

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of December 18, 1996 (approved)

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The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met in 567 Capen Hall at 2:00 PM to consider the following agenda:

1. [Report of the Chair](#)
2. [Report of the President](#)
3. [Report on New Construction and Rehabilitation](#)
4. [Report on the Quality and Availability of Classroom Space](#)

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The Chair circulated information on three items: an Equipment Challenge Grant program, a Multidisciplinary Pilot Project program, and a request from a Counseling Center member regarding an internet usage questionnaire. He announced that the Provost will submit drafts of his planning documents to the deans for their comments, to be followed by discussion of it early in the Spring 1997 semester. The plan, he surmised, would be released early in February.

The Chair then circulated a revised agenda for FSEC discussions in the upcoming semester. Professor Nickerson noted that two very important items were slated for discussion on January 29, 1997, and expressed concern that the Committee would not have the time to discuss both in sufficient depth. He suggested that the date be reserved exclusively for discussion of Academic Planning.

Professor Schuel asked when the FSEC would see a copy of the report; the Chair believed we would have it by February 19. Professor Jameson said she would appreciate it if the Chair could work into the agenda for January 15, 1997, the Provost's education technology plan, and to bring to the meeting the author of the plan. Professor Frisch added to the agenda a discussion of the budgeting model being

adopted (Responsibility-Centered Management), an item which will require a lot of discussion and which will have real policy implications.

Professor Meidinger supported Professor Jameson's earlier suggestion, noting a further deterioration in the existing access to the computing system, growing delays, and a "disinvestment going on in the central system".

Professor Meacham suggested deleting two items from the agenda in order to allow time for the more important additions: the capital campaign (scheduled for February 12) and the patent policy (scheduled for April 23). The Chair asked the Committee for opinions. Professor Malone argued that, as the University tries to become more independent, the issue of patents and their impact on the University's income will become quite important; he suggested we retain that agenda item.

Professor Hare wondered if the agenda could be made more flexible with respect to the discussion of Academic Planning; he argued that this should depend on when the FSEC receives the document(s), adding that this issue may require more than one meeting.

President Greiner agreed that "quality time" would be needed for discussion of the Provost's Academic Plan. He strongly suggested the FSEC also include the topic of student housing and student life in its agenda for the coming semester.

Item 2: Report of the President

The President wished everyone Happy Holidays and invited questions from the Committee. Professor Schuel asked if any plan were in place to resume the search for a dean for the Medical School. President Greiner replied yes, but that the search will be conducted in a different fashion: the Steering Committee determined that there should first be a search for a vice-president, who would then oversee the search for a dean.

Professor Malone, referring to the discussion on collective bargaining at the last Senate meeting, asked if the President had any idea what the next step might be. President Greiner replied that he was trying to arrange an off-the-record session with the UUP and SUNY leaders, in order to understand their positions more clearly, and that he would contact friends in Albany and report on this issue. The

people in the central office, he said, are beginning to understand that there is a sense of urgency. A crucial issue for both the Governor and the UUP is what to do with the three SUNY hospitals; any attempt to operate them now as a State agency "borders on impossible", since they cannot compete effectively with not-for-profit hospitals. It is becoming increasingly difficult to defend further subsidizing these hospitals as public entities. Given the changes in federal policy regarding Medicare and Medicaid and other factors, the environment in which we can run a State hospital is simply not there anymore. On the other side, about 6,000 UUP employees in the hospitals are associated with the SUNY medical centers, which is necessarily a huge concern for the Union.

Item 3: Report on the New Construction and Rehabilitation (part 1)

Associate Vice-President Nayler first reported on the plans for the North Campus. The general plan to improve quality and accessibility involves investing \$100 million in a ten-year span. This includes bringing Mathematics and Architecture to, and providing integrated student services at, the North Campus.

Nayler believes Facilities Planning could generate additional research funding. About \$75 million is now being used to provide a new facility for Natural Sciences and Engineering; in addition, funding would be increased (by about one-third) by bringing Mathematics there and targeting investments in many interdisciplinary programs. Part of this is due to providing the needed facilities space for that research program.

Facilities is also looking at ways to participate in expanding the use of educational technology on campus; for this purpose, Facilities has asked Albany for funding in the regular Capital Budget, apart from the money received in the Operating Budget. Although there is not any funding available in the current proposal, it is acknowledged as a facilities need in the Construction Fund's five-year capital plan. The program also includes building apartment-style student housing, regarded as a critical need for student recruitment and retention, and for enhancing the quality of student life.

