

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of November 6, 1996 (approved)

revised 10/3/95)

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The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM in Room 567 Capen Hall to consider the following agenda:

1. [Report of the Chair](#)
2. [Approval of the Minutes from October 9, 1996](#)
3. [Report of the Faculty Tenure and Privileges Committee](#)
4. [Changes in Library/Computing Technology](#)
5. [Approval of the Agenda for the Faculty Senate Meeting - November 19, 1996](#)

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that the UB Council had met on October 31. He reminded the FSEC that the Council is appointed by the Governor to serve primarily as an advisory body to the President, yet is not without some statutory powers - e.g., in its involvement in the search process for the President, the approval of student rules and regulations, and in the naming of buildings on campus. The President and senior administrators regularly report to the Council. At the most recent meeting, the Provost talked about the process of academic planning and the institutional goals of UB. President Greiner judged as totally without merit the lawsuit filed against the University by "Students for Life", and added that well-intentioned students were being exploited by others.

Professor Welch circulated two announcements, the first concerning the Instructional Technology Fair coming in March 1997 and the second with the 1996-97 intersession curtailment.

He commended the chairs of the Public Service, Library, Affirmative Action, and Faculty Tenure & Privileges Committees, adding that nearly all of the standing committees are quite active and have begun meeting regularly.

The Secretary reported that 17 nominations for Chair of the Faculty Senate have already been submitted for the upcoming election; the nominees represent thirteen different departments at the university. From each one accepting the nomination, the Secretary will request a statement of candidacy, which will be distributed with the ballots.

In order to make the compendium of Senate resolutions as useful as possible, the Chair invited members of the FSEC to look through the handbook of resolutions prior to 1985 (also available on WINGS), to see if any deletions or additions are necessary.

The agenda for the upcoming meeting (November 13) of the FSEC includes two major policy issues. The first concerns public relations and the University's image. A consultant from Marts & Lundy has already met with a few deans, and the Chair advised her to consult the FSEC for a faculty perspective. The second issue will focus on University policy in Athletics and Recreation. Attending will be the new chair of the Intercollegiate Athletics Board, Al Price, whose report will be circulated prior to the meeting; the Chair suggested the FSEC might compare this with a previous report by Professor Chatov (circulated in October) for additional ground. Professor Malone, the NCAA representative, and Professor Jameson, Chair of the Athletics and Recreation Committee, will also be present.

As a follow-up report on the issue of faculty credit for team-taught courses, the Chair offered a partial response. For a course listed twice (cross-listed) by two different departments, each faculty member receives credit for the number of students enrolled in the respective department. For team-teaching by members within a department, the policy depends on the individual school or faculty; no clear University-wide policy exists. The Chair added that there may also be a minimum enrollment required in order for the faculty member to receive credit toward the teaching load.

The Chair opened the floor for discussion. Professor Jameson asked whether the author of the report on Athletics had been invited to attend next week; the Chair affirmed this, but did not know whether he also intended to come.

Professor Malone addressed the issue of team-teaching; in his department, the policy is to multiply the number of students enrolled by the credit hours, and then divide by the number of weeks taught by each of the instructors. He reiterated the lack of any University policy, adding that since the Senate has not yet discussed the issue of workload over the past few years, it should do so. Professor Welch agreed, but preferred to put it on the agenda when it arises in the context of academic plans and responsibilities. Professor Jameson pointed out that for cross-listed courses which involve no team-teaching, the FTE credit is given to the department which pays the instructor; it seemed to her that this, in effect, constituted a "built-in disincentive" to cross-list. Professor Welch remarked that the FSEC will discuss this issue when it examines "responsibility-centered budgeting", which has been under consideration by the Budget Priorities Committee. Professor Nickerson, when asked how soon this may come up for discussion, replied that it depends on the progress of another committee. Professor Welch added that, as he understood it, by Fall 1998 there will be quantitative [enrollment] expectations for the individual Schools and Faculties; for every student more than one percent short of the mandated enrollment level, the department budget could be reduced by \$2,500, and for every student more than one percent over the enrollment target, the department would receive an additional \$1,500.

Professor Nickerson, liaison with the Graduate School Executive Committee, announced that the fellowship program (popularly known as the Woodburn Scholarships) will change during the present cycle; the focus will be on recruitment with this scholarship, and the faculty will be solicited for proposals for this purpose. He added that graduate program evaluations will be "up and running" by next year, and that they will be selective. Professor Welch asked whether the evaluation format will be essentially similar to one used in the past.

