

**Faculty Senate Executive Committee
Minutes of September 15, 1999 - (approved)
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The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on September 15, 1999 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

1. [Approval of the Minutes of September 1, 1999](#)
2. [Report of the Chair](#)
3. [Report of the President/Provost](#)
4. [Issues facing the Ad-Hoc Committee on Graduate Education](#)
5. [Report of the Faculty Senate Teaching and Learning Committee](#)
6. [Old/New Business](#)

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that:

- the next meeting of the Senate is October 5, 1999, at which meeting Provost Triggles will speak on the Academic State of the University, and tentatively the Educational Programs and Policies Committee will present a resolution on program assessment; subject to FSEC's discussion of the resolution at its September 29 meeting (the resolution will be posted to the Faculty Senate e-list and mailed to Senators after the FSEC meeting); the Voting Faculty meets on September 21; the Provost hosts FSEC on September 22; the October 13 Provost's meeting has been canceled to accommodate the Mission Review process
- am concerned about scheduling a topic for Senate discussion before FSEC has had an opportunity to discuss it; time table is setting the agenda (Professor Swartz)
- EPPC has a track record of bringing forward well crafted reports, so am comfortable with this schedule (Professor Schack)

- he extends his apology to the FSEC and to Professor Schack for his misreading of the *Charter* provision making the past Chair of the Faculty Senate an ex-officio member for one year following the expiration of his term
- there has been considerable interest in the University budget by several Chairs in the College of Arts & Sciences; this presents a good opportunity for the Budget Priorities Committee to stimulate dialogue on this important function;
- the group (former Chairs of the Faculty Senate then serving on FSEC) who drafted the resolution on the need to notify the Faculty Senate when "initiation, termination, amalgamation, division or major reorganization of an academic unit is under consideration" met to react to the President's response that he would instruct the Provost to inform the Senate Chair about reorganization issues as soon as they are before the Provost; the group will request further clarification from the President since his approach would not provide the informal consultation that was envisaged
- the Faculty Senate at SUNY College at Old Westbury has asked for our endorsement of the following resolution prior to a meeting of SUNY governance leaders this weekend; most SUNY institutions have already endorsed it:

"We support the College at Old Westbury in their efforts to halt a compromised Presidential Search and request that you act to allow them to begin a new and legitimate search process which conforms to the Guidelines of the SUNY Board of Trustees"

- move (seconded) to endorse the resolution (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- am uncomfortable with endorsing the resolution without knowing more about the situation; any additional information? (Professor Malone)
- extensively reported on by the *New York Times* (Professor Boot)
- there has been no attempt to offer an alternative view from the administration at Old Westbury, from the SUNY administration or from the Board of Trustees (Professor Adams-Volpe)

the resolution passed unanimously

- FSEC has been asked to nominate a faculty member to serve on a subcommittee on "the security, confidentiality and privacy of the University's information technology infrastructure and digital resources"
 - the subcommittee will be considering the authentication of users of campus public computers; at issue is the ability of other than faculty/staff/students to use these computers; this brings into question the role of the University as a community resource, especially as to the Libraries (Professor Adams-Volpe)
 - might see what other Association of American Universities institutions do about exempting library access from authentication requirements (Professor Welch)

- the UB Council met in open session at the Common House in Hadley Village; they heard from Sylvia Muller, the student member of the Council, who said that she wants to promote a better understanding of the Council by students, develop on-line voting in student elections and examine proper processes for consideration of the fee structure and parking; Vice President Black talked about the Student Life Commission and student life in general; the Council passed a resolution honoring Miles Lasser for his 19 years of service as a SUNY Trustee which will be presented at the University Convocation
 - Ms. Muller's comment about parking reaffirms the definition of a university as a parking problem held together by a central heating plant (Professor Baumer)

- the Academic Planning Committee has been active; Professor Welch, Chair of APC, said that the Committee examined a proposal from the School of Dental Medicine for a reorganization of its departments, examined the University's responses to the Mission Review and scheduled an October 5 meeting to examine the briefing book compiled by the University

Item 2: Report of the President

President Greiner noted his pleasure that FSEC had adopted the resolution in support of the Old Westbury faculty. He suggested that FSEC might want to send a copy to the Board of Trustees.

The President gave some ground on the College of Arts & Sciences hiring freeze. First, in the environment of all funds budgeting, Deans must use all financial resources available to

them, their full state appropriation, but also, overhead recovery, Research Foundation, direct funds, income funds, auxiliary services income, philanthropy, and endowment. Understanding that these dollars are not completely fungible, they should, be used for operating expenses to the extent possible, and the Provost will consider requests for additional state appropriations funding in the context of all resources available to a Dean. Some academic units have been more agile in adjusting to all funds budgeting than others. Second because of the University's structural deficit, allocations from state appropriations to units will be decreased. Since units have not been allowed to spend the full amount of their allocation in the past but will be allowed to do so now, the decrease is really only nominal. However, the College of Arts & Sciences has developed its own imbalance of appropriation to spending, primarily by honoring commitments made prior to the formation of the College. If the College continued to spend at the rate it has been spending, it would accumulate a \$2/3 M deficit, so the Provost and Dean Grant are working to reduce expenditures. This will result in delays in hiring and other budget tightness. The President pointed out that New York is the only state that has reduced the actual dollars spent for higher education; institutions with profiles similar to UB's have seen double digit increases in their budgets. He is, however, hopeful that focused state appropriations will increase and that UB will grow its enrollment to 25,000.

The President displayed aerial photographs of the North Campus. Professor Freschi developed a long range plan for its 1,250 acres. The approximately 500 acres enclosed by the loop roads around the academic spine contains space that will easily satisfy UB's need for new academic buildings. The space beyond that will be used for student housing, so that the academic center of the campus will be approached through a community setting. Hadley Village illustrates the concept, and additional housing will be built close to Hadley Village, along Lee Road and around the two man made lakes. The outer perimeter will be maintained as natural areas. Some within the University community are unhappy with the development of these intermediate areas, but this is a campus, not a park. Environmental concerns are legitimate, but UB must balance the needs of students against the desire to maintain the a pristine campus. The President pledged that trees sacrificed in development

will be replaced; for example seven trees were cut down in the initial clearing of land around the lakes, and 154 trees will be planted in landscaping the finished area.

Parking is another issue of concern. Student housing on the campus should reduce vehicular traffic. Housing will have associated parking, but at a lesser ratio than one parking space to one bed, and since the Hadley Village parking lot is never full the ratio would seem to be adequate. The President acknowledged that between 10 AM and 2 PM there is "a bear of a parking problem". It may be time to consider building a new parking lot close to the Mail Building.

There were questions for the President:

- the lakes on the North Campus were dug for drainage, so in 1970 the seven trees at issue didn't exist; the North Campus served as a barrow pit for building the Youngman Highway (Professor Baumer)
- when I chaired the first Parking Task Force, the state had a formula which limited the amount of parking space we could build; is that formula still a problem? (Professor Malone)
- probably not, since UB pays for new parking lots (President Greiner)
- need lots more classroom space (Professor Malone)
- the classroom problem is also a 10 AM to 2 PM issue; need to extend the hours classrooms are used (President Greiner)
- faculty and staff have undertaken projects to beautify the campus; the garden behind the School of Pharmacy was built with faculty contributions (Provost Triggler)

Item 3: Approval of the Minutes of September 1, 1999

The Minutes of September 1, 1999 were approved.

Item 4: Report of the Provost

The Provost reminisced that when the University of Buffalo became a state institution, the state promised to provide 100 cents on the dollar for the University. Today the state

provides 31 cents on the dollar and will continue to decrease its contribution, perhaps to the 15 cents on the dollar provided by Michigan to the University of Michigan.

The Provost noted that the hiring freeze in the College of Arts & Sciences arises from several factors. When we merged three entities into the CAS, auditors and a team to put finances in order from the beginning should have been provided. Further, when Dean Grant took over in mid-year, significant financial commitments had already been made by the component units. Third, CAS hired 38 full time, tenure track faculty and 11.23 FTE visiting faculty in anticipation of some 32 retirements, but most of those who were expected to retire are still on the payroll. Additionally reducing UB's approximately \$9 M structural deficit will require a cut in units' base budgets over the next 4/5 years. However over target enrollments will give UB additional income; CAS will receive \$1/1.4 M because of increased enrollment. The Provost is looking for ways to reduce his Office's expenditures to contribute to budget deficit reduction.

There were comments from the floor:

- within the faculty of CAS there is little understanding of these budget factors and morale is suffering; urge that the President and the Provost communicate this information to the CAS faculty (Professor Schack)

Item 5: Issues facing the Ad-Hoc Committee on Graduate Education

The Chair reminded FSEC that the Ad-Hoc Committee on Graduate Education was formed in response to the promulgation of a periodic review of Graduate Faculty by the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty and the Dean of the Graduate School.. The Chair understands that the Dean of the Graduate School has asked Divisional Committees to develop guidelines for periodic review. The Ad-Hoc Committee's first charge is to investigate what the current status of such review is. Professor Wetherhold has agreed to chair the Committee

There were comments from the floor:

- FSEC also discussed whether there was any need for even continuing the status of Graduate Faculty; would be useful for the Ad-Hoc Committee to study that broader issue as well (Professor Schack)
- the major focus of FSEC discussion was the issue of periodic review (Professor Nickerson)
- periodic review seems on the face of it to be more costly than it can be beneficial since there is no apparent problem to be solved (Professor Boot)
- there has been enough concern expressed about this issue that the Faculty Senate needs to look at it; if it is a trivial issue, the report of the Ad-Hoc Committee will say so (Professor Schack)
- this review is part of the larger issue of mutual faculty accountability and responsibility for everything we do; we need to face up to this larger issue or we deserve what we get (Provost Triggles)
- will accountability extend to administrators as well as faculty? (Professor Boot)
- understand that the Ad-Hoc Committee is being asked to investigate and then organize and distribute the information gathered (Professor Wetherhold)

A second charge for the Ad-Hoc Committee is to look at issues arising from a memo from the Provost to the Deans and Vice Presidents entitled "Our Budget Process and Graduate Programs and Policies". The Chair described the memo as recentralizing some of the processes of graduate education and believes the Ad-Hoc Committee should look at the memo.

Provost Triggles responded that the memo is less about recentralization than about examining long standing policies which are perhaps in need of change. The issues involved are the quality of programs, the perception of programs, the extent to which we can attract the best students, stipends for graduate students, and the ways in which we train graduate students at a time when academe is no longer their major career choice. If left exclusively to the Departments, little change will occur. The timing of the memo reflects the National Research Council's scheduling of another round of NRC reviews in 2002/2003.

There were comments from the floor:

- the memo suggests there could be elimination or merger of graduate programs and the Academic Planning Committee needs information about such changes; competition for research and strong graduate programs need strong library support, but the UB Libraries slipped in ranking again this year because of staff losses and cuts in journal subscriptions; since 1993 UB Libraries have slipped in ranking more than any other American institution; need to know the research and teaching directions of UB to target the resources we have most productively (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- want to keep a tight focus for the Ad-Hoc Committee; want members who exercise leadership in graduate affairs (Professor Wetherhold)
- the memo brings up three issues: reallocating TA/GA/RA state resources, looking at graduate student stipends, and the purpose of graduate education since the majority of graduates no longer go into the academy; memo isn't prescriptive as to answers to these issues (Provost Triggler)
- does the state regulate stipends? (Professor Malone)
- sets minimum; there is a wide range of stipends; Chemistry, for example, chooses to accept an increased workload in order to pay fewer but more generous stipends (Provost Triggler)
- CAS may be forming a committee to look at its stipends (Professor Schack)

The third charge to the Ad-Hoc Committee is explore what kind of Standing Orders the Faculty Senate should have as to the oversight of graduate education. The Deans are not receptive to Senate oversight, fearing that the Senate would be too intrusive. The Ad-Hoc Committee should think through the nature of Senate oversight and how it would be carried out.

- we reformulated the original George proposal to emphasize that the graduate oversight would be parallel to undergraduate oversight and would be bound by past practice; the Committee might consider drafting a resolution binding the Senate to its past practices (Professor Schack)
- this charge is a technical issue with political overtones; would like a member who understands the issues and can do careful writing (Professor Wetherhold)
- the Bylaws Committee should review, but not have primary responsibility for drafting these Standing Orders (Professor Nickerson)
- the President has to accept this change to the *Charter* and we need to reassure his constituency (Professor Schack)

- the Provost's memo should have been copied to Faculty Senate to keep faculty involved in an important discussion of graduate education (Professor Boot)
- there is far more faculty oversight of graduate education and its future by faculty than is true for undergraduate education (Provost Triggler)
- it is oversight by appointed, not elected, faculty (Professor Boot)
- memo should have been more widely circulated than just to Deans and Vice Presidents, but faculty might have taken offense to the negative tone of statements about the quality of UB's graduate programs (Professor Schroeder)
- can deny reality only at a very serious expense; the three issues raised by the memo are not unique to UB but have been widely aired in the literature (Provost Triggler)
- based on the NRC rankings, it's an understatement to say that we don't enjoy major national reputation; wasn't necessary to copy the memo to the Senate since no solutions are put forward and the Executive Committee of the Graduate School was also not copied (Professor Schack)

Item 6: Report of the Faculty Senate Teaching and Learning Committee

The Chair introduced Professor Gentile, Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee. FSEC gave the Committee two charges: to recommend whether the written portion of student course evaluations should be published or otherwise made available to students, and to consider Dean Grant's suggestion that junior faculty not be eligible for a Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Professor Gentile presented the report of the Committee on the publication of student evaluations. He first distinguished between norm-referenced assessment, i.e. assessment based on the average of how all others were graded, and criterion referenced assessment, i.e. assessment based on an absolute standard. The literature concludes that student ratings are very important because they are the only assessment tool institutions use and that they have validity in that they moderately correlate with other measures. The Committee concluded that since student written comments which have no normative base are difficult to combine into usable composite data, they are not easily interpretable for

summative, norm-referenced comparisons. Furthermore in many schools at UB the norms being referenced are out of date or of unknown origin. Adding to the complexity of the situation, there are several assessment forms in use at UB. UB-CATS is the most widely used, with some versions providing space for written comments and other versions not.

In light of the above the Committee made the following recommendations:

- student evaluations should be continued but improved: by ensuring standardization of the instrument and procedures used to collect data, by establishing, specifying, collecting and updating appropriate normative data, and by publishing course ratings, as well as the norms, for those who need them
- students' written comments should not be published; each unit should determine how to otherwise use written comments
- some questions on evaluations should be designed for criterion-referenced purposes
- faculty and programs should explore ways other than student course evaluations to document the efficacy of instruction
- those who are responsible for supervising instruction and making promotion/tenure decisions need to be fully informed about 1-4

There were comments from the floor:

- if decanal units have bodies comparable to the Teaching and Learning Committee, might be able to work with them to develop these recommendations; the Committee might wish to formulate a resolution incorporating these recommendations (Professor Welch)
- the report is substantial and a good point of departure; item 4 is the most important of the recommendations; had hoped the Committee would not focus on student course evaluations but rather on assessing learning outcomes and how technology is integrated into teaching (Vice Provost Fischer)
- there is a large literature about evaluation which the Committee did not consult, for example in dossier preparation, in the evaluation of different teaching strategies, in the disciplines of Medicine and Nursing;

hope the Committee spends more time on what the purposes of evaluation are because the datum and its form then defines itself (Professor Cedric Smith)

- Committee was asked to respond to the two charges expeditiously and it did so, recognizing that more work could be done (Professor Gentile)
- it is clear that many people do not understand the difference between norm-referenced and criteria referenced evaluation; evaluation even of experienced faculty can be a very enlightening experience for the faculty member (Professor Schroeder)
- how many evaluation forms did the Committee see? (Professor)
- looked at 6/7 (Professor Gentile)
- senior faculty in Pharmacy worked with a junior faculty member who had gotten bad ratings, and over the course of two years turned him into one of the School's best teachers (Professor)
- what is the status of the teaching portfolio in dossier preparation? (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- final revision of the instructions on dossier preparation are in the Provost's Office; waiting for final review and implementation (Vice Provost Fischer)
- exit interviews provide really good information (Professor Fournier)
- anonymity of evaluations leads to extreme statements; often don't know how valuable a course has been until some time later; evaluations are often put to uses that they can't support, even by science faculty (Professor Schack)
- how does one get a random selection of students for exit interviews? (Professor Boot)
- have someone else pick sample (Professor Fournier)

The Chair suggested that the Committee formulate a resolution incorporating its recommendations for FSEC and Faculty Senate discussion. Professor Gentile agreed, subject to recommendation 4 being taken as a separate and later topic.

Professor Gentile reported that the Committee had discussed Dean Grant's proposal that junior faculty be ineligible to receive the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Dean Grant fears that administrators would be asked to write in support of a junior faculty candidate for the Award and later find themselves in non-support of tenure for the same candidate. The Committee felt that promotion and tenure decisions are based on broader considerations than just teaching, that administrators are under no compulsion to write in

support of a candidate for the Chancellor's Award and that letters of recommendation are not the sole basis for receiving a Chancellor's Award. The Committee unanimously approved the following recommendation: "There should be no separate UB policy against nominating junior faculty for a Chancellor's Award." There was a motion (seconded) to accept the Committee's recommendation which passed unanimously.

Item 7: Old/New Business

Professor Adams-Volpe advised FSEC that we are out of compliance with Article 6 of the *Charter* which caps representation on FSEC to four for any one academic unit. Currently the College of Arts & Sciences has six representatives.

- because CAS lacked bylaws its three component units elected Senators under their old bylaws
(Professor Schack)

The Chair suggested that the issue of whether CAS should be treated as a single unit be referred to the Bylaws Committee.

- there is work being done to provide for unified elections in CAS, but they will not be ready for this year's Senate elections (Professor Schack)

There being no other old/new business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn M. Kramer
Secretary of Faculty Senate

Present:

Chair: P. Nickerson

Secretary: M. Kramer

Parliamentarian: D. Malone

Arts & Sciences: W. Baumer, C. Fournier, M. Harwitz, S. Schack

Graduate School of Education: T. Schroeder

Health Related Professions: J. Tamburlin

Law: L. Swartz

Management: J. Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: C. Smith

Pharmacy: N.

SUNY Senators: J. Adams-Volpe, J. Boot

University Libraries: D. Woodson

University Officers: W. Greiner, President

D. Triggler, Provost

Guests:

W. Coles, Chair, Professional Staff Senate

M. McGinnis, *Reporter*

J. Celock, Red Jacket Hall Council

C. Welch, Chair, Academic Planning Committee

J. Meacham, Chair, Educational Programs and Policies

Excused:

Engineering & Applied Sciences: R. Sridhar

SUNY Senators: H. Durand, J. Fisher

Absent: Architecture: S. Vassigh

Arts & Sciences: C. Smith

Dental Medicine: R. Baier

Information & Library Studies: G. D'Elia

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: B. Albini

Nursing: J. Thompson

