

# FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

## Minutes of April 29, 1998 (approved)

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

- [1. Introduction of Michael Bernardino, Vice-President for Health Affairs](#)
- [2. Report of the Chair](#)
- [3. Report of the President](#)
- [4. Resolutions on Grade Replacement and on Mid-Semester Progress Reports for Freshmen](#)
- [5. Report of the Faculty Senate Affirmative Action Committee](#)
- [6. Approval of the Agendas for the Faculty Senate Meetings of May 6 and May 13, 1998](#)
- [7. Executive Session](#)

### **Item 1: Introduction of Michael Bernardino, Vice-President for Health Affairs**

The Chair introduced to the FSEC the newly-appointed Vice-President for Health Affairs, Michael Bernardino. An academic radiologist by profession, Vice-President Bernardino also received an MBA and went on to direct managed-care contracting for Emory University.

Professor Welch asked him what effect the impending hospital mergers would have on our profile as a university research center; in particular, is he developing a strategy to insure that UB's contributions and accomplishments are duly recognized. Vice-President Bernardino replied that, despite internal organizational problems, and despite the multiple different contracts resulting for the particular situation in Buffalo, the consolidation of the hospitals afford us the opportunity to become more focussed, concentrating our resources, and to

create a true feeling of faculty within the hospitals. It would better enable our centers of excellence to compete not only regionally, but nationally as well. The merger will also require many of the hospitals to look for alternative sources of funding. In addition, UB will need to re-assess its Medical School, Dental School, Pharmacy School, Health-Related Professions, Nursing School, and their curricula, in light of the changing health-care environment --- specifically, the fact that two-thirds of received care will be outpatient, leaving only one-third for the hospitals.

## **Item 2: Report of the Chair**

The Chair announced that this would be the final FSEC meeting of the 1997-1998 year, and took the opportunity to thank the Secretary, the Faculty Senate Office staff Anna Kedzierski, her assistants Rob Carlsen and James Giardina, and Chris Connelly, representative of Special Interest Housing.

Professor Kramer attended a UB Council meeting in lieu of the Chair, and reported that it had adopted changes in student regulations, particularly the definitions of "academic good standing" and "satisfactory progress" toward a degree. Substantive items included the introduction (and warm reception) of Vice-President Bernardino; an overview of the University by President Greiner, focussing on equipment, housing, and universal student access to computing; and a brief discussion of the Periodic Review report.

The Graduate School Executive Committee met on April 16 and endorsed the policy passed by the Faculty Senate on administrative resignations. The GSEC is still working on the issue of a policy for the transfer of credits; it seems likely that it will recommend approval of a policy under which transfer credits are approved upon admission.

Professor Fisher distributed a detailed written report of the SUNY Senate meeting (April 23-25) at Brockport and briefly summarized the highlights. Among these was an initiative, proposed by President Aceto, for the creation of a "civil compact" for all members of SUNY

that would outline "what we would do when we disagree or disapprove of actions or activities of others in SUNY. We should express our concerns within the family of SUNY and not use the mass media or other external organizations to express our discontent". (The Trustees had, as yet, not responded to the proposal.)

### **Item 3: Report of the President**

President Greiner briefly discussed the budget, which he described as "benign", containing some "very positive elements" ---- in particular, the full funding for contractual agreements reached by all bargaining agents; this not only supports faculty and staff better than in the past few years, but also enhances morale. Although the legislature did not succeed in adding much to the budget for higher education, not much was lost, either.

He reported that the process for selecting a dean of Arts & Sciences from among the four candidates is proceeding on pace, and expressed the hope that it would be completed by early June.

Quality of student life continues to be a most important issue. One reason the President has been pushing so hard on building new student housing is to accommodate the changing demographics of the UB student population. With the decreases in part-time and transfer student enrollments, UB seems to be shifting toward a more traditional population of resident, full-time students; the University must change accordingly.

With the appointments of the Vice-President for Health Affairs and the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, the Provost's Office will become more a "strategic planning and oversight" unit, and much less a "hands-on" administrative office than what has been customary.

In the Campaign for UB, the University has received its first two endowed chairs, one from the head of a major biotechnology company to continue to support the work of a certain distinguished faculty member, the other an outright gift from one of the UB faculty. In

addition, UB has raised additional money for the UB Honors program. In part through improving our yield in top-quality students, President Greiner hoped for a "very substantial increase in privately-funded financial aid".

#### **Item 4: Resolutions on Grade Replacement and on Mid-Semester Progress Reports for Freshmen**

Professor Schroeder, Chair of the Faculty Senate Grading Committee, presented two draft resolutions on grade replacement and on the assignment of mid-semester grades. The purpose of the first proposal is primarily to encourage students to repeat courses which they feel they have not adequately mastered. While recognizing that the grade of C is in general "satisfactory", the members of the Committee considered it an indication of inadequate preparation for further courses in a sequence in a particular field of study. Secondly, such a policy of grade-replacement should increase a student's self-confidence in their chosen subject. It would improve student recruitment and retention, and also increase a student's employment opportunities. The Committee felt this would represent a fair way of calculating grade point averages as well. Finally, the proposed resolution is intimately connected with past resolutions of the Grading Committee on academic good standing and satisfactory progress towards a degree.

Professor Hyde asked about the priorities of allowing students to repeat courses which are typically filled to capacity. Vice-Provost Goodman replied that there is no effective way of assigning priority in our present "first-come, first-served" system; nevertheless, he did not foresee an inordinate number of students repeating such courses. Professor Jameson asked to what extent the policy would be retroactive; Professor Schroeder answered that the Committee had not resolved this issue, but surmised that it would not be made retroactive, and Vice-Provost Goodman requested some latitude in dealing with certain problems in implementing the policy. He added that the ultimate authority over transfer courses/credits and the curriculum has to reside with the faculty in the individual departments. President Greiner pointed out that adoption of the policy is a two-stage process: the Senate would

first accept, or "legislate", the resolution, after which the Vice-Provost would be responsible for delineating the rules and regulations of its implementation.

The FSEC endorsed the resolution for transmission to the Faculty Senate for further discussion.

The primary reason for the second proposal is to better inform students, and in a more timely fashion, of their progress within a course. This allows students to more effectively monitor their own work and become more responsible for their studies. It also provides advisors with a more effective mechanism for checking a student's performance, and for intervening earlier in case there are problems. The instructors need not assign any grades, but rather indicate at least whether or not a student is passing at mid-semester.

Professor Meacham suggested that it would be much easier to ask instructors to report only to those students who are receiving unsatisfactory grades (D or F). Professor Goodman emphasized the importance of meaningful consultation with students who perform poorly, instead of merely posting grades or issuing warnings; many of these [freshman] students "do not integrate well into the community, do not understand what is expected of them, do not understand what the consequences are", and often come from high school environments in which they are not penalized for poor performance to the extent that they are at UB. Dr. Coles noted that the faculty have greatly helped the EOP with mid-term evaluations, adding that for his office, "early intervention is crucial".

The FSEC voted in favor of forwarding the resolution to the Faculty Senate for further discussion.

## **Item 5: Report of the Faculty Senate Affirmative Action Committee**

Professor Moore had distributed a written report of the Affirmative Action Committee prior to the meeting, and quickly summarized the