

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of August 27, 1997 (approved)

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

1. [Moment of Silence](#)
2. [Report of the Budget Priorities Committee](#)
3. [University Budget for 1997/98](#)
4. [Further Discussion of the Budget and Budget Priorities](#)
5. [Report of the Chair](#)
6. [Other Items of Business](#)
7. [Committee Nominations \(Executive Session\)](#)

Item 1: Moment of Silence

Professor Nickerson asked the FSEC to observe a moment of silence in memory of all faculty and staff colleagues who passed away this summer.

Item 2: Report of the Budget Priorities Committee

Professor Gates, Chair of the Budget Priorities Committee (BPC), reported that the 1997-98 agenda for the BPC divides into three categories:

- *Communication.* The BPC, which has worked most closely with administration, needs and plans to improve communications with faculty and staff, to facilitate communications between administration and faculty/staff, and to establish actual mechanisms for achieving these goals.
- *Subcommittees.* The subcommittees of the BPC will concentrate on three major issues: (1) The Academic Information System, designed to reveal our operations to us of the BPC and to develop information of importance for the academic operations and educational purposes of this institution; (2) Incentives and rewards; and (3) Responsibility-Centered Management (RCM).

- *Collaborative Budget Development.* In order to improve its "reading" of the University, the BPC will urge each unit to organize its own budget committee, which would report to the BPC.
- At its next meeting, the BPC will consider the Research Foundation's five business models, form subcommittees, and formulate their charges. He invited suggestions for other budget-related items to be considered.
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Item 3: University Budget for 1997/98

Senior Vice-President Wagner presented an overview of the 1997/98 State University budget. The State budget appropriates for the State University an operating budget of \$1,510.5 million, equal to the Trustees' original request for the 1997/98 fiscal year. State tax support funds \$729 million (an increase of \$117.7 million) of the operating budget; the remaining \$781.5 million is to be funded by University-generated revenue. No tuition increase is anticipated to achieve this revenue target.

Appropriations for Special Revenue Funds (Residence Halls - \$160 million, general IFR - \$325 million, SUTRA - \$50 million, hospitals - \$665 million, Long Island Veterans' Home - \$24 million, Bridge Program - \$10 million) remain at the level recommended in the 1997/98 Executive Budget. \$14.5 million were approved for the endowment fund spending plan.

The budget approves \$170.8 million in new appropriations for State-operated campuses, compared with the University request of \$474.3 million. Included in the new budget are \$117.8 million for bonded capital projects, \$21 million in direct State support, and \$32 million for a revolving loan program for residence halls.

Funding for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) remains at the 1996/97 level, and there have been no base-level reductions. Senior Vice-President Wagner mentioned that the budget for next year (fiscal 1998/99) would also be "reasonably decent", and hoped not only for stability but also for increased State tax support. He added that UB, after examining its budget requirements, adjusted the savings factor upward by \$3 million. The main reason, he said, is that the revenues, which UB generates, have decreased; for example, SUTRA revenues will probably meet projected targets, but nothing beyond, and revenues from utility savings will be less than in the previous year, due to the financing of the utilities conversion.

Professor Welch asked if separate appropriations would cover the pay increases stipulated in the new UUP contract; Senior Vice-President Wagner expected that, upon ratification of the contract, the State legislature would put forward a bill to pay for those increases. Professor Noble asked whether the decrease in indirect costs is a reflection of a decrease in research funding or awards and grants. Senior Vice-President Wagner replied that it is a combination of both, that the mix is changing; his office will be discussing this problem and possible solutions over the next few days.

Professor Nickerson asked him what the senior administration is considering in its "forward-looking" budget planning. Senior

Vice-President Wagner responded that it would continue to push for increased State appropriations (which, he commented, is "a political process") would look for additional revenue sources, for opportunities for increasing revenues from tuitions and fees, and step up recruitment of out-of-state students, among other things. In addition, administration is pushing hard on the capital budget, in particular for the construction of the Mathematics Building and the comprehensive Health Science Education Center. Whereas the January budget had nothing for these projects, the new budget contains "a significant amount of money" which has not yet been allocated.

Professor Gates observed that the issue of indirect cost recovery underscores the importance of the various units of the University, since each handles this matter differently; for that reason, the Budget Priorities Committee will look into budget allocations in the various units this year, as mentioned earlier.

Professor Faran wondered whether the capital projects would be stalled until the State government and legislature act; Senior Vice-President Wagner responded that, with capital allocation, the Math Building should be ready for construction by the end of September.

Professor Malone wondered to what extent the relatively positive 1997/98 budget is associated with the upward surge in the stock market this past summer, and whether a possible downturn in the market would substantially affect the budget as it now stands.

