

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of April 7, 1999 (Approved)

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The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on April 7, 1999 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

- [1. Report of the Chair](#)
- [2. Report of the President/Provost](#)
- [3. Charging the Faculty Senate Grading Committee](#)
- [4. Report from the Faculty Senate Public Service and Urban Affairs Committee](#)
- [5. Old/New Business](#)

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that:

he attended the Professional Staff Senate Executive Committee meeting. Fred Covelli reported to the Committee on the activity of the Faculty Senate Budget Priorities Committee; Ed Brodka, Chair of the PSS Student Life Committee discussed student assistants working more than 20 hours per week and whether there is a check on their academic good standing; Professor Ludwig will work closely with the PSS Student Life Committee; the Professional Staff Senate Executive Committee, acting for the Professional Staff Senate, passed the SUNY Senate/UUP Statement of No Confidence in the Board of Trustees

he attended a meeting of the Deans with the Provost, learning that:

Yahoo ranks UB 47th among the 100 most wired colleges

the Provost reviewed enrollment plans with SUNY, and the freshman class will probably be 3,000; the 1998/1999 shortfall in enrollment will be taken from the 1999/2000 budget; performance funding by SUNY will be implemented during the next academic year but there will be no new funds

SUNY staff will probably be on campus in August to discuss Mission Review; UB was not the last campus to submit its Mission Review statement

applications to graduate programs will be submitted on line for Fall 1999

the Associate Vice President for University Libraries, Ms. von Wahlde spoke on the state of the libraries

inadequate storage continues to be a major problem

the Libraries have 3 M volumes and now acquire material "just in time"

unclear who has responsibility for securing course pack copyright permissions

role of the University Libraries in recruitment

role of UB in SUNY CONNECT

peer assessment of the University Libraries

Associate Provost Mangum has asked for nominations for a search committee for director for personnel and an assistant

SUNY Central is waging a campaign against the SUNY Senate /UUP statement of no confidence

Provost Triggles says that the Senate Resolution on Grade Replacement will be implemented effective Fall 1999

the following Senate Committees have met: Student Life Committee has formed two subcommittees, one to look at faculty advisement of student clubs and organizations, and the other to look at the

issue of academic integrity; the Teaching and Learning Committee is examining student access to the written comments in teaching evaluations and whether junior faculty should be eligible for the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching; the Educational Policy and Programs Committee has discussed assessment of academic programs and a policy on student attendance

Nicole Pitrowski, who has just been elected as President of the Student Association, is a guest at today's meeting; FSEC congratulated her on her election; she responded that she will try to ensure that there are students available to participate in Faculty Senate discussions of issues affecting students; there were comments from the floor:

would like to see Student Association funding for academic clubs increased
(Professor Welch)

budget already in place for next year; intend to publicize the academic clubs more aggressively to increase their membership which would increase their funding (President Pitrowski)

Health Sciences offers many opportunities for research and training; a greater undergraduate presence on the South Campus might make those opportunities more visible to undergraduates (Professor Baier)

not sure if it is University policy to house undergraduates on the North campus; so long as there is undergraduate housing on the South Campus there will be an S.A. presence there (President Pitrowski)

honors students are made aware of the research and training opportunities in the Health Sciences, but other undergraduates seem unaware of them, and many opportunities go unfilled (Professor Nickerson)

Career Planning and Placement lists many internships and jobs on campus
(Dr. Coles)

science courses for non-science majors are taught on the North Campus; would be better if they were taught on the South Campus so undergraduates would be exposed to the richness of the South Campus (Professor Baier)

S.A. is planning on setting up an electronic list for incoming freshmen to improve communication and inform students of opportunities (President Pitrowski)

(addressed to President Pitrowski) will you be attending Faculty Senate meetings or sending a representative? (Mr. Celock)

schedule permitting will attend, but if not will send representatives (President Pitrowski)

in response to a request, he had located a copy of the position description used in the search that identified Provost Bloch; the Chair and Dr. Coles will be on the search committee for a new Provost but the other members are unknown to the Chair

Item 2: Report of the President/Provost

The Provost added details of his Albany meeting. It is increasingly clear that the RAM is going to be a budget allocation method working within fixed sums of money, rather than expanding the state tax support as student enrollment might go up. There is an intent to implement performance funding, but no solid new money for that. The budget will be essentially flat which makes for difficulty in funding new initiatives.

- any idea of when budget might be passed? (Professor Malone)
- didn't ask since wouldn't have gotten a serious answer (Provost Triggler)

Item 3: Charging the Faculty Senate Grading Committee

Two issues have been posed by faculty as possible topics for the Grading Committee to consider. The first suggestion is that neither resigned courses nor incomplete courses be included in determining

satisfactory progress towards the bachelor degree. The second suggestion is that a student transferring from a UB undergraduate professional school to the College of Arts and Sciences be permitted to exclude all professional school courses for purposes of determining satisfactory progress, grade point average and credits toward the bachelor degree. Professor Baumer, Chair of the Faculty Senate Grading Committee asked for FSEC's comments on whether the Committee should look at these two suggestions and on other issues it should consider.

There were comments from the floor:

- the definition of "satisfactory progress" may need to meet regulations from the Higher Education Assistance Program, the NCAA or other bodies outside the University (Professor Welch)
- NCAA does have a definition of "satisfactory progress" but referring to something else; however, in role of Faculty Athletic Representative, would violently oppose the first suggestion; it would encourage athletes to resign or take incompletes which would put them at risk of other NCAA regulations and internally would be an academic disaster (Professor Malone)
- what is the rationale offered for the suggestion re incompletes, and what is the correlation to getting TAP money? (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- the second suggestion is based on a misunderstanding; when a student transfers between schools, the entire transcript is sent to the new school which takes the student's grades into whatever account it takes its own grades; for example, a student would not get credit for an F graded course at the new school, but it would be taken into consideration in computing the QPA (Vice Provost Goodman)
- a student, improperly advised to take a course, should be able to withdraw from it without penalty but that determination could be made the first week (Professor Malone)
- withdrawal from a course within the first two weeks isn't recorded on the student's transcript; have minor personal sympathy with giving a student who takes an incomplete one semester in which to complete the course before it counts against "satisfactory progress; opposed to allowing a student to resign from courses with no academic penalty because the student continues to be considered a registered student (Professor Baumer)

- is any distinction made between I/F as opposed to I/passing grade? suggest that an I/passing grade be counted toward graduation (Professor Schack)
- some students use resignations and incompletes as a way avoid studying while keeping scholarship/TAP money coming in, but that is rare; not right to penalize students who use incompletes and resignations infrequently; Committee should consider the first suggestion (Professor Sridhar)
- students who take I and R infrequently are not at risk since a student may have successfully completed only 75% of his credits and still be making satisfactory progress (Professor Baumer)
- before the implementation of W grades, even students with well documented hardships were given R grades; suggest that R grades predating the implementation of W grades be treated the same as W's; consider lowering the 75 % rule for "satisfactory progress" since, for example, federal funded assistance programs only require a 60 % rule (Dr. Coles)
- does the Committee have a student member? (Professor Welch)
- yes (Professor Baumer)
- if the Governor's proposal to require a student to be taking 15/18 credit hours before being eligible for TAP is implemented, would want to accommodate students any way we could (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- an I/x grade can only be given as a whole grade, not a plus or minus grade; if a student ultimately gets a minus grade, there can be dispute ; the Committee might want to discuss this (Professor Boot)
- Committee might alternatively want to consider three issues:
 1. is grade inflation a real problem? what are the trends at UB?
 1. is there a contrast in grading among the disciplines and class levels?
 1. consider the practice of recording not only a student's grade but also the median grade in a course (Professor Welch)
- Grading Committee may have already considered the first two issues suggested by Professor Welch (Professor Schack)

- under Professor Schroeder the Committee, working with the Office of Undergraduate Records, did produce a report on the average grade as a function of discipline and year, and there is about a .8 of a grade point between the highest and lowest; the Committee also looked at grade inflation but this is a mine field (Professor Churchill)
- should not have provisions regarding R and I grades which disadvantage students who rely on student aid (Professor Boot)
- students who are not on student aid may also be hurt by rules; had a student whose health care coverage depended on her making satisfactory progress toward the degree; am getting to the point that will only give I/F grades, regardless of the quality of the student's completed work (Professor Baumer)
- suggest the Committee update the studies done by Professor Schroeder on consistency of grading and grade inflation and re-distribute them (Professor Schack)
- Committee should see if UB's 75 % rule for satisfactory progress could be made less punitive; students who get financial aid would be less likely to lose it and their chance to continue (Dr. Coles)
- NCAA definition of satisfactory progress also must be complied with or athletes lose their grants in aid (Professor Malone)
- several years ago the Committee did look at the 75 % rule and found it necessary to be in compliance with all external agencies (Professor Churchill)
- if we want one set of policies, can't avoid taking the highest standard (Professor Baumer)

The Chair asked for a prioritization of the issues suggested. Professor Baumer enumerated the following items: how to count R and I grades, various standards on satisfactory progress and how UB's standard relates to them, the transfer issue, grade inflation and consistency of grades across disciplines, course numbering and student class levels, and putting a median course grade on transcripts

- issue of financial aid should get top priority (Professor Welch)
- understand the Committee is being asked to look at standards set by various outside agencies concerning satisfactory progress or good standing, compare those to the University's standard,

and report on the matter, perhaps recommending changes; the R and I issue would be only peripherally included in this study (Professor Baumer)

- consider the issue of the pre and post W grade R's (Dr. Coles)
- redo the Schroeder reports; the transfer issue is based on mistaken information so disregard it (Professor Schack)
- don't support discussing the R and I grades issue (Professor Churchill)
- median grade of the transcript is third priority (Professor Baumer)
- could consider the use of rank in class as an alternate to the median grade issue (Professor Churchill)
- dislike horse race implied in having a median grade included on transcripts (Professor Harwitz)
- student is in competition with himself; what is important is if he did his best work (Professor Thompson)
- study issue to see if perhaps its inclusion would advantage UB's students (Professor Nickerson)

Item 2. (continued) Report of the President/Provost

President Greiner asked if the Faculty Senate had adopted the SUNY Senate/UUP statement of no confidence, including the hospital provision? Upon the Chair's informing him that the Faculty Senate had done so, the President said that he would be asked by SUNY Central to interpret the action of the UB Senate. In the past the various Faculty Senates have avoided entanglement with collective bargaining issues, and the statement could have the appearance of melding academic and collective bargaining issues. He will tell SUNY Central not to focus on this aspect of the statement. They should rather see it as the vehicle by which the SUNY faculty are communicating their unhappiness at the Board of Trustees for ignoring faculty interests. The New Paltz affair, involving freedom of expression, and the Board's adoption of the General Education Requirement with no regard to faculty's academic concerns are egregious examples.

There were comments from the floor:

- assertion that SUNY Senate has been co-opted by UUP is on its face indicative of the wrong attitude toward faculty and insulting; faculty feel very seriously that areas they are genuinely

and deeply concerned about have been intruded on in a way which destroys process in the institution (Professor Harwitz)

- faculty voted for the statement not because of UUP's joint sponsorship but because they felt there was no possibility of meaningful dialogue with the Board; spoke in favor of retaining the hospital provision because of issues of service to the poor and because am uncertain whether the Medical School's funding could also be cut; also needed to show support for our SUNY colleagues who are affected by the hospital issue, just as we want support for issues important to us, e.g., research funding, which don't affect all SUNY institutions (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- the Chancellor is dismissive of this first joint Senate/UUP action, but just because it is unprecedented, it should be taken very seriously; not necessary for us to subscribe to every whereas in the statement because in aggregate the statement simply means what it says, the faculty have no confidence in the Board; not strong enough to say that the SUNY faculty are unhappy (Professor Schack)
- SUNY Senate has on two prior occasions tried to communicate its concerns to the Board and has been ignored; Chancellor Ryan is part of the problem not part of the solution; having been treated with contemptuous disregard, the faculty had to do something, and this statement of no confidence is it; this affair makes it exceedingly unlikely we will attract academically adequate Chancellor candidates (Professor Malone)
- am trying to arrange a conference of the SUNY hospitals here in Buffalo in the Fall to see if we can sort out the problems with the System administrators (Professor Fisher)

The President noted that the Provost Search Committee has been formed and the names of members will be announced soon. There will be six faculty on the Committee. He is looking at consulting firms to help with the search and expects the search to take place mainly in the Fall.

He also announced that the Mission Review documents are all on the web. UB's response was among the most succinct. SUNY staff will come in late Spring or Summer to discuss mission review. The President encourages continuing discussion of the issues of mission review on the Senate's electronic discussion page.

Item 4: Report from the Faculty Senate Public Service and Urban Affairs Committee

Professor Nyberg, Chair of the President's Review Board, in June 1998 submitted a draft document entitled *Evaluation of Professional Academic Work* to the campus for comment. It is a guide to PRB policies. Professor Frisch, Chair of the Faculty Senate Committee on Public Service, presented the Committee's written comments on the draft. The Committee felt that the document makes an important advance by broadening the definition of scholarship to include the application of research. However the Committee felt its section on professional service was confusing, ranging in its discussion from public benefit to service as a journal editor. The Committee suggests that the term "public service" be used only for applied research, which is distinct from professional service and University/community service. The Committee hopes to meet with Professor Nyberg for further discussion

Dr. Brooks-Bertram from the Office of Public Service and Urban Affairs spoke about the second annual symposium sponsored by the Office and the Committee on Public Service. It will be held April 12, 1999, and is entitled Symposium on Public Service : Applied Scholarship for Promotion and Tenure. Its focus will be how to fit public service into the tenure and promotion process. The Symposium will explore how professional schools, which lead in the development of the concept of public service, evaluate and assess public service. There will also be speakers from Portland State University, which has made public service one of the legs of the tenure stool. Assessment of public service at Portland State is done by a campus wide Assessment Committee which determines the scope and meaning of service.

The Office is impressed with the Nyberg document. Its framing of applied scholarship as being service which is grounded in knowledge and theory is acceptable to the Office. The comments of the Committee on Public Service are also helpful. The Office wants to stress that applied scholarship takes the lead as opposed to professional service.

There were comments from the floor:

- Committee might suggest to Professor Nyberg that University Service and community service should be discussed in different paragraphs, service to the University being far more important (Professor Schack)

- am uncomfortable with treating the editorship of a journal as professional service; should be treated as scholarship (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- Committee wanted to avoid the three bins of scholarship, service and teaching and create a bridge (Professor Frisch)
- would like a concrete example of public service; assume it should be unpaid work; fear that public service will become a requirement for promotion and tenure (Professor Boot)
- Professor Taylor's work building the Office of Urban Initiatives which is producing some very interesting understandings of the nature of black business development is a good example; public service doesn't require that the work be done on a charity basis; public service can raise serious questions of the distinctions among paid work, consulting work and work done gratis; likewise it can be tricky to distinguish advocacy from politics; there is no intent to raise the bar for promotion and tenure to require public service; this is an inclusionary provision to make legible to PRB the career of faculty who do applied research, it is not an exclusionary provision (Professor Frisch)
- PRB should consider public service to be a kind of research and not discuss it in the same section as professional, University and community service; applied research may require as much research as traditional research; the issue of payment for applied research is not relevant to promotion and tenure decisions (Professor Malave)
- the Committee is also concerned to provide migration possibilities of applied research to the fundamental, central considerations rather than having it stranded in the service section (Professor Frisch)
- in response to the Public Service Faculty Initiative there were about 50 proposals; faculty had no difficulty in showing how they were engaged in scholarship which framed an approach to a societal problem which would provide a service to a specified group; the proposals were so good it was very difficult to pick the winners (Dr. Brooks-Bertram)
- University and community service are not related to one's discipline, whereas public service is so related; other examples of public service are Professor Welch's work on human rights in Africa, my own work with the National Weather Bureau on the design and defense of a radar system (Professor Malone)

- a distinguishing characteristic of public service is the combination of individual faculty talent and university uniqueness and the delivery of the two for some public benefit; some public service is really a public disservice (Professor Baier)
- don't want to make simple distinctions between A and B because depending on the level of involvement, the two may end up supporting the same outcome (Professor Harwitz)
- agree that the issue is not definition but assessment (Professor Frisch)
- in some disciplines there are recognized models of public service that would support promotion and tenure, while in other disciplines there are none; the Committee could usefully compile a broadly based list of examples of public service (Professor Schack)

There was a motion (seconded) to receive the report. The motion passed.

Item 5: Old/new business

Professor Fisher was concerned with the noise level in the Student Union during the April 6, 1999, Faculty Senate meeting. He pointed out the danger of hearing loss. Professor Adams-Volpe said that the employees in the Union have brought an OSHA suit. Professor Nickerson added that the Union has a sound meter which is used to monitor the noise level.

Professor Schack inquired about progress on forming an ad hoc committee to look at the issue of graduate faculty. Professor Nickerson reminded the group of his e-mail message saying that he has no notes of what was decided and asking for members' recollections. Professor Schack suggested the committee look at all issues involving graduate faculty status, e.g., appointment of graduate faculty, whether and how graduate faculty should be reviewed, and whether the graduate faculty is an outmoded institution.

There was a motion (seconded) to form an ad hoc committee to look at all issues involving graduate faculty status. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn M. Kramer

Secretary of Faculty Senate

Present:

Chair: Peter Nickerson

Secretary: Marilyn Kramer

Dental Medicine: Robert Baier

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Ramalingam Sridhar

Graduate School of Education: Lilliam Malave

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Law: Louis Swartz

Management: John Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Cedric Smith

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Melvyn Churchill, Samuel Schack

Nursing: Jacqueline Thompson

Social Sciences: William Baumer, Michael Harwitz

SUNY Senators: Judith Adams-Volpe, John Fisher, Dennis Malone, Claude Welch

Ex-Officio: Robert Hoeing

University Officers:

William Greiner, President

David Triggles, Provost

Guests:

Sue Wuechter, *Reporter*

John Celock, *The Spectrum*

Michael Frisch, Chair, Faculty Senate Public Service and Urban Affairs Committee

Peggy Brooks-Bertram, Office of Public Service and Urban Affairs

Nicole Pitrowski, President, Student Association

Suzanne Ley, Student Association

Nicolas Goodman, Vice Provost

William Coles, Professional Staff Senate

Joe Cook, *The Spectrum*

Excused:

Arts & Letters: James Holstun

Pharmacy: Nathan

University Libraries: Dorothy Woodson

Absent:

Architecture & Planning: Shahin Vassigh

Health Related Professions: Luc Gosselin

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini