff Wilson reported progress on the development of the apartment complex on Sweet Home road (115 two-bedroom townhouse apartments), designed principally for graduate and upper-division undergraduate students; ten to thirty units would be ready by January 1998, and the rest would be available by June 1, 1998. Services available will include the University shuttle bus, UB Public Safety, blue-light telephones, and cable and computer connections to the campus. Built as a demonstration project with funds borrowed by the UB Foundation, it will cost the University nothing; rents are expected to pay the loan over the years. As mentioned earlier by President Greiner, two sites on campus (next to the bookstore, the other near Governor's residence halls) have been approved for the construction of apartment houses for undergraduates. The ultimate purpose of these projects is to enhance a sense of University community.
- Efforts continue in the conversion of the 6-bedroom units in the Ellicott Complex into two doubles with a living-room area; 4-bedroom units are also being converted, either into two doubles or into a single plus a double, depending on square footage. The conversion from electricity to gas in hot water production for one half of Ellicott resulted in significant utility savings, which in turn kept room rates from increasing; the conversion of the other half of the complex is scheduled for next summer. He reported also that all rooms in all the residence halls have been wired for direct access to the University computing system, with one connection per student, and that new food plans are now available, including kosher and vegetarian meal plans, as well as a breakfast-equivalency program.

Plans for the rehabilitation of Harriman Hall include office for the vice-president and dean of the Medical School on the upper two floors. The second floor will include a food court, an expansion of the sit-down dining room / catering facility, and a leadership development center. Ms. Barbara Ricotta added that the ground floor will be devoted to student union facilities. In response to students' requests, a commuter lounge is being developed from the former music listening room. The lounge will contain individual study carrels, hopefully with computer hook-ups in the future, a

kitchen area, and space for coordinating student services. Opening is projected for November 1997.

Professor Welch suggested that the overarching issue of the discussion is the nature, extent, and possible expansion of faculty interest in student life. He reminded the FSEC that one of former President Sample's goals for UB was to enhance the quality of student life. Most of the initiatives, however, seemed to come from the administration, and not from the faculty. The weakness of faculty commitment, he believed, prevented any significant improvement from the norm, despite our rhetorical commitment. One way to improve this could be for us to examine the role of academic student clubs, which play an important role in the students' professional development, and could improve faculty/student contacts; however, the clubs have been "chronically underfunded" and thus difficult to maintain.

Vice-President Black remarked that there were no "quick fixes" to the problem; the best remedy is simply to care, to become involved. He added that the academic honor societies could also provide opportunities for improving faculty/student contacts. Mr. Wilson mentioned also the "special interest areas" in the residence halls, such as an American Studies program and an engineering group, and student/faculty dinners. Richard Elliott, representative from Special Interest Housing, commented that instilling a true sense of community is absolutely necessary for improvement in student life; if possible, we should try to recruit students at an earlier age, fostering this sense of community before they attend UB.

Professor Wooldridge said that the organizational means by which faculty become more involved is not very clear; although faculty members may be willing, they often do not understand how to start. We also need some mechanism for communicating problems effectively "to someone who could do something about them", instead of haphazardly addressing the entire University community.

The changing student demographics, Professor Michael observed, force us to do a better job at attracting minority students; he asked whether Student Affairs envisioned different programs designed for these students.

Vice-President Black replied that they would certainly examine their plans in this light as part of their self-evaluation study, since there are already certain groups within the student population who are not being adequately served.

Professor James thought that Orientation had improved through the addition of a longer advisement session, and wondered whether there were any plans, first, to add a "bit more of an academic component" to freshman orientation --- perhaps by offering open lectures --- thereby introducing them early on to our star lecturers, and secondly, to include faculty in the less academically oriented aspects of Orientation.

- Ms. Ricotta welcomed the ideas, saying that they are always looking for ways to improve Orientation, and mentioned that she would like to have Opening Weekend expanded, since it has proven so successful.
 - Professor Doyno asked if there had been any effort to survey the commuters, in order to better ascertain their needs; he also suggested that, at Orientation, the students be given information alerting them early to things they will need to know about recommendations, interviews, and other preparations for professional life.

Professor Baier asked the representatives from Disability Services if they would consider the students they serve as a special resource; he considered them an opportunity for our continued recruitment and growth, particularly in helping develop certain programs on the South Campus (such as the Rehabilitation Medicine program and the Center for Assisted Technology). Directors Ryan and Borst agreed that students with disabilities --Sue Wuetscher, Associate Director of News Services, now reports on the Faculty Senate and FSEC meetings.

This summer, Art Page and staff redesigned the newspaper, including more color, the new UB logo, additional photos, a summary of additional stories on the longer, more complete electronic version, a more vertical layout of the articles (with fewer "jumps"), new type fonts, and calendar changes. Content changes include weekly interview with members of the University administration, faculty, and staff; a "Transitions" section notifying of any changes in the personnel of the University; minor changes in the way research and sports news is presented.

There would be a few more issues of the paper every year, in particular, an extra issue in both December and January. Mr. Page said the new design is based on the idea that people want to "get a good share of news in a small space", one which presents smaller items on the front page and which presents news coverage without a great deal of detail --- more complete versions being posted in the electronic version. - at least 2-3 % of the student body --- were both educational and financial assets to the University, and that they offered endless research possibilities.

Professor Malone observed that one of our biggest problems is the attrition rate, and wondered how we could counter that. Vice-President Black replied that we all need to consider this problem to find a solution.

5. Update on *The Reporter*

Dr. Petro announced that the new *Faculty/Staff Handbook* is now available on UBWings, but will not be distributed in print. She then notified the FSEC of the changes in *The Reporter*: First, it had been transferred about one year ago from Publications to News Services and put under Art Page's direction. Three years ago, Chris Vidal took over as Editor of the paper.

Professor Wooldridge asked whether the website would be updated during the newspaper's downtimes; Mr. Page replied that the paper is only part of the website, and that the site is updated every day. In addition, there is now an electronic submission form which facilitates updates to the calendar.

Professor Meacham wondered why *The Reporter* comes out on Thursday, saying the timing is not advantageous for discussion of issues at the Faculty Senate and FSEC meetings. Mr. Page replied that he was not sure, but added that it could not come out on Monday or Tuesday, because they needed a few days of lead time to assemble the issue; Friday is not good either, since fewer faculty and students come to campus on that day.

Professor Malone inquired about the editorial policy regarding contributions from internal and external sources. Dr. Petro distributed copies of the mission and policy statement of *The Reporter*, adding that preference is given to contributions from members within the UB community.

Professor Meacham asked whether they had considered ways to increase student interest in the paper. Mr. Page answered that the paper is always available to students, and Dr. Petro mentioned that the addition of a sports section would probably help.

Professor Welch commended the staff of *The Reporter* on its coverage of Faculty Senate proceedings the previous year, but questioned the efficacy of its distribution practices around campus. Dr. Petro replied that they rely to some extent on the help of the custodial staff, and would look into ways to improve distribution.

Professor Baier suggested extending beyond the University to include reportings from the greater Buffalo community, in the spirit of sentiments expressed earlier in the meeting. Mr. Page responded that there is a funding problem, but it would certainly be possible were the funding to come from outside.

6. Committee Appointments (Executive Session)

The FSEC discussed Faculty Senate committee appointments in executive session, after which the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 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: Victor Doyno

Dental Medicine: Robert Baier

Graduate School of Education: Thomas Schroeder

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Management: Ramaswamy Ramesh

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Bernice Noble

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: James Faran

Nursing: Powhattan Wooldridge

Social Sciences: Jack Meacham

SUNY Senators: Maureen Jameson, Dennis Malone, Clause E. Welch

University Libraries: Marilyn Kramer

Guests: Student Affairs:

Dennis Black

Randy Borst (Director of Disability Services)

Barbara Ricotta

Dan Ryan (Director of Career Planning and Placement)

Clifford Wilson

Student Association:

Brendan Keene

Nicole Lee

Special Interest Housing:

Christopher S. Connelly

Norma Cruz

Richard Elliott

Jeannette Ludwig (Modern Languages)

University Services:

Carole Smith Petro

Art Page

Sue Wuetscher (*The Reporter*)

Excused: SUNY Senators: John Fisher

Absent: Arts & Letters: Martha Hyde

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Michael Ryan

Health-Related Professions: Judith Tamburlin

Law: Isabel Marcus

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Melvyn Churchill

Pharmacy: Nathan

Social Sciences: Michael Farrell