

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of February 28, 2001 - (approved)
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The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on February 28, 2001, in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

1. [Approval of the minutes of February 14, 2001](#)
2. [Report of the Chair](#)
3. [Report of the President/Provost](#)
4. [Orientation Update - Vice Provost Sullivan, Vice President Black,, Dean of Students Ricotta, Director of Admissions Toomey, Director of Academic Advisement Kaars](#)
5. [Indirect Costs - Provost Capaldi, Professor Mollendorf, Chair, Faculty Senate Research and Creative Activity Committee](#)
6. [Old/new business](#)

Item 1: Approval of the minutes of February 14, 2001

The minutes of February 14, 2001 were approved. **Item 2: Report of the Chair** The Chair reported that:

1. the election process for the 2001/2003 Chair of the Faculty Senate has been completed
 - Professor Michael Cohen was elected chair with a substantial plurality; about 1/3 of the voting faculty participated in the election (Professor Kramer)
2. because of Spring Vacation, there will not be an FSEC meeting on March 7
3. the Faculty Senate meets on March 13; the agenda includes a report by Dean Cranley on what is new in the School of Nursing, a second reading of the Second Chance Policy, and a presentation by Vice Provost Sullivan and Professor Zambon on classroom quality; on March 14 the FSEC will meet in executive session with the Provost
4. the Provost has asked for the FSEC's input on changing the name of the School of Information Studies to the School of Informatics; the change has the support of the School's faculty

- believe the term “informatics” refers to the interface between biological science and computer science (Professor Malone)
- consider substituting the term “informatica” which is more specific to information studies and has no conflicting connotations (Professor Boot)
- other schools doing the same things as the SIS use “informatics” in their names; the term is used to describe the study of the structure of information, how information is communicated and how information technology interfaces with humans (Provost Capaldi)
- because the FSEC has not studied the matter itself, we should not approve the name change, but rather should indicate that we have no objection to the change (Professor Swartz)
- the Academic Planning Committee hasn’t looked at the matter, and the FSEC has not been given a report on which to base a recommendation (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- in Europe “informatics” is used for “computer science” (Professor Sridhar)

There was a motion (seconded) to respond to the Provost that the FSEC has no objection to the name change. The motion carried.

5. the Grading Committee has met and will present a Class Absence Policy to the FSEC on March 21

The Chair asked for questions:

- what is the status of the proposed 2001/2003 academic calendar? (Professor Baumer)
- the Calendar Committee will meet during the Spring Break to discuss the issues raised by the FSEC and will report to the President (Professor Nickerson)
- if the Election Committee applies the rule that no one School may have more than 25 Senators when it carries out the mandated five year apportionment of Senate seats, the College of Arts & Sciences’ representation will be significantly reduced; the Bylaws Committee should promptly but thoroughly examine the provision keeping in mind that there is no magic in the limit of 100 Senators (Professor Baumer)

There was a motion (seconded) to refer the matter to the Bylaws Committee. The motion passed. The Chair invited Professor

Baumer, Chair of the CAS Bylaws Committee, to meet with the Faculty Senate Bylaws Committee at its March 9 meeting. **Item 3: Report of the President/Provost** There was no report of the President/Provost. **Item 4: Orientation Update** Dean Ricotta and Assistant Vice Provost Kaars described enhancements to the 2001 orientation for new freshmen:

1. orientation has been organized into four distinct phases: pre-orientation, Summer orientation in July, Opening Day/Weekend, and ongoing activities like September Welcome and UB 101
2. block scheduling and pre-registration planning have been improved
 - in the past, advising staff, handling large numbers of students at mass registration, spent 5 minutes at most to help a student develop a schedule and register
 - now, beginning in April, advisors primed with information from a questionnaire filled out by the student and in conversation with him develop his schedule
 - after courses are selected, Records and Registration will register the student; the goal is to have all freshmen registered by July
 - allows resources to be put in place to have enough freshman classes available to permit freshmen to take academically appropriate courses
 - rather than using a small, dedicated group of advisors, advisors from all over the University who have met and exchanged expertise will help with the pre-registration process
3. communication with students/families has been improved
 - coordinated the look and style of admissions and orientation mailings
 - now send four comprehensive mailings rather than many individual mailings
 - this information is also available at the orientation web site <<http://orientation.buffalo.edu>>
 - set up a centralized toll-free phone number for questions; a human operator will take questions and direct the student to the appropriate staff
4. track new students in a centralized database to monitor their progress from when they pay their deposits through the first day of class
5. summer orientation has been improved
 - at the end of Summer orientation, students will be given a book with a theme relevant to their freshman year to take home and read; the book will be used as a focus for programs in UB 101 and in the residence halls; Professor Barba heads the book selection committee

- academic presentations and presence have been increased
- there will be hands on computing sessions
- there will be workshops on being a successful student
- will administer a student inventory which will be available to advisement and to UB 101 instructors

Dean Ricotta described other changes to orientation. Transfer students will also register prior to orientation. Rather than a mid-Summer orientation, there will be a two day end-of-summer program focusing on the transition to UB. Family orientation programs will also be offered both during Summer orientation and on Opening Weekend.

