

## **FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of June 11, 1997 (approved)**

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The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on June 11, 1997 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

- [1. Report of the Chair](#)
- [2. Classroom Planning Approach](#)
- [3. Interim Report of the Hearing Panel for the Reorganization of Arts & Sciences](#)
- [4. Interim Report of the Academic Planning Committee](#)
- [5. Interim Report of the Budget Priorities Committee](#)
- [6. Resolution of the Faculty Senate Governance Committee](#)
- [7. Approval of the Draft Agenda for the Faculty Senate Meeting of June 17, 1997](#)

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

The Chair first thanked the FSEC for its gift of appreciation he received at the May 14 meeting. He then circulated a memo from Vincent Aceto, Chair of the SUNY Senate, concerning limited faculty involvement in "system-wide searches at high levels", i.e., searches for persons for appointment to positions over \$50,000.

Among changes in personnel, he announced the departures of Dean Winter (School of Management, no interim named yet) and Vice-President Palmer (Student Affairs, Dennis Black as Interim VP); he introduced Dr. John Fisher, newly-elected SUNY Senator for Health Sciences. Elections to the UB Faculty Senate are in progress in EOC, Health-Related Professions, Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, Social Sciences, and Social work, and have been completed in all other units.

As a final note, the Chair asked the FSEC members to remind their fellow senators of the upcoming special Senate meeting on June 17 in 107 Talbert Hall.

## **Item 2: Classroom Planning Approach**

Associate Provost Sullivan presented a draft of a "Classroom Planning Approach", which developed out of discussions with the Classroom Quality Assessment Group. Included under the term "classroom" are seminar rooms, class laboratories, and all central and distributed rooms where teaching and learning occur; excluded were all faculty offices.

The Classroom Planning Approach outlined four main objectives:

To establish standards for classroom quality and attributes. Complaints about classroom quality abound, and evaluations must be carried out, but as yet UB has no specific standards by which to measure classroom quality. To set such standards constitutes a logical first step.

To establish standards for classroom utilization. A considerable amount of classroom space and time is wasted, largely because faculty did/do not wish to teach at certain times. Building additional classroom space to accommodate the heavy demand on popular time-slots is not feasible.

To allocate significant funds, on an annual basis, for classroom investment, since we currently do not have any real money for upgrading classrooms. Thus a budget must be designed for this purpose.

To establish a process for decisions on upgrades. This would involve several steps: (1) Evaluating the quality and attributes of the classrooms; (2) Evaluating classroom utilization and scheduling practices; (3) Determining the sufficiency of classroom inventory to meet classroom demand; (4) Developing a plan for the best investment for classroom appropriation to meet classroom supply and quality/attributes improvement needs; and (5) Involving and informing classroom users about the events and decisions in classroom quality and utilization planning.

The draft includes recommendations for the establishment of three working groups --- a Committee on Classroom Quality and Attributes, a Committee on Classroom Capacity and Utilization, and a Steering Committee to coordinate the activities of the other two committees and make recommendations to the Provost. These groups, Provost Sullivan emphasized, should consist largely of faculty; he added that it would be especially helpful if the FSEC were to advise his office how these groups are to be staffed. He intended to have these committees formed by the early Fall 1997 semester.

Professor Welch asked if individual units could use their own funding to upgrade their locally-owned classrooms; Provost Sullivan saw no reason why they could not; in fact, his office has been operating on "the de facto principle that classrooms that are assigned to units are the responsibility of the units". Those units which could not maintain or upgrade their classrooms could either return them to central ownership, or discuss with Provost's office how best to secure the necessary funding. Professor Baier pointed out what seems to be some discrimination between in servicing the two campuses; often the air-conditioning or heating, for example, are turned on when North Campus classes begin, usually two weeks later than those of the South Campus. The same seems to hold for needed maintenance and repairs.

One major consideration, the Provost added, is the possibility of distributing more classrooms to individual units, which would then be held accountable for maintaining them at set standards, but would also allow the owner units "the flexibility to schedule around changing scheduling requirements". The major concern under this proposal is how to ensure the same degree of utilization attained that is attained centrally. Professor Faran asked about the source for the annual funds proposed in the third objective. Provost Sullivan replied simply that "we're going to have to make choices"; although some flexible funding already exists, it is more likely that [decentral] units will need to match monies from administration.

### **Item 3: Interim Report of the Hearing Panel for the Reorganization of Arts & Sciences**

Dean Thomas briefly reviewed the purpose of the Panel:

To solicit information and opinions covering two major reorganization proposals --- (1) the creation of a College of Arts and Sciences, and (2) the creation of both a College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and a College of Sciences and Engineering.

To create a report which identifies the strengths and weaknesses of various proposals.

The Hearing Panel received 17 different proposals, only 5 of which (from Biology, Statistics, Computer Science, Engineering, Life Sciences) were formally drafted and submitted. Concerns centered on the quality and extent of undergraduate education, the linkage between undergraduate and graduate education, and the creation of interdisciplinary work with the concomitant elimination of interruptive bureaucracy.

The Panel identified two major sets of proposals, the first espousing a College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), the second suggesting local options; the option of creating two colleges (mentioned above) was not considered. Proposals of the first group suggested the CAS as a way to alleviate the concerns that were identified; specifically, it would provide a comprehensive undergraduate education, an identity, resources and authority in one central area so that changes could be made rather easily. On the other hand, they expressed concerns that a CAS would develop or accentuate the cultural differences between the science and non-science components and make interdisciplinary work difficult, and would create another layer of bureaucracy in necessitating a search for a dean who is familiar with three separate faculties. Also of concern are the role of centers (and their connection to the CAS), and the interrelation of graduate and undergraduate education.

The other model (a "Science" model) had the benefits of linking the graduate, undergraduate, and professional schools more easily, and in offering pre-professional training in its programs.

Professor Mensch summarized the "unresolved dilemmas", concerns which surfaced repeatedly and could not be resolved by any simple structural change. These included:

Mission clarification and prioritization.

Resource allocation.

A reward structure which corresponds to our stated priority of undergraduate education.

Governance and the allocation of decision-making.

Dean Thomas added finally that the Panel had completed a first, very rough, draft of its report, and had set as a target the end of June to prepare the second draft for consideration by the Faculty Senate as well as by administration.

Professor Nickerson asked Dean Thomas whether, had the Panel had more time, more faculty would have participated in the Hearing Panel discussions; Dean Thomas doubted the extra time would have made any difference. To this, President Greiner added that the faculty knew of the timeline/deadline well in advance, and had little reason for failing to offer opinions.

#### **Item 4: Interim Report of the Academic Planning Committee**

Professor Malone briefly summarized the changes the Academic Planning Committee (APC) had made to its two prior interim reports. The two issues that appeared to be most critical were undergraduate enrollment and the research reputation in the graduate programs. He added that the two structures we might put together to optimize either of these issues are not necessarily the same.

The APC had considered the advantages and disadvantages of moving departments into a CAS, but decided that alternative proposals must be addressed as well in the immediate future. Nevertheless, the APC found it advisable to at least begin with concept of a CAS; otherwise, little progress would have been made.

Like the Hearing Panel, the APC had also heard the concerns surrounding the "culture problems" of rearranging departments --- namely, the lack of understanding of the disciplinary customs, which could lead to difficulties in the promotion/tenure process. He added that interdisciplinary groups, or "centers", should be referred to as "partnerships", thus underscoring the independence of the members of these interacting groups; however, the lines of authority within these groups will need to be clearly defined, as must their governance structures

Another set of concerns focussed on how budgetary decisions would be made, and how Responsibility-Centered Management (RCM) would work.

All of these concerns, he argued, are reasons for deciding on at least a general structure, so that the details could be expedited and clarified. Moreover, if the University wishes to improve both undergraduate education and services as well as our research reputation, it will have to prove that it rewards efforts in both areas.

One committee member recommended that the APC contact Ross MacKinnon (now a Dean of Arts and Sciences at another university), whose remarks were summarized in Appendix B of the interim report. MacKinnon thinks a unified CAS approach is preferable, although any structure could be made to work, and that a CAS would strengthen the perceived importance of the Arts and Sciences. Several universities have switched and forth, proving that no structure should be regarded as permanent. One negative aspect of a CAS is that the dean loses the intimacy with the individual programs and departments within a larger Faculty.

The FSEC voted in favor of transmitting the report to the Faculty Senate.

#### **Item 5: Interim Report of the Budget Priorities Committee**

Professor Nickerson reported that the BPC is presently considering a number of issues previously discussed --- Responsibility-Centered Management, the process of evaluation of UB compared to other universities, and several others --- none of which, however, directly link to the organizational structure of the University. He thought it would be inappropriate to discuss these at the present, since it would "deflect away from the real issues".

#### **Item 6: Resolution of the Faculty Senate Governance Committee**

Professor Albini presented the resolution of the Governance Committee, espousing a process which should be structured in a way that it comes to some closure, but on the other hand should allow for continuous review of any proposed reorganization within the University. The process must also be transparent in the sense that the faculty understands what is transpiring.

In order to keep the Senate involved in the process, Professor Albini proposed as a fourth step to the review process the formation of an ad hoc committee which would meet and report regularly on further developments in the reorganization process.

The FSEC voted to forward the resolution for a Second Reading to the Faculty Senate meeting on Tuesday.

**Item 7: Approval of the Draft Agenda for the Faculty Senate Meeting of June 17, 1997**

The agenda for the Faculty Senate meeting of June 17, 1997 was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert G. Hoeing

Present:

Chair: Claude E. Welch

Secretary: Robert G. Hoeing

Arts & Letters: Michael Frisch, James Pappas

Dental Medicine: Robert Baier

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Robert Wetherhold

Health-Related Professions: Atif Awad

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: James Faran

Nursing: Powhattan Wooldridge

Social Sciences: Michael Farrell

SUNY Senators: John Fisher (Senator-elect), Dennis Malone, Peter Nickerson, Claude Welch

University Libraries: Marilyn Kramer

Guests:

William R. Greiner (President)

Sean Sullivan (Associate Provost)

Nicholas Goodman (Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education)

William Fischer (Vice-Provost for Faculty Development)

John Thomas (Provost's Hearing Panel, Interim Dean of the School of Management)

Elizabeth Mensch (Provost's Hearing Panel)

Sue Wuetscher, The Reporter

Excused:

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Pharmacy: Nathan

SUNY Senators: Maureen Jameson

Absent:

Architecture & Planning: G. Scott Danford

Graduate School of Education: James Hoot

Law: Errol Meidinger

Management: Ramaswamy Ramesh

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Bernice Noble, Herbert Schuel

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Stanley Bruckenstein

Social Sciences: Jack Meacham