Senior Vice-President Wagner answered that, clearly, the State's added resources have come from the financial services sector, and that, were this to change dramatically, it would have some impact; the challenge we face is what to do in the off years.

Professor Gates noted that a good stock year affects anything dependent on endowment income; increases in endowment income are reserved --- which makes us more secure in the off years than we otherwise would be.

Item 4: Further Discussion of the Budget and Budget Priorities

On the issue of collaborative budget development, Professor Faran asked whether the various units would advise the deans on their budgeting strategies, and whether the deans were ready to accept this as part of their duties. Professor Gates responded that this is a responsibility of the deans. He added that the faculty have a responsibility to set educational priorities which have an impact on the budget. Although a large block of the budget which is not prioritized at all --- salaries, for example --- he asked what can be done "at the margins" to improve the educational process. Before units can determine their priorities, however, they must first understand the budget process. At present, there is a wide degree of variation among the departments as to how (well) they understand the budget; information is not shared, but needs to be. Professor Gates acknowledged that, although we do not control the amounts of money at our disposal, we can determine its distribution --- "if we can't turn the spigots, we can design the plumbing system".

Professor Nickerson pointed out that the BPC is a committee that had to develop carefully, over time, because it involves a great

deal of trust between faculty/staff and the administration. Professor Welch added that the relationship between the BPC and administration requires extensive consultation, organizing efforts, and sharing of information. Professor Gates remarked that the BPC has also succeeded in shifting the faculty's attention beyond State allocation, which indeed comprises a relatively small percentage of the budget.

Professor Doyno alerted the BPC to the issue of how merit money is distributed --- primarily to administration, secondarily to research, and to teaching "only as a distant third". He urged the need for increased faculty involvement in setting priorities.

Professor Noble added that there has been a gender bias in the distribution of merit money and discretionary increases, an issue which the BPC must work to correct.

Professor Malone commented that the amount of influence the faculty has in budget priorities depends on how much effort they put forth; most, he said, do not care about the budget beyond their individual concerns.

Professor Wooldridge pointed out that, although several units lack budget committees *in name*, they do have committees whose duties *included* budget prioritization.

Professor Schroeder supported Professor Malone's comment, adding that we need a BPC with an educative function, and secondly one whose members must be willing to take public stands on certain issues; in the past, the BPC has been rather "invisible".

Professor suspected that the lack of faculty interest in the budget may be because they do not know what the budget is, or may have only a partial knowledge of it. He wondered whether the chair of the BPC shares this information and gives some year-end accountability of its utilization. Professor Welch reminded him that the budget is a *public* budget, open to all.

Professor Noble remarked that the confidentiality of departmental and decanal budgets has been "a great secret of power", one which those in power were very reluctant to divulge; as resources begin to dry up and become more precious, it becomes all the more important for faculty to understand these resources and their utilization.

Item 5: Report of the Chair

The Chair announced that the Provost had issued on July 16, 1997, the final report from the Hearing Panel for the Reorganization of the Arts and Sciences; the Provost would be present at the next FSEC meeting to update the Committee on further developments.

He then reminded the FSEC of the vehicles of electronic communication at its disposal, which would perhaps become more important this year because of fewer meetings scheduled.

The Chair had delivered a presentation on faculty governance at the orientation for new faculty, and encouraged the new faculty members to become more involved in the governance of their units.

He circulated a press release announcing that the UB Division of Dining Services is introducing the new kosher Hallal meal plan, beginning September 2, 1997, and effective Sunday through Thursday each week.

Professors Nickerson and Welch had met with Louis Howard, recently confirmed by the New York State Senate as a member of the SUNY Board of Trustees. The meeting was frank and cordial, and they discussed a number of issues of concern to the faculty, in particular, possible mandated General Education requirements and full searches for all academic positions.

The Reporter is initiating a new section ---- an interview with selected individuals; questions posed via e-mail will be answered in print. The newspaper selected the Senate chair as the first person to be featured in the new format.

The meeting of the Voting Faculty is scheduled for Tuesday, September 23, in the Center for Tomorrow. The first Faculty Senate meeting, originally scheduled for October 15 (the date for the University Convocation), was re-scheduled for October 8.

Orientation on governance for several new senators will take place on Tuesday, October 7. Senior Vice-Provost Levy has referred a request from Dean Mark Karwan to change the name of the *Department of Civil Engineering* to the *Department of Civil, Structural, and Environmental Engineering*. The proposed change has the support of the Department, the administrative council, and the Dean. No less than 45 of 120 similar departments/schools in the United States include *environmental* in their names. The Department has asked the FSEC to expedite this request because of the need to advertise the change in name to prospective students.