There were comments from the members:

- description sounds really good; suggest that orientation like communication with students continue throughout their time at UB (Professor Sridhar)
- are there specialized orientation sessions, e.g. honors students, engineering students? (Professor Swartz)
- on Opening Day we bring all students together for a welcome to UB; then they are separated into academic areas for an orientation specific to the discipline; there will be a special session on decision making for the undecided students (Assistant Vice Provost Kaars)
- where in the orientation process are students told that getting an education is hard work? (Professor Malone)
- orientation does stress that message, but students don't always listen; instructors should re-enforce the message early in freshmen classes (Vice President Black)
- teaching faculty have more credibility with students than do the professional staff, so are increasing the use of faculty in Summer orientation (Assistant Vice Provost Kaars)
- best tip advisor can give a student is to personally get to know one faculty member each semester; that personal contact can be a strong force in a student's development; how do you determine the appropriate class placement for each student? (Dr. Durand)
- use SAT score for English placement; for math, use a combination of SAT score, high school courses taken and a conversation with the student; 50% of students were placed in the math course that the SAT score alone would have suggested, while 25 % were placed higher and 25% placed lower; will monitor success rates (Assistant Vice Provost Kaars)

- in hands on computer training, teach students how to access course materials and library electronic reserve as well as how to use e-mail (Professor Bono)
- the I-Connect program does teach those things; also will try to reach new graduate students (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- during its summer program EOP analyzed students for placement in math; with SAT scores alone, 75% of students would have placed in Math 146, but when the other components advising uses were factored in, only 13% were placed in Math 146; EOP uses a boot camp approach for summer orientation; students complain while they are in it but after classes start say the experience should have been more rigorous (Dr. Coles)
- when are students shown the dorms? (Professor Farkas)
- live in the dorms for Summer orientation; by Summer orientation they have their permanent room assignment and know who their roommates (Dean Ricotta)
- during orientation student presentations are the most credible; could new students be provided with the I-Connect CD during the Summer when they have more time to explore? (Professor Sridhar)
- potentially would be a substantial workload for IT to support new students at a distance; the computer training in July orientation will be hands on with students assigned real assignments to complete (Assistant Vice Provost Kaars)
- use 26 students in July orientation and Opening Weekend because they are, indeed, very effective in reaching the freshmen; invite faculty to participate in orientation (Dean Ricotta)
- should extend contacts with students beyond the freshman year (Professor Boot)
- will continue to make the University more student friendly (Provost Capaldi)

Item 5: Indirect Costs Provost Capaldi gave an overview of research indirect costs which she characterized as “Indirect Costs 101.” Direct research costs are those that are incurred for a specific research project, e.g. money for animal feed and litter; indirect costs are costs incurred by a institution to provide space and services for the research project, e.g., heat, light and cleaning. The institution may manage indirect costs reimbursement in ways other than paying for the specific elements that went into the calculation of indirect cost. Because of the complexity of university finances, typically the indirect costs budget is used in whole or part for non-research related costs.

Circular A-21 from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget governs how an institution calculates its indirect costs.. Using OMB’s regulations, UB’s true indirect cost is 78.49% of direct

costs. The federal government and the institution then negotiate an indirect cost re-reimbursement rate, which is usually less than the true indirect cost. UB's federal indirect costs re-reimbursement rate is 54%, but in toto UB recovers only about 23% because of individual negotiations with public agencies and the private sector prior to grant awards. For FY 2000/01 UB spent \$22,644,936 on research and received indirect costs reimbursement of \$18,695,000.

The Provost stressed that all grants, even those which pay little or no indirect costs, are good since at least the Principal Investigator is funded for the direct costs of her research. However, PI's should take into account reimbursement rates for indirect costs if there is a choice of funding sources. Federal grants pay the highest rates of indirect costs; in addition federal grants are more prestigious and important in an institution's national rankings.

There were comments:

- why do institutions like Harvard get higher reimbursement rates? (Professor Fournier)
- private institutions can factor in the cost of building facilities which we can't do since the state pays for our buildings; we can only claim operating expenses; when an institution receives its first federal grant, it negotiates a reimbursement rate with the funding agency which then establishes the rate for grants from other federal agencies; some agencies are tougher negotiators than others so institutional rates vary (Provost Capaldi)
- the concept of indirect costs was developed in the 1950's/1960's to provide subsidies to research institutions (Professor Fournier)
- research institutions should never have agreed to less than full federal reimbursement; New York is subsidizing our research activities (Provost Capaldi)
- are there any attempt to share indirect costs with the PI or the School that generates them? (Professor Easley)
- PI's receive services from UB, e.g, the Instrument Centers, Laboratory Animal Facilities, pre- and post-award services and bridging funds; if indirect costs were given to the PI, UB would have to use more state funds to pay for these services (Provost Capaldi)
- how does one get bridging funds? (Professor Easley)

- written request to the Vice President for Research; helpful to have matching funds from your Dean; some institutions do return a portion of indirect costs to the PI, but find that PI's tend to save the funds against a time when they don't get funding; that is not a productive use of the money; next year will give Deans a sum equal to 12% of the indirect costs their units bring in; intended as a reward, and not as indirect costs per se (Provost Capaldi)
- set up costs for faculty should also be included in indirect costs calculations (Professor Fournter)
- didn't attempt to list every possible indirect cost; just wanted to illustrate that we spend more than we are reimbursed (Provost Capaldi)
- some disciplines value publishing more than grant getting; in those disciplines, the grant getters are not promoted while their publishing colleagues, who are being subsidized by the grant getters, are promoted (Professor Malave)
- rewarding grant getting is a separate matter from indirect costs (Provost Capaldi)
- if our funded research activity increases without the need for additional space and services, does UB's recovery margin increase? (President Greiner)
- would work only if we had unused capacity, which we don't; in fact we need to create more research space (Provost Capaldi)
- could the Research Foundation build buildings as a private entity, so that UB could charge for the buildings in indirect costs? (Professor Easley)
- state law only permits private funding for student housing on SUNY property (President Greiner)
- am always willing to try creative approaches to getting more indirect costs, but the federal government will resist paying more (Provost Capaldi)
- what range of reimbursement do private institutions get? (Dr. Coles)
- in the past got 80%-90% (Provost Capaldi)
- this information about indirect costs should be widely shared; faculty have the perception that the administration has a large pot of money from indirect costs to spend as it wishes, and they feel cheated out of what they believe should rightly come to them (Professor Malave)
- perhaps the Faculty Senate should hear this information (Professor Nickerson)

- as state drew down its support of our operating budget, the pressure on indirect costs increased (President Greiner)
- have been afraid to ask for high indirect costs for fear of losing grants; very enlightening to know that private institutions get higher indirect costs (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- grant writers could cite UB's lower indirect cost rate as a reason to give a grant to UB rather than its competitors (Professor Malave)
- some faculty feel we shouldn't be getting grants because they actually cost UB money (Professor Nickerson)
- remember all grants are good (Provost Capaldi)
- research will go on, whether funded or not, so always better to get funding, even if it is only partial funding (Professor Sridhar)
- faculty, who are very smart in their own disciplines, are not very smart in basic economics if they believe that indirect costs aren't real (Professor Boot)
- grants are often 90% salary, and faculty don't understand how freeing up personnel dollars generates indirect costs (Professor Farkas)
- the University subsidizes unfunded research by providing it with the same infrastructure support that funded research pays for through indirect costs; faculty with grants feel this is unfair (Professor Sridhar)
- could make the same argument for those faculty who teach more students and bring in more tuition (Provost Capaldi)
- grants often pay a faculty member's salary, freeing up money for her Dean; that is not the case with extra teaching (Professor Fournier)
- we also feel we are not good enough to be expensive; need to get beyond that because we are in fact good enough to be competitive (Provost Capaldi)
- would be very helpful to tell faculty which agencies fund research more generously (Dr. Coles)

Item 6: Old/new business Professor Easley suggested that new faculty orientation would be a useful topic for the FSEC to explore. Professor Boot renewed his request to discuss the policy regarding the use of undergraduates in teaching. There being no other old/new business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn McMann Kramer

Secretary of Faculty Senate

Present:

Chair: P. Nickerson

Secretary: M. Kramer

Parliamentarian: D. Malone

Arts & Sciences: W. Baumer, J. Bono, C. Fourtner

Dental Medicine: M. Easley

Engineering & Applied Sciences: R. Sridhar

Graduate School of Education: L. Malave

Health Related Professions: G. Farkas

School of Information Studies: J. Ellison

Law: L. Swartz

Management: J. Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: S. Spurgeon

SUNY Senators: J. Adams-Volpe, J. Boot, H. Durand, P. Nickerson

University Officers: W. Greiner, President

E. Capaldi, Provost **Guests:** S. Sullivan, Vice

Provost for Academic Planning and Information

D. Black, Vice President of Student Affairs

B. Ricotta, Dean of Students

N. Kaars, Assistant Vice Provost & Director of Academic Advisement

J. Mollendorf, Chair, Faculty Senate Research and Creative Activity

Committee

J. Lewandowski, *Reporter*

W. Coles, Chair, Professional Staff Senate **Absent:** **Architecture:**R.

Sibley

Arts & Sciences: M. Jardine

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: B. Noble, C. Pruet, A. El Solh

Nursing: E. Perese

Pharmacy: R. Madejski
University Libraries: A. Booth