The major projects to be examined for the next ten years included the following:

- [The Mathematics building.](#)

- The Natural Sciences and Engineering building, "the next-highest academic priority" in the North Campus plan. There is presently an agreement with a construction fund to undertake a program study to size the building and estimate the cost of the facility.
- All student services presently located in the temporary buildings behind Hayes Hall trailer, including Student Health Services, will be brought to the North Campus.
- Architecture & Planning would be the only undergraduate program remaining on the South Campus; moving this department is considered a longer-term plan, and "may fall outside the ten-year window".

The Mathematics building is currently under design by a nationally-renowned architectural firm, which has completed a schematic design and estimated construction cost at \$6 million. It has been approved by the SUNY Construction Fund and is presently under review by the Division of Budget for inclusion in the fiscal 1997-1998 budget. Despite the current policy which rules out any new construction on the SUNY campuses, Facilities made "impassioned pleas" to the Division of Budget representatives that this is a critical and necessary project -- a very small project, Nayler concluded, given the magnitude of the total capital budget.

The building, which will be situated just to the west of the Computing Center, will comprise 20,000 net square feet, sufficient for all the programmatic needs of the Mathematics faculty (offices for faculty and TAs/GAs, seminar rooms, one lecture hall, and some computer labs). It will not, however, provide all the classrooms needed. Vice-President Nayler expected the design to be completed by Summer 1997. Facilities is presently lobbying with the Construction Fund to be able to bid the project ahead of the bonds being sold; the budget would probably not be approved until the summer, consequently the bonds will not be sold until the fall. Without a Fall 1997 construction start, Nayler feared the project (estimated at two years) would lag and delay the targeted opening date of Fall 1999.

Through surveys and interviews, Facilities learned that students prefer apartment-style housing, which is lacking on both campuses. Not only students, but their parents as well, are concerned about the general quality of student life and student safety. Proposed is the construction of 120 two-bedroom, townhouse-style units at the corner of Sweet Home and Chestnut Ridge roads, to be financed entirely by the UB Foundation which owns the land. The project is under review by the Properties and Finance

Committees of the Foundation, and will soon come up for discussion by the Board of Trustees. Each unit would be 1000 square feet in size, with standard living room, dining room, kitchen, and half-bath on the first floor, and two bedrooms with full bath on the second. Internet connections to the system on campus, cable TV, shuttle bus service, outdoor recreational space and a social hall would be provided, as well as an on-site manager. Because it is a private project, it must receive town approval. Assuming approval this Spring and the start of construction in May or June 1997, construction would last until May 1998.

Professor Meidinger was concerned that the proposed design did not look like on-campus housing; it was situated on fast roads, and lacked bike paths or other similar connections which would facilitate access to campus. Professor Meacham commented that there is already a similar problem for students coming from the Ellicott Complex, who, choosing the straightest path possible, often compromise their safety; the proposed project needs to avoid this problem.

Professor Meidinger emphasized that UB falls far short of the norm in preferred student housing, and warned that if it does not provide any direct access to campus, there would be costs to pay later; he urged that Facilities "figure out the logistics" of constructing a pedestrian overpass in order to avoid any future disaster. Professor Neal, Chair of the Faculty Senate Facilities Planning Committee, responded that, according to studies and history, an overpass would not work, since people simply do not use them.

President Greiner remarked that UB would not even touch that sector of land if we had the opportunity to construct similar housing on campus. Facilities received "zero help from faculty and other groups", but rather some opposition, and the only reason for building off-campus is that it might eventually be instrumental in convincing the authorities to build similar housing on-campus. The State of New York cannot, under its current practices, policies, and rules, build a competitively-priced unit. Thus the proposal is a demonstration project; if we do not eventually build on campus, he argued, UB will be in big trouble.

Professor Frisch applauded the previous observations, and mentioned that in order to make it as successful as we want, we should work out as many of the glitches now rather than pay for them

later. Professor Meidinger, addressing President Greiner's remarks, argued that this is not a problem with the State; he simply thought the project can and must be improved.

Professor Neal said that Facilities is planning, on recommendation from the deans, a full integration, both programmatically and physically, of all the Health Sciences, "the way the Health Sciences work in the real world". The Schools of Medicine, Health-Related Professions, and Nursing will be entirely located within the Cary/Farber/Sherman complex: Occupational Therapy would remain in Kimball Hall, due to space restrictions, and Rehabilitative Medicine would be relocated there as well, given the close relationship between the two.