Professor Jameson asked Professor Nickerson about the criteria used for appointment to the Graduate Faculty. She said she was not aware of any process, but noted that the recent

nomination of one junior faculty member, who is currently supervising three graduate theses, was summarily turned down. She asked whether Vice-Provost Triggles had implemented any new criteria by himself. Professor Nickerson knew of no changes, and replied that the Arts & Letters Divisional Committee makes the recommendation. Professor Malone mentioned that the forthcoming report of the Task Force on Quality contains suggestions for modifying the criteria for Graduate Faculty Status. Professor Nickerson added that some sub- committees are examining this.

Professor Frisch underscored Professor Jameson's concerns, and thought we need better ways of discussing this point. From his experience on a divisional committee, he felt that the existence and uses of the "Graduate Faculty" category were rife with problems in terms of an almost parallel personnel procedure, and of the morale and expectations of junior faculty. In light of the existing personnel procedures at every level, he questioned the purpose of a "quasi-independent, often arbitrary, certainly not very accountable, and almost always mysterious policy" of determining who counts as graduate faculty. In his experienced opinion, it creates little more than bureaucratic overload and redundancy. Professor Welch said he would try to schedule a meeting with the Dean of the Graduate School on this matter.

Item 2: Approval of the Minutes from October 9, 1996

The Minutes of the FSEC meeting of October 9, 1996 were read and approved.

Item 3: Report of the Faculty Tenure and Privileges Committee

Professor Acara, chair of the Faculty Tenure and Privileges Committee, stated that the charge to the Committee was to review the criteria for promotion to Full Professor. The current criteria (in the 1993/94 Faculty and Professional Staff Handbook) give exceptional weight to research, and have not been examined for

many years. Committees at several universities are exploring new ways of expressing scholarly activity. Guiding many of their discussions is a book by Ernest Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered*, which includes as part of scholarly activity the "discovery, synthesis, application, and scholarship of teaching". This is a shift from common practice at universities, yet one consistent with national trends.

She quoted an outside reviewer who considered it a possible weakness that the definition of "ingenuity and independence" of a faculty member is constrained by traditional standards. As times change, the role of faculty probably need to change as well. Furthermore, it is less clear now than in the past as to what constitutes scholarship. The Committee does not intend to degrade research, but rather admits the need to recognize the other scholarly contributions of service and teaching as an essential part of the promotion process. Although the Committee focussed on teaching achievements as a criterion for promotion to Full Professor, it did not include specific changes in the overall guidelines because it felt that, first, the faculty must accept the recommendations for these changes.

Professor Acara distributed copies of the changes proposed, adding that there was no consensus on the Committee; at least one member thought the criteria should not be changed, others felt the changes should be extended to promotion to Associate Professor. If the proposed changes are accepted, they will be included into the revised Handbook.

Among the proposed changes are:

1. the inclusion of a personal statement by the candidate on how the candidate's teaching, research, and service fit into the candidate's career as well as into the academic programs of the University;
2. a teaching portfolio of the candidate's activities over the relevant period of time;
3. evidence of educational leadership in articles, conference presentations, syllabi, and the like;
4. letters of peer evaluation of teaching;

5. University's establishment of "modest but consistent" funding to reward excellence in teaching and for improving teaching.

Professor Meacham supported the Committee's proposals and thanked Professor Acara for clarification of some questions he had circulated in a separate handout. Professor Welch relayed two points the Provost wished to make: First, he very much wants to upgrade the criterion of teaching in ALL dossiers (not only those considered for promotion to Full Professor); secondly, in his judgment, the Provost thought the relative weighing of teaching and service could vary according to the level of promotion.

The Chair welcomed discussion, reminding the FSEC that the idea is not to redefine the criteria, but rather to re-emphasize them. Professor Faran asked what the first paragraph requires that is not already required. Professor Acara said it requires the Provost to emphasize the importance of teaching; Professor Faran contested that that is not what is stated, or rather that what she intended to say in that paragraph is not explicitly stated. He questioned whether the word may should be replaced by should/must to be more forceful. Furthermore, he doubted that a personal statement by the candidate was appropriate in the dossier -- this would also be more work for the candidate if indeed it is required.

Vice-Provost Fischer argued that the procedure allows the candidate the opportunity to characterize the evolution of his/her research and to provide a context for this process. Professor Noble voiced support, saying the personal statement is an opportunity for the candidate to say what he/she is doing here; thus she would not like to see this eliminated. Professor Faran countered that if there were no negative statements in the dossier, why should the candidate bother with a personal statement when time could be better spent pursuing further research. He argued further that, very often, a dean would not be able to evaluate one's teaching ability, that in fact very little can be evaluated outside the candidate's department. Professor Acara responded that for that reason, the Committee suggested that such an evaluation be school-specific.

Professor Faran warned against misleading junior faculty into thinking that teaching might substitute for quality research, and suggested that perhaps this funding should be made available only to tenured professors. Professor Welch pointed out that, since the students are the ones who benefit from improved teaching, the proposed funding should be extended to all. To this Professor Faran replied that there is a potential conflict between doing what is right for students and doing what is right for junior colleagues. Vice-Provost Fischer acknowledged Professor Faran's concerns, but argued that the point of the recommendations is nothing revolutionary, but simply to shift our perceptions of the value of teaching. Each department must exercise wisdom in guiding junior faculty along appropriate lines of research, but this need not exclude a re-emphasis on teaching.

Professor Frisch observed that it is easy to call for cultural changes in the university, but we must be careful not to send mixed signals to the junior faculty. In his view, cultures change according to the classical paradigm shift -- we catch up to what is happening in reality. He considers it important to establish a framework in which the interrelations of teaching, service, and research will become more legible.

Professor Noble hoped that this impending change in the preparation of dossiers would eliminate the simplified teaching evaluation (and its abuses) as was practiced in the past. She added that systematic documentation has been requested repeatedly in promotion cases anyway.

With regard to procedure, Professor Meacham suggested that the proposed changes be made more explicit before being interwoven into the Handbook. Vice-Provost Fischer, speaking of the efforts to transliterate the proposal into a revised dossier checklist, noted that it is the "structural legibility" which is essential in moving the agenda along, and that this is where the bulk of the work remains to be done.

Professor Jameson appreciated the efforts of the Committee, but doubted the strength and efficacy of the proposal. Although on the surface it re-emphasizes teaching, the proposal in effect seems to confirm the "second-class" status of teaching. Professor Boot admitted that it is a small first step; its importance lies much more in a change in ambience than in actual

action. That the chairs will now be focussed on having a statement of the candidate's teaching ability prepared will cause teaching to be considered more heavily in promotion cases.

Professor Jameson replied that we must find a way of raising the standards of teaching to the same rigorous standards by which we measure research. Vice-Provost Fischer countered that what she was asking for -- namely, peer review for teaching -- we do not yet have, although we could move toward it. He added that each candidate should include a personal statement of teaching in the teaching portfolio. Professor Wetherhold doubted that, if we wished to change the culture of evaluation, we would not achieve that goal simply by adding additional checklists to the review process.

Professor Faran asked if the Faculty Tenure and Privileges Committee had any interaction with the Teaching and Learning Committee; Professor Welch reminded him that the latter had just been reconstituted. Professor Faran then commented on the possibility of substituting teaching for research, e.g., teaching an extra course if one's research activity were not as productive as desired. He then reminded the Committee of the new draft resolution from the Budget Priorities Committee, requiring all committees to consider any budgetary implications of proposed resolutions.

Professor D'Elia agreed with Professor Jameson that if the intent of the proposal is to increase the credibility of teaching as a criterion for promotion, then we need to move toward a peer review of teaching, as we do with research. He added that this would get rid of the "checklist mentality" and the inane set of empirical data by which we attempt to prove that we are good teachers; furthermore, it would get senior faculty involved with mentoring the junior faculty and thus conveying to them the message that teaching is important.

The Chair asked the Faculty Tenure and Privileges Committee to react to the discussion. Professor Acara stated that the FSEC should decide what it wants to forward to the Senate; also, if we were serious about changing the culture of promotion, then certainly the Provost must play a major role. The Chair asked the FSEC for a motion to forward the proposal to

the Senate for discussion; it was so moved and seconded. Professor Meacham did not think the report in its present form was ready to go to the Senate. He suggested first, to include more rationale, and secondly, to attach the current criteria for promotion to the proposal so that the Senate could have a context with which to compare the proposal. A vote was taken, and the motion passed with 8 in favor, 5 against.

Both Professor Malone and Professor Jameson argued that the proposal lacked sufficient detail, and that the underlying issues and objections raised needed to be articulated and answered more clearly. Professor Acara replied that there had been sufficient disagreement in the Committee that there should be any changes at all; thus, unless the Senate agreed that changes were necessary, it would be idle work suggesting any specifics.

The Chair remarked that the Senate would be asked to accept the report, after which it would become advisory to the administration; he felt confident that the administration would take Senate acceptance very seriously, and would send the report with comments and suggestions for re-writes regarding the criteria and their implementation.

Vice-Provost Fischer said the administration is viewing this as an entirely collaborative effort; administrators still consider themselves faculty and thus are deeply engaged in this venture. He assured the FSEC that the Provost is standing very strongly behind this. Senior Vice-Provost Levy echoed this, mentioning that if the administration had had any intent of slowing the process down, it would simply have allowed it to "run its normal course" (which would take another year at least) instead of suggesting this parallel process with simultaneous review by the Deans' Council.

Item 4: Library/Computing Technology.

Senior Associate Vice-President Voldemar Innus explained that, in order to establish a better planning process for Information Technology (IT) at UB, there had been a reorganization within University Services, under which the libraries and CIT report directly to him. He, in turn, works with the Provost and other Vice-

Presidents in developing the IT agenda. He stated that it was not his intention "to bring to a halt all the initiatives occurring in the vice-presidential and provostal areas", but rather to form an ad hoc committee to review the pending issues which needed to be addressed before the new structure was in place.

The first step in the planning process is the assessment of IT at our campus. He had met with all the deans and vice-presidents on campus to get their views on Instructional Technology, as well as with most constituent groups. In addition, he scheduled meetings with various expert groups at conferences and will visit other universities with well-integrated IT plans, thus attaining external perspectives from both the business and educational sectors.

Other goals of the committee include:

- the identification of priorities and strategic objectives;
- the development of an organizational structure;
- the development of a planning and implementation process;
- the development of a communication plan separate from the organizational structure to facilitate the exchange of information;
- the delineation of centralized vs. decentralized responsibilities;
- the development of a comprehensive IT budget;
- the development of a centralized IT development plan that meets the needs agreed to as part of the centralized and decentralized responsibilities division.

Professor Welch had invited Senior Associate Vice-President Innus to attend the FSEC meeting to receive feed from its members as faculty and as consumers. He reminded the Committee of two Senate resolutions, one which stated that we need to spend more on distributed information technology, and the second which concerned the digitalization of the libraries as long as it does not hurt the traditional collection.

Professor Meacham asked for a concrete example of a change that would result from the new planning process. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus mentioned the decision to modify and upgrade the IBM mainframe. Previously, discussions took place within, and were limited to, University Services; under the new plan, there would be broader discussion of those issues involving the university community. He did not expect a significant difference in most cases; the issue is not that there have been bad decisions, but rather that people have often not understood the contexts of those decisions. The new communication plan would prevent future misunderstandings.

Professor Malone noted that most issues which arise are specific rather than general in nature, and wondered how (and by whom) these decisions are made; he offered as a specific example the decision to eliminate the VAX system. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus replied that he did not know the answer to this particular question. He envisions in the future a three-tiered structure: the top level would handle mission, policy, and strategic planning issues, the level below would develop specific one- or two-year plans which would include educational technology, academic computing, administrative computing, and would identify research needs. Professor Malone remarked that all Senior Associate Vice-President Innus said had the flavor of an administrative impact, and asked about the level of the actual users. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus replied that the new plan will involve more directly the user community and its input.

Professor Faran asked what the third level of the three-tiered system would be; Senior Associate Vice-President Innus said this would consist of the individuals who implement the plans and recommendations, with robust participation of the users. Professor Cowen reminded Senior Associate Vice-President Innus of past rejection of user input into enhancements, such as being able to print, since printing was not considered a supported activity. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus admitted that there had been a decision to act very quickly and abruptly, but argued that this did not involve any enhancement; it was rather a transition, done in such a way that did not provide for any consultation.

Professor Cowen asked about Senior Associate Vice-President Innus' references to the "Gardner Group" and the "CAUSE Conference". Senior Associate Vice-President Innus explained that the Gardner Group is a well-recognized industry consultant for IT issues, one of the premier consulting groups in the world. CAUSE is an organization consisting chiefly of chief information officers at major universities throughout the country; their conference is scheduled in December. Professor Cowen then asked which constituent groups he had met with; Senior Associate Vice-President Innus responded that that was yet to come. The reason for establishing the communication plan was that organizational structure tends to filter information both upwards and downwards; the new plan would involve "grass-roots" input from the three major constituent groups. Although this will take an enormous amount of time, it is necessary because the institution has been "very lacking" in communication.

