

## **FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of February 28, 1996 (approved)**

**revised 10/3/95)**

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The meeting of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee was called to order at 2:00 p.m. in the Jeannette Martin Room on February 28, 1996 to consider the following agenda:

1. [Report of the Chair](#)
2. [Report of the President's Task Force on Women at UB](#)
3. [Report of the President/Provost](#)
4. [Report on Policy Issues in Research](#)
5. [Old Business](#)
6. [New Business](#)

### **ITEM 1: Report of the Chair**

Professor Welch reported that:

- "Managing UB's Academic Future", published in the Reporter on 2/22/96, noted that UB was comparable to mid-sized public research universities. He stressed the importance of the document written by Provost Headrick and President Greiner. He commented that Provost Headrick had given instructions to the Deans to compile program inventories, profiles and future directions. Academic strategies were being developed and there had been concern expressed about faculty effort.
- President Greiner had forwarded the Faculty Senate Resolution on Appointment and Reappointment of Chairs to Provost Headrick with his blessings calling the resolution "entirely sensible".
- Professor Churchill's father had died in England.

- The Budget Priorities Committee had met on Monday and the Chair and the Senior Vice President had been asked to speak to the Faculty Senate at the 3/27/96 meeting.
- Professor Sellers reported that Professors Welch and Malone had been elected as SUNY Senators with Professor Johnson as first alternate and Professor Schack as second alternate.
- The Academic Good Standing Policy had been implemented and questions had been raised regarding the policy. The number of students not in good academic standing had been greater than expected and issues and unanticipated consequences had been raised. Vice Provost Goodman stated that the Academic Good Standing Policy was a classic academic issue and the faculty should determine the standard. He noted that if dissatisfaction existed, action would have to be taken quickly for the change to be implemented during the next academic year and for inclusion of the policy in the University Rules and the Undergraduate Catalogue. Professor Malone expressed concern about the serious effects of the policy. He noted that comments had included that the "institution has lost its heart" and that the policy was too harsh. He recommended two areas for modification: giving a warning to students with a grade point average (gpa) in the prior semester of less than 2.0 with an overall gpa of more than 2.0 and a warning to students who failed to complete 75% of courses in the immediate prior semester but who have completed 75% of courses overall. Professor Malone stated that these changes would take care of "unusual circumstances" such as an accident or death in a family during one particular semester with a negative effect on the gpa. He noted that this change would not be relaxing the standards.

Vice Provost Goodman stressed that the Academic Good Standing Policy was not a set of new rules. He noted that the change was that the rules were being enforced stringently. He stated that he was in sympathy with the idea that a student with overall acceptable performance should be treated more leniently. He emphasized the main effect of probation as being ineligible for participation in extracurricular activities. He remarked that students with below par grades should not participate in extracurricular activities and should concentrate on academic studies. He recognized that decisions regarding extracurricular activities were important and noted that approximately 28.4% of undergraduate students were currently on probation. He stated that the statistical significance must be evaluated in terms of the average grades of

students which were: 2.89 for females, 2.73 for males, 2.66 for female freshmen and 2.50 for male freshmen. He commented that 2.0 was a serious standard and that it was not "bad" to have a number of students on probation.

Professor Malone asked why a warning could not accomplish the same purpose. Vice Provost Goodman replied that the intention was to change the culture to taking academic standing seriously. He quoted the Spectrum as stating that the previous policy had been "toothless".

Professor Jameson restated that Professor Malone had implied use of a warning only in cases where the student had successfully completed more than 75% of courses and maintained a 2.0 gpa in previous semesters. She suggested a warning for the first infraction and probation for the second infraction. She wondered how many students were coasting by with only slightly over a 2.0 gpa. Vice Provost Goodman stated that the requirement was a cumulative 2.0 gpa in all work including transfer grades and grades at UB. Professor Jameson hypothesized regarding warnings for three semesters and being unable to graduate. She stated that graduation requirements and the policy should be coordinated.

Professor Adams stated that she had major concerns with the policy related to the University being computer driven and not reviewing individual cases. She noted conditions such as not being accepted into a major with resultant probation as being problems with the University and not the students. She mentioned grades not being handed into Admissions and Records in a timely manner affecting successful completion of 75% of courses. She noted that there were approximately 2099 students with less than a 2.0 gpa. She voiced concern regarding the treatment of athletes not in academic good standing.

Vice Provost Goodman disagreed that not being accepted into a major was the responsibility of the institution. He stated that students were automatically admitted into majors. Professor Sellers related a scenario of a student with a 3.7 gpa unable to secure an appointment with an advisor within the Psychology Department in a timely manner being placed on probation due to the requirement of being in a major with 60 or more credit hours. Vice Provost Goodman replied that only approximately 280 students had been placed on probation due to being without a major.

Vice Provost Goodman stated that students not accepted into majors were not a "statistically significant problem". He questioned the impersonality of the institution, stating that while probation was a serious blow to students, it was not permanently on the transcript and did not interfere with courses or affect financial aid. He stated that a letter had been sent to students including the conditions of probation.

Professor Schuel acknowledged that it was important for the institution to demand acceptable performance and enforce reasonable standards. He voiced concern with the implementation of the policy. He noted that the system was computer driven and that students could receive a letter of probation with "A" averages. He suggested sending a letter explaining that the student might be placed on probation for the following reasons and to make contact immediately with the appropriate authority to rectify the situation.

Professor Wetherhold asked if transfer grades appeared on transcripts as "T" grades. Vice Provost Goodman replied that a 2.0 was required both at UB and with transfer grades. Professor Wetherhold stated that a computer generated letter was impersonal but efficient. Vice Provost Goodman stated that he would share a copy of the letter with the FSEC and that the letter advised the student to consult an advisor to resolve the problem. Professor Wetherhold remarked that a sign of a "caring" University was to identify individual students and deal with unique situations. He noted that at a large institution, punishments could impact unintentionally on a minority of students undeserving of the punishment.

Professor Henderson stated that being placed on probation was not a trivial punishment for a student. He remarked that he would give the computer program being used to generate the letters a low rating and would recommend a more creative program that could generate two or three letters dependent on the situation. He agreed that Professor Malone's suggestions were in the right direction. He noted that it was important to keep in touch with students without creating hard feelings.

Professor Jameson, speaking as the Director of Undergraduate Studies within her department, noted that she had received copies of reports listing students on probation. She stated that she had written to each of the students individually requesting scheduling of an appointment within two weeks. She observed "no trauma and no tragedy" due to receipt of the letter from the University and stated that

she believed that the University was "on the right track". She noted that the institution was slow to process transcripts from overseas which might be problematic.

Professor Malone stated that the Director of Athletics did not make unilateral decisions about eligibility.

Professor Adams inquired into the status of student athletes regarding the policy on academic good standing. Professor Malone stated that the policy was not applied to athletes this semester, and that the policy was under review with the Athletic Dept. and the Administration. If the policy is applied to athletes next semester, there could be problems.

Professor Welch asked Mr. Boyce to address the issue and he stated that government leaders were removed from office if placed on academic probation.

Professor Eberlein inquired into the result of probation. Vice Provost Goodman responded that typically at the end of three semesters on probation, the student transcript was carefully reviewed and the quality point deficit was calculated to determine the likelihood of returning to academic good standing. He stated that few students were being dismissed and quoted an approximate number of 200 to 300 of the 6,000 total undergraduates as being in the process of being dismissed from the University.

Professor Welch stated that the FSEC should move expeditiously to propose revisions to the policy.

Professor Boot commented that the rules had been applied only one time and were worthy of fine tuning. He stated that he felt a sense of overreaction and noted that there was no reason for FSEC members to "panic" over the situation.

Professor Malone disagreed with Professor Boot and stated that a review of the policy was owed to the students and the institution.

Professor Wooldridge stated that removal of students from student governance offices was a severe penalty and that he had a major concern with a small subset of students being treated with "manifest gross injustice". He recommended revision of the policy to avoid unfair treatment to any students.

Vice Provost Goodman disagreed with Professor Wooldridge and stated that it would only be an

injustice if a sanction was imposed. He suggested contacting Associate Vice President Black regarding his implementation policy connected to academic good standing and participation in student governance.

Professor Welch noted that the sense of the house was in favor of revision of the academic good standing policy.

Professor Schroeder, as Chair of the Faculty Senate Grading Committee, stated that he was generally in favor of Professor Malone's suggestions and the distinction between the results of the previous semester and overall results.

Professor Jameson stated that she was concerned with abuse of the system and noted a hypothetical case of dropping all courses by the date specified for receiving an "R" grade.

Professor Farrell stated that a policy change was indicated based on the fact that approximately 28% of the undergraduate student body was on probation. He agreed that a change in the culture was necessary but suggested allowing the students a chance to adapt to the changes through a warning. He stated that many students did not deserve to receive the computer generated notice and he mentioned that there could be "drastic psychological consequences" from the process. He stated that without a means of appeal, the University seemed callous.

Professor Nickerson suggested that the Grading Committee should resolve the issue. Professor Schroeder agreed to his suggestion.

Professor Malone, responding to Professor Jameson, noted that there were external requirements imposed by the NCAA which would prohibit the concerns expressed about resigning courses.

Professor Adams asked that the Grading Committee also consider several types of letters. She recommended that special attention be paid to circumstances which were not under the control of students and which resulted in negative consequences.

Professor Schuel suggested that the first letter sent to students could explain that a potential, specific condition which could result in probation existed and that the student could appeal by a particular date

if extenuating circumstances were present. He noted that this solution could resolve the issue of probation without the accompanying psychological problem.

Professor Welch commented on separating academic concerns from psychological considerations.

Vice Provost Goodman stated that the appropriate place for appeal was at the point of consequences. He cited an example of poor grades from a specific situation with the result of not being allowed to participate in extracurricular activities at this point. He voiced his preference for appeals in the sanction process rather than in the determination of academic good standing.

Professor Wooldridge stressed that a major distinction should exist for probation due to poor grades and probation due to other reasons included in the policy. He recommended increased involvement of academic advisors in the process.

Professor Welch requested a formal motion to the Grading Committee to review the academic good standing policy and report to the FSEC as soon as possible. Professor Nickerson moved to refer the matter to the Grading Committee and the motion was seconded by Professor Adams and passed unanimously.

## **ITEM 2: Report of the President's Task Force on Women at UB**

Professor Noble, Co-Chair of the President's Task Force on Women at UB, explained that she was delighted to discuss the activities of the Task Force but was unable to disclose the recommendations or specific data until the information was reviewed by President Greiner.

Referring to the handouts, Professor Noble stated that the Task Force had been formed two years ago with recommendations for its composition and charges to be representative of all aspects of University life. She noted that she had met with President Greiner and engaged in candid dialogue regarding the continued prosperity of women at the University in both the academic and financial sense. She noted that women were an increasingly important force in academic life in terms of numbers of female students, faculty, administration and staff. She remarked on cultural diversity and issues of gender.

She cited the NCAA review of gender issues at UB and the importance of Title IX compliance. She mentioned sexual harassment in the workplace and changes in expectations. Professor Noble commented on identification of the status of cultural change at UB in relationship to women and the goal of the Task Force to make recommendations for the focus for the future. Six charges were divided among three subcommittees and regular monthly meetings were held with insight and information gathered about the experiences of women at UB. With experts, the Task Force reviewed University policies and practices on a variety of matters which included hiring, compensation, promotion, harassment, safety and gender equity in athletics.

Professor Noble explained that a decision was reached not to conduct a survey due to limited resources.

Subcommittee A had looked at the University in comparison to other institutions. Professor Noble referred to a 1970 article published in The Reporter entitled "The Half-Eaten Apple" which had been located in the University Archives. She stated that 17 outside reports had been collected from institutions believed to be similar to UB. She noted that the reports were on reserve in Lockwood Library due to the cooperation of Professor Adams.

Professor Noble issued a caveat regarding the decisions involved in data review and noted that documentation on tenure track positions was the easiest to obtain.

Subcommittee B, dealing with "climate" issues, drew a consensus picture from review of all external reports. She noted that the committee members had not wanted to be perceived as compiling a list of complaints and preferred to view the task in a positive light, emphasizing actions to improve the climate for women at UB.

Professor Noble announced that the workshop scheduled for next week would highlight the leaders in the University community and promote visibility of issues and acknowledgement of the accomplishments of women. She noted that the workshop offered a specific opportunity to gain workplace skills to advance in the system. Professor Noble reported that the majority of registrants were non-faculty members. She announced that an official "bring your daughter to work" day was being organized. She noted that this was an important opportunity for publicity for the University and

community outreach. She encouraged participation and noted that Vice Provost Fischer and the unions were supportive of the workshop.

Subcommittee C was noted to be studying harassment issues and the status of the University on workplace issues.

Professor Jameson, returning to the issue of "bring your daughter to work", stated that issues of family were major concerns and she inquired into the status of day care on campus which had been proposed by Provost Bloch. Professor Noble replied that the committee was checking into progress in the area of day care.

Professor Noble stressed that creating a family friendly environment was a major concern and noted that family issues were part of the changing culture with both parents working for economic reasons.

Commenting that the University was unrepresentative of the workforce at large, Professor Noble stated that the University needed to respond to changing economic realities for faculty, staff, administration and students.

Professor Welch proposed that Professor Noble return for a future discussion of the Task Force recommendations. He apologized for closing the discussion due to time constraints of the President and Provost.

### **ITEM 3: Report of the President/Provost**

President Greiner reported that he had invited Governor Pataki to campus as a commencement speaker to enhance his perspective of SUNY and public higher education as positive items. He stated that he was doubtful that Governor Pataki would accept the invitation.

Professor Welch inquired into the status of the state budget. President Greiner responded that there might not be a budget until August or November. He noted that the federal budget issues posed questions at the state level. In relationship to the flexibility items, he stated that there was not much affirmative response. He noted that the legislature was not in favor of change. He stated that SUNY

might get nothing but a \$100 million reduction which would be "bracing". He mentioned that the Board of Trustees was moving towards an advocacy position regarding SUNY and maintaining a high quality of public education. President Greiner stressed that the emphasis at the University would be on maintaining the quality of the institution.

Professor Malone questioned the factors involved in evaluation of quality. He noted that the plan must be specific from an academic standpoint. He mentioned undergraduate and graduate education, M.A.s and Ph.D.s and papers published as factors. President Greiner agreed that the listed factors were important in the evaluation of quality.

Provost Headrick remarked that judgments regarding quality were made routinely in matters of promotion, admissions, grading of papers and editorial reviews of journals. He stated that it was most difficult to evaluate ourselves, our colleagues and our friends. He stated that the evaluation was a "wrenching process". He noted that it was difficult to gather accurate, complete information. Professor Malone questioned if evaluations were being done on a program or faculty level and Provost Headrick replied that the evaluations were being completed at the program level.

Professor Welch remarked that the Deans had received requests to provide program inventories. He noted concern for faculty activities within programs. He stated that Faculty Senate members would be asked questions by other faculty members about the program inventories. Professor Malone stated that the inventories had created questions among faculty and Chairs.

President Greiner agreed that the Chairs should be included in the process and he commented that external evaluations were more comfortable.

Professor Malone acknowledged that Provost Headrick needed the data and Professor Welch inquired into the specifics of the information. President Greiner reiterated that judgments would be necessary and Provost Headrick stated that a memo to the Deans had requested specific information and/or clarification of information. Records of faculty activities had been requested within a one month time period with an additional month to clarify additional information. A compendium was described which outlined faculty, programs, aspirations and visions for the future. The information, according to

Provost Headrick, would be used to filter out tentative directions and recommendations. He stated that the information would be shared broadly during the fall of 1996.

President Greiner stated that "engagement" was desired and the information gathering was not intended to be punitive. He commented that even as the University changed, the goal was to be as supportive as possible. He acknowledged that the "past will not continue to work".

Professor Welch stated that the "Managing UB's Academic Future" document by Provost Headrick was thought provoking. He mentioned portions of the document including faculty roles in rethinking small departments and redirection of faculty efforts. He urged the Senate to engage in discussion with colleagues regarding the crucial issues raised by Provost Headrick. President Greiner agreed that responses and dialogue were welcome.

Provost Headrick stated that his intended tenor was to accept the realities of the context and situation. He acknowledged that the University was a fine institution with capable individuals. He requested faculty to put their minds together to figure out how to improve the institution without additional resources. He stated that he wanted direction in thinking of the future. He remarked that 1996-1997 was a tough year and that a longer term perspective was needed which might include difficult choices. He expressed the need to turn public opinion around regarding public higher education.

Professor Boot questioned documentation of productivity and warned against use of the information in a punitive fashion.

Professor Horvath commented that integration of upper divisions with M.A. programs was an admirable idea. He commended the concept of keeping the best students.

Ms Cornwall asked if there was student input in the plans for reorganization. Provost Headrick replied that the process would include students. Ms Cornwall stated that the course evaluation format did not optimally gather student input.

Professor Welch stated that a 5% to 6% reduction was a significant loss and that the situation was complicated.

Professor Jameson stressed the importance of quality and the fact that small programs were not synonymous with low quality. She noted that being "innovative" was not appropriate to all programs. Provost Headrick mentioned that innovation was appropriate to many programs.

President Greiner stated that the entire institution was "smallish" and that resources were "spread too thin". He stated that peer group institutions would be other smallish AAU institutions. Compared to peer institutions, UB had a greater number of rated Ph.D. programs except for Pittsburgh, according to President Greiner. He stated his belief that there were no programs that could not be innovative. Professor Jameson commented that there appeared to be pressure to abandon procedures that were effective.

Professor Johnstone stated that innovative and creative ways to deliver outcomes were necessary in the current economic climate. He stressed that a willingness was needed on the part of the faculty for critical self-evaluation and development of a plan for the future.

Provost Headrick stated his intention to share the information broadly of what the University is and what the University could be in the future. He commented that the process was difficult and he was determined that the process be open.

Professor Malone stated that a motto to be adopted should be "the past is no longer". He issued a caveat that it was possible to be creative, innovative and bad. President Greiner noted that the traditional method could also be bad. Professor Malone stressed that it was important to prove that changes would actually save money and preserve academic quality. Professor Danford remarked that programs might not be sustainable in the future and that the private sector was ahead of the University in this respect. He stated that innovation might be mandatory because programs could be non-sustainable in the future.

President Greiner stated that efficiency was the issue and mentioned getting the most from a fixed set of resources. He commented regarding empowering Chairs and Deans to work to encourage all members of the community to make significant contributions to the institution. He stressed that it was important for Chairs to get the faculty to take the mission of the unit seriously. He encouraged colleagues to work with each other and take responsibility for each other.

Professor Welch stated that the FSEC would work with the Provost to encourage an open process and would gather feed from colleagues and provide information.

#### **ITEM 4: Report on Policy Issues in Research**

Professor Welch welcomed Vice President Landi and Professor Yeagle. He stated the interest of the FSEC in the results of the policies on creative activity and research and the status of entrepreneurship at the University.

Vice President Landi stated that research was healthy and that he was encouraging greater creativity and innovation. He noted the emphasis on external support and the importance of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF). He reported that 75% of external funding was from the Public Health Service (PHS) or NSF auspices. He noted that there had been no new awards since October 1, 1996 due to the federal government shutdowns. He announced that awards from the NSF had decreased 30% in number and size and that Public Health awards had decreased 20% in size while remaining at a steady number. He commented that there were logs in workloads related to review of grant proposals. He stated that the Public Health Service had received 5% higher appropriations and that grants would be amended. He stated that the NSF was operating under a continuing resolution.

Vice President Landi stated that the campus policy on research integrity was respectable and that one formal case had been resolved, demonstrating that the policy worked. He noted that federal regulations had been revised regarding the definition of misconduct. He mentioned the terms fabrication, falsification and plagiarism.

Regarding the investigator disclosure policy, Vice President Landi noted that the policy was required by the NSF and PHS. He reported that the policy at UB had been revised during the summer, 1995 and had been in place since October 1, 1995. He noted that the policy was more complex than the scientific integrity policy and required more paperwork. He stated that implementation had proceeded smoothly from an interim policy to a final form. He noted that additional guidance was required in dealing with private enterprise. He reported that sponsorship had increased by a factor of 20 in nine

years. According to Vice President Landi, there was growing involvement of faculty with private business, including degrees of ownership, consultantships and positions on boards of directors. He mentioned problems related to conflict of interest within the last ten years. Vice President Landi cautioned about negative public perception of the University in relationship to private business. He elaborated upon asking the faculty to be more entrepreneurial and increasing the risk of conflict of interest. He suggested guidelines for Deans and faculty to avoid particular pitfalls.

Professor Welch commented on the murkiness of the regulations on faculty involvement with private business .

Professor Yeagle reiterated the importance of the policies on responsible conduct in research and investigator disclosure. He noted that Provost Bloch had raised issues regarding entrepreneurship for consideration by the Faculty Senate. He agreed that the issues were difficult and complex. He mentioned the approach of first gathering information based on faculty experiences, highlighting problems and needs. He mentioned long range goals involving public forums emphasizing the faculty, administrative and federal perspectives.

Vice President Landi stated that he was not anxious to be the morals officer of the University.

Professor Acara stated that a broker was needed to assist faculty in receiving external support in Pharmaceuticals and other departments. Vice President Landi replied that downsizing was occurring in the private sector in Pharmaceuticals and that without adequate in-house support, private companies were reaching out to the University. An ombudsman could identify contacts and interaction could occur between sponsored programs and centers at the University. Professor Acara suggested assigning staff to departments.

Professor Schuel requested information on access to alternate sources of funding due to shrinking federal support. He mentioned seed money for pilot studies. Vice President Landi responded that initial research could lead to a competitive proposal. Professor Schuel inquired into institutional assistance to keep a project alive. Vice President Landi replied that bridge funding, through contributions of the Deans, was available for a few months until a new grant could be secured. Professor Schuel asked the

method of access to this funding by the faculty. Vice President Landi stated that the Deans provided funds centrally to his office.

Professor Farrell suggested a liaison to develop faculty proposals which might include workshops in increasing efficacy of dealing with NIH review panels. Vice President Landi mentioned the Council on Research and Sponsored Programs and a recommendation to arrange for new faculty members to work with senior faculty members to promote an internal review service.

Professor Welch requested a motion that the Faculty Senate Committee on Research and Creative Activity develop a resolution related to faculty involvement in external funding. The motion was made by Professor Albini, seconded by Professor Acara and passed unanimously.

#### **ITEM 5: Old Business**

**There was no old business for consideration at the meeting.**

#### **ITEM 6: New Business**

There was no new business for consideration at the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Ann Sellers

Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Those present:

University Officers: W. Greiner, T. Headrick  
Senate Officers: C. Welch, C. Sellers  
Architecture & Planning: G. S. Danford

Arts & Letters: J. Fradin, M. Hyde  
Dental Medicine: G. Ferry  
Engineering & Applied Sciences: R. Wetherhold  
Graduate School of Education: R. Stevenson  
Health Related Professions: P. Horvath  
Law: E. Meidinger  
Management: R. Ramesh  
Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: M. Acara, B. Albini, H. Schuel  
Natural Sciences & Mathematics: P. Eberlein  
Nursing: P. Wooldridge  
Social Sciences: M. Farrell, D. Henderson  
SUNY Senators: J. Boot, M. Jameson, D. Malone, P. Nickerson  
University Libraries: J. Adams

Guests:

Academic Affairs Director: L. Cornwall

Those excused:

Educational Opportunity Center: S. Bennett  
Law: E. Meidinger  
Natural Sciences & Mathematics: M. Churchill  
Pharmacy: N.