Other issues being considered include enhancing the current recreational and sports facilities, possibly converting existing dormitories into family-style housing, and renovating Hayes, Wende, Clark, and Harriman Halls. Vice-Provost Goodman asked about Acheson Hall; Professor Neal replied that it would remain vacant for a while, and that renovations would be necessary before it could be used again as an adequate research facility. President Greiner commented that he had asked the Provost to look into the possibility of relocating the School of Pharmacy into Acheson Hall, since funds for refurbishing would be more easily obtained than for building a new facility.

Item 3 continued below

Item 4: Report on Quality and Availability of Classroom Space

In response to numerous complaints of room scheduling for the Fall 1997 semester, the Provost had asked a task force led by Associate Provost Sullivan to investigate the problem quickly and to propose solutions. The problems seemed to comprise three components. First, there is an insufficient response to the increased demands for educational technology. Secondly, there is an inefficient use of the classrooms. Referring to the materials he distributed, Associate Provost Sullivan cited two statistics: over 60% of the centrally-scheduled classrooms were not being used on Fridays, and over 50% not being used in the afternoons after 2:00 PM. Thirdly, we have no good way of resolving conflicts or enforcing policies already in place regarding classroom space and scheduling.

He recommended four actions:

1. The installation of a standard level of fixed instructional technology in as many classrooms as possible. Included would be an overhead projector, a VCR in a lockable cabinet, appropriate computer and video projection capability, and Internet connections. This would obviate the present need to consider technology needs when scheduling classrooms.
2. Strategic investment in higher levels of technology in strategic classroom locations to stay ahead of high-end technology demand over time.
3. The reaffirmation and enforcement of existing scheduling policies.
4. The deans will be asked to be "compliance officers" in enforcing room assignments and scheduling for the various departments and faculties.

Professor Miller pointed out at this point that many freshman medical students have very little time to get from one classroom to another, because the classrooms are located at different ends of the campus. Associate Provost Sullivan said he believed that more efficient use and assignment of the classrooms would take care of this problem.

Professor Jameson commended the recommendation of a baseline standard of educational technology. However, she pointed out that students in courses which require them to work with technological facilities outside the classroom find access to these facilities difficult, since the public sites are usually reserved or overcrowded. She does not see us moving forward in this respect, and wondered what could be done about it.

Associate Provost Sullivan replied that Facilities was on the verge of integrating much more effectively what we do centrally with the distributed user communities. In addition, the Provost's Educational Technology Action Plan, initiated last year, led to the development of 22 facilities throughout the academic units; continued investment in this area will alleviate the problem. The difficulty faculty have in getting their students lab space, Professor Jameson said, was a "political problem" which needed to be addressed. Sullivan replied that Voldemar Innus' plan, in concert with his, will solve the problem.

Professor Malone asked for a clarification of "classroom efficiency". Sullivan cited an example of a class being used once a week, on a Friday, that lasted one hour fifteen minutes. Since the normal class length is 50 minutes, the class would "leak into" another time-slot which could be used for a 50-minute class; thus no MWF class could be scheduled into that slot. Unless a MW class, also lasting one

hour fifteen minutes, could be scheduled for that classroom, that classroom would sit idle on Monday and Wednesday at those times. This he considered poor, inefficient use of classroom space.

Associate Provost Sullivan then referred to a second handout dealing with the hypothetical expenditure of nearly \$300,000 in funds from savings in the CES-Way project for the improvement of classrooms. Among the recommendations listed was that the University should establish a minimum quality and attributes standard for centrally scheduled classrooms that incorporates and complements the instructional technology standard mentioned above. Professor Danford asked, if a unit could not meet the proposed efficiency or quality standards for spaces under its control, whether that unit would be asked to turn it over to the University. Sullivan replied that that would be a possibility.

Professor Meacham noted that having the classrooms in good working order sends a message to the students that we care about their education; thus this should be maintained as a high priority.

Professor Malone wondered what the consequences would be if someone should find out that a classroom was being underutilized. Associate Provost Sullivan was not sure at this point; he did note that they would invest in a number of students who would monitor the utilization of classrooms, and that, in cases of late notifications of cancellations, there might be "budgetary consequences".