About the filtering effect, Professor Cowen expressed some concern, since several deans did not seem to know much about this area. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus replied that this is an interim step he is taking before everything is in place. Professor Cowen then asked what he intended to do with the current elaborate committee structure, which has become unwieldy. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus replied that it is indeed a Gordian knot, and that there is a continual push to make it even more complex; at present, he has no simple answer.

It bothered Professor Nickerson that the Library Committee was not more involved with the new planning; although the two entities were and probably should remain separate, there are several issues on which they need to interact. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus seemed to be moving quickly on developing the new structure, and wondered if he was leaving the Library Committee out of the discussion. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus replied that he had not yet done anything that leads to precisely what is planned, and assured Professor Nickerson that he will consult others, including the Library Committee, when the time for actual planning comes.

Professor Wetherhold mentioned that many faculty have software packages which run on the VAX environment, which is being eliminated in favor of the UNIX system. He wondered

whether the system could be revised in such a way that this software could still be used. He had little success in finding help in this matter. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus found this to be part of the problem of not talking to the consumer groups and identifying potential problems. Although he did not understand the specific technical issues with which Professor Wetherhold had problems, he assured him that in the future he would have a forum for those problems.

Professor Jameson wanted to understand more about the centralized IT development plan. She mentioned that technology should be helpful to some sort of academic vision or instructional plan, but was curious as to what such a centralized plan would look like. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus replied that this would arise out of the discussions of centralization, decentralization, and devolution of responsibilities. Professor Jameson then asked whether this was a plan for the devolution of responsibilities rather than a plan for platforms for the next five years. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus replied that the plan encompassed both, infrastructure and support.

Professor Wetherhold was worried that the devolution of responsibilities could result in a loss of a centralized specialization or information center, with many separate places trying to replicate these different specialties. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus replied that this problem is not unique to this campus, but it is a problem with which we must grapple.

Professor Adams asked Senior Associate Vice-President Innus to comment on the avenues we could pursue for funding. Senior Associate Vice-President Innus mentioned first the specialized fees, such as the new technology fee -- as an important cornerstone of support. Part of the differential tuition (which is bound to be instituted at some point) must be reserved for this purpose. Other sources include re-allocation of some portion of existing funding, closer cooperation with vendors in getting gifts and grants, and more creative use of research foundation money.

Item 5: Approval of the Agenda for the Faculty Senate Meeting - November 19, 1996

It was agreed that the original Item 7, the first reading of the Proposed Amendments to the Charter of the Faculty Senate and to the Standing Orders, would be placed as Item 6. The original Item 6, the first reading of the report of the Faculty Tenure and Privileges Committee, would be placed as Item 7, since it would probably invite more discussion. With this change, the agenda for the Faculty Senate Meeting for November 19, 1996, was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert G. Hoeing,
Secretary of the Faculty Senate

THOSE PRESENT:

University Officer(s): William Fischer, Ken Levy

Chair: Claude Welch

Secretary: Robert G. Hoeing

Arts & Letters: Michael Frisch, Nathan Grant

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Robert Wetherhold

Health-Related Professions: Atif Awad

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Bernice Noble

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: James Faran

Nursing: Mattie Rhodes

Social Sciences: Peter Hare, Jack Meacham

SUNY Senators: Maureen Jameson, Dennis Malone, Peter Nickerson, Claude Welch

University Libraries: Marilyn Kramer

Guests:

Graduate Student Association: David Toscana-Cantaffa

REPORTER: Sue Wuetcher

Other Guest(s):

Faculty Tenure and Privileges Committee: Margaret Acara (Chair), John Boot, Michael Farrell

Voldemar Innus, Senior Associate Vice-President

Judith Adams (University Libraries)

Michael Cowen (Mathematics)

Excused:

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini

Absent:

Architecture & Planning: G. Scott Danford

Dental Medicine: William Miller

Educational Opportunity Center: Areta Buchner

Graduate School of Education: James Hoot

Law: Errol Meidinger

Management: Ramaswamy Ramesh

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Herbert Schuel

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Stanley Bruckenstein

Pharmacy: Nathan