

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of October 27, 2004

(unapproved)

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) met at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 27, 2004, in 567 Capen Hall to consider the following **agenda**:

1. Report of the Chair
2. Report of the President/Provost
3. Charging the Admissions & Retention Committee – J. Adams-Volpe
4. Report of the SUNY Faculty Senate meeting
5. Old/New business
6. Executive session (if needed)
7. Adjournment

Item 1: Report of the Chair

Chair Nickerson reported:

- The FSEC, acting in executive session, discussed the name change for the Center for the Americas. After considerable discussion and with further information received from the College of Arts & Sciences, the FSEC recommends acceptance of the name change from the Center of the Americas to the Department of American Studies.
- The Interim Vice President for Research has sent a letter to the campus community in which he discusses centers and institutes. He was unable to attend today's meeting, so we'll schedule him for the next FSEC meeting on November 10th.
- A Faculty Development Task Force draft report was distributed to SUNY senators at the recent University Faculty Senate meeting. The executive summary will be distributed with the next FSEC agenda, and the full report will be e-mailed to FSEC members as an attachment when it's received. Comments are due by the end of November, so prompt responses will be appreciated.

- The Computer Services Committee recently reviewed and recommended approval of a Statement of Support for Web Browsers. We'll invite their chair, Professor John Ringland, to report on it at an upcoming FSEC meeting.

Item 2: Report of the President/Provost

None

Item 3: Charging the Admissions & Retention Committee – J. Adams-Volpe

Professor Adams-Volpe was absent due to illness, but she'll receive notes on our discussion.

Interim Vice Provost Kerry Grant reported that UB's admissions applications and yield are up, so all of our regular admits now come from the top two levels, G-1 and G-2. Incoming students have higher SAT scores, higher high school averages, and higher transfer GPAs.

Regardless, the university wants to increase the number of applications from area minority students through our individualized admissions programs, because increasing institutional access is part of UB's social mission. We are committed to diversifying our student body, as well as our faculty and professional staff.

In addition to attracting minority students, UB is committed to providing bridge support to help their chances of being successful in university life. We want them to be fully competitive here and to graduate with an education and experiences that will support their career choices. Having a diverse student body benefits our campus, our community, and our society.

An admission issue related to successful recruiting is that UB sometimes attracts more students who are interested in selected programs than those programs can accommodate. Pharmacy is

currently very popular, and the demand for some other majors also exceeds the number of available “seats.” Some situations are the result of cyclical market trends that stimulate interest.

UB is still able to offer enough sections of popular courses so students can move through the curriculum of their major without difficulty if they register in a timely manner and can be flexible with their class schedules. Students trying to accommodate job demands or arrange convenient class times, however, might encounter some problems.

It’s as important to retain good students as it is to recruit new ones. Mid-semester grading has been very helpful with retention rates, because it indicates when there are signs of academic trouble in time for advisors and students to consider options other than failing. Improving study habits can help, but sometimes the best options will be to withdraw from the course before the deadline. Not all faculty are complying with mid-semester grading, but many are, and students are benefiting from it. Colleagues should be encouraged to participate.

UB’s retention rate is similar to other commuter-based schools’, but it’s much lower than the average rates of residential schools.

Some students repeat courses to meet the standard for advancing to other required courses. There are some who repeat courses just to raise their GPA (which will be based on the grade from the second attempt). The option is not abused often, but it does happen occasionally.

The Office of Undergraduate Education would appreciate having a FS committee consider the advantages and disadvantages of extending UB’s drop period to 11 weeks for all students. Many schools allow students to drop courses until the end of a term. We don’t want to go that far, but an 11-week drop period might help to improve our retention rate.

Chair Nickerson suggested that individualized admission procedures should be reviewed by the committee.

Item 4: Report of the SUNY Faculty Senate meeting

Professor Kramer highlighted the main topics covered at the recent Plenary Meeting at SUNY Maritime College. The SUNY Faculty Senate wants to rework the old Budget Allocation Formula (BAP) that was used through the 2003/04 budget year. That formula distributed money to the campuses based on enrollment, discipline mix, sponsored program expenditures, and other factors. When state tax dollar support was reduced by nearly \$200 million, however, the formula had a disparate impact SUNY-wide. The colleges and technology institutions would have had budget increases, while the doctoral campuses would have had budget losses. To avoid this outcome, SUNY redistributed the budget more evenly to all the campuses.

The proposed new BAP retains the policy that tuition revenue generated by a campus stays at that campus. The changes include two new features: 1.) there will be Funded Functional Categories (called "baskets") for major areas of campus activity, e.g. undergraduate/graduate/professional instruction and research; 2.) funding will be based on attainment of realistic performance goals negotiated between SUNY and local campuses. Changes will begin in the 2005/06 academic year and be phased in over the following few years.

Mission Review 2 (MR2) was the other major topic. Like the first Mission Review, MR2 repeats the process of asking each campus to prepare a goals document that will frame campus/SUNY discussions of assessment, financial and facilities issues, etc. SUNY will then use each campus's MR2 document (that are due December 15th) to draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Father John Cremins has replaced Candace de Russy as chair of the Board of Trustees Academic Standards Committee. He has extensive college teaching experience and is interested in more interaction between the Committee and SUNY faculty.

Item 5: Old/New business

Professor Baumer said there was extensive disturbed discussion in the College of Arts & Sciences following President Simpson's comments at the October 13th FSEC meeting about curbing the use of qualified ranks. Many faculty members have expressed concern that UB's academic standards will be set impossibly high for assistant professors in the humanities to achieve. FSEC should be aware that this topic might come for further consideration.

Professor Baumer asked if there is any set of actions that FS can initiate to address the aggravation of spam, i.e. unwanted e-mails. Chair Nickerson indicated that the Computer Services Committee is already working on that.

Item 6: Executive session (if needed)

None

Item 7: Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Will Hepfer
Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Attendance (P = present; E = excused; A = absent)

Chair: P. Nickerson (P)

Secretary: W. Hepfer (P)
Architecture & Planning: GS. Danford (P)
Arts & Sciences: S. Bruckenstein (P), M. Churchill (P), J. Faran (P),
S. Schack (P), K. Takeuchi (E)
Dental Medicine: M. Donley (P)
Education: X. Liu (A)
Engineering & Applied Sciences: J. Jensen (P), R. Mayne (A)
Informatics: J. Ellison (P)
Institutional/General: O. Mixon (A)
Law: vacant
Management: C. Pegels (P)
Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: J. Evans (A), L. Harris (A), J.
Hassett (P), D. Holmes (A)
Nursing: P. Wooldridge (P)
Pharmacy: G. Brazeau (A)
Public Health & Health Professions: C. Crespo (E)
Social Work: Barbara Rittner (A)
SUNY Senators: W. Baumer (P), W. Coles (P), M. Kramer (P), P.
Nickerson (P)
University Libraries: C. Tysick (P)

Guests: P. Balzano (SA), M. Cochrane (Reporter), K. Grant
(Undergrad. Ed.), N. Kaars (Undergrad. Ed.), L. Labinski (Prof. Staff
Senate), L. Muster (SA)