Professor Hare wondered if increased scheduling in the afternoons would have any effect on attrition. Sullivan replied that he had no concrete information on this. The two ranges of responses to this issue are (1) perhaps we should not do this, and (2) if we scheduled classes more regularly on Friday, students would develop the attitude that they must attend on Friday, and would begin to attend the classes regularly.

Professor Miller noted that there are some faculty members who teach on both campuses, with no means of storing items they need for their classes, and asked whether this could be made possible. Sullivan agreed that this problem must be addressed.

Item 3: Report on New Construction and Rehabilitation (part 2)

Associate Vice-President Nayler continued his report with comments on the capital budget, in which he identified three major categories: The first for major capital projects (e.g. the School of Medicine research facility), the second for maintenance and alteration projects, and the third for maintenance

and repair projects less than \$100,000. Nayler had established a Facilities Advisory Committee which conducts broad consultation on all the capital projects.

Facilities has developed a number of projects which are geared toward enhancing the infrastructure and taking care of the basic problems on campus. The major capital projects for the 1997-1998 year are (1) the construction of the Mathematics building, (2) the construction of the Health Sciences Education Center, (3) construction and funding for the Co-Generation facility. All three together total \$40 million.

The floor was opened for questions and discussion. Professor Miller exhorted Facilities to accelerate the installation of the blue-light emergency telephones on the North Campus; this is important both as an actual safety issue as well as a perceived issue, especially in terms of how parents view the campus.

Professor Kramer asked about the status of the Bethune renovation. Nayler replied that it has been scheduled as a regional library storage facility for all Western New York campuses. The Construction Fund and the Trustees have approved a five-year plan which includes Bethune; however, there is no funding request in 1997-98 for the Bethune renovation. It would be a priority for 1998-99. Professor Kramer stressed the gravity of the situation, noting that many books -- several of them unique titles - were being discarded because there is no space for them. Nayler replied that they are aware of the urgency, that they have a plan and know the cost, but that it is not in next year's budget.

Professor Welch remarked that UB has coped with budget reductions in part by increasing the number of square feet for which each custodian is responsible, and asked whether anything is being done to halt this process. Nayler replied that they tried to offset the problem by contracting out for custodial services as they opened new facilities. Although they did stretch the space for which each custodian is responsible, they reduced the number of cycles for certain jobs, such as emptying trash three instead of five days per week. With continued budget cuts, low-priority custodial services would need to be reduced or curtailed; nevertheless, a critical standard must also be maintained for the sake of image and student recruitment.

Professor Malone requested that certain custodial practices, such as emptying trash from faculty offices, be conducted with more care, in order to ensure security.

Professor Meacham suggested that the major asset of the North campus is the lake, and that we should take advantage of this and develop it into a real focal point for recruitment and student life. The two major structures near the lake -- the bookstore and The Commons -- have no windows which look out toward the lake, nor has the area immediately surrounding it been designed in an attractive manner. Naylor agreed, and reported that original plans had included a walkway around the lake, which was never realized.

The Chair then asked the FSEC what issues the Facilities Planning Committee should consider as its charge. Professor Meacham, harking to the issue of having deans and department chairs enforce existing scheduling and classroom policies, though it would be a good idea for the Facilities Planning Committee to educate the faculty on the issue, and inform them what changes to expect. Professor Meidinger reiterated his concern about the lack of accessibility to campus, and urged that Facilities Planning make this a very high priority.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert G. Hoeing

Secretary of the Faculty Senate

THOSE PRESENT:

University Officers: W. Greiner, S. Sullivan, N. Goodman

Chair: Claude Welch

Secretary: Robert G. Hoeing

Architecture & Planning: G. Scott Danford

Arts & Letters: Michael Frisch

Dental Medicine: William Miller

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Robert Wetherhold

Graduate School of Education: James Hoot

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Law: Errol Meidinger

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini, Herbert Schuel

Pharmacy: Nathan

Social Sciences: Peter Hare, Jack Meacham

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

University Libraries: Marilyn Kramer

Guests:

REPORTER: Sue Wuetcher

Other Guests:

Ronald Nayler, Associate Vice-President of University Facilities

John Neal, Chair, Faculty Senate Facilities Planning Committee

Peter Gold, Director of the Undergraduate College

Excused:

Arts & Letters: Nathan Grant

Health-Related Professions: Atif Awad

Management: Ramaswamy Ramesh

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: James Faran

Absent:

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Bernice Noble

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Stanley Bruckenstein

Nursing: Mattie Rhodes