Professor Ryan affirmed that the Department has a strong environmental group, and that advertising this in the name would be important in recruiting students. Professor Wooldridge asked whether the issue was solely one of re-labeling, or whether it involved structural or curricular changes as well. Professor Ryan suggested that it was purely a re-labeling to better advertise the curriculum already in place. The Intercollegiate Athletics Board (IAB) has issued its annual report. Professor Nickerson directed the chair of the Athletics Committee, Professor Jameson, to review and comment on the report. The Policy on Administrative Resignations approved by the Faculty Senate last April has been approved by President Greiner.

The Chair then sought the advice of the FSEC on how the Faculty Senate should proceed regarding the debate (made public in *The Buffalo News*) about the changes in the Department of Music, including charges of violation of bylaws. Professor Nickerson stated his opinion that, first, the violation charges were quite serious, since bylaws state how a unit's business is to be conducted, and secondly, the proper role of the Faculty Senate is to deal with University-wide matters. Consequently, he believed there should first be an attempt to deal with and resolve the issues at the departmental level; only after such an attempt should the Senate become involved.

Professor Malone thought it wise not to interfere, since "it is not our province to wander around the University and find things that we might right"; also, no one has yet filed a grievance, so it is best not to act unless asked. Professor Meacham agreed that the problem should first be addressed locally.

Professor Gates thought the Senate should have a somewhat broader process, one that allows it to intervene --- albeit informally -- in the process early on, in order to determine the nature of the problem and to begin considering possible solutions. Speaking from extensive experience on the Governance Committee, Professor Albini agreed that earlier intervention would be of help in preventing major problems and confrontational situations; without early interaction, people get desperate and turn to the newspapers (among other things). He did not think the Senate would infringe on any administrative prerogatives by getting some insight into the facts (instead of relying solely on the press); in fact, by intervening at an early stage, it could prevent the problem from becoming a community issue. Professor Doyno also believed that early information and using the good offices of the Senate might help preserve and build the University in a more constructive way. Professor Wooldridge questioned whether the disputants would regard the use of the "good offices" as an unwanted intrusion, and advised caution.

Item 6: Other Items of Business

On another issue of governance, Professor Doyno urged the Chair to continue the pattern of the past Chair in providing updates on the Senate committees' agenda, and particularly in apprising the Senate of the progress in decanal reviews. He believed that a lack of decanal review would be in part responsible were UB not to be considered among the top universities. He wanted to know when there would be a decanal review, what the coming year's FTE per students look like --- in general, more hard information about the present state of the University.

Professor Meacham recalled that the President had asked the department chairs and deans to respond, by the end of the Spring 1997 semester, to Professor Noble's report on the status of women at the University; he wondered whether the President could give a summary of those responses to the FSEC. Professor Noble commented that she and the other members of the Task Force on Women had seen only one response so far. Professor strongly supported the call for more hard information being shared with the faculty, since "*we* are the ones who grant the degrees"; furthermore, the lack of quantification in the past has led to some very "lumpy" set of decisions being made. Professor Noble concurred, noting that there is a great deal of data which are extremely well-guarded from the faculty, data which could help us understand what is really transpiring at the University.

The motion to receive and file, without objections, the request of a change in name for the Department of Civil Engineering was approved.

Item 7: Committee Nominations (Executive Session)

After a brief executive session, the meeting was adjourned at 4:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Robert G. Hoeing,

Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Present:

Chair: Peter A. Nickerson

Secretary: Robert G. Hoeing

Arts & Letters: Victor Doyno

Dental Medicine: Robert Baier

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Michael Ryan

Graduate School of Education: Thomas Schroeder

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini, Bernice Noble

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Melvyn Churchill, James Faran

Nursing: Powhatan Wooldridge

Pharmacy: Nathan

Social Sciences: Jack Meacham

SUNY Senators: John Fisher, Dennis Malone, Claude E. Welch

University Libraries: Marilyn Kramer

Guests:

Senior Vice-President Robert Wagner

Senior Vice-Provost Ken Levy

Prof. Terry Gates, Chair, Budget Priorities Committee

Michael Stokes (Professional Staff Senate)

Pat Donovan (*The Reporter*)

Ariel Shea (Undergraduate Student Association)

Absent:

Architecture & Planning: Mary Beth Tauke

Arts & Letters: Martha Hyde

Health-Related Professions: Judith Tamburlin

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Law: Isabel Marcus

Management: Ramaswamy Ramesh

Social Sciences: Michael Farrell

SUNY Senators: Maureen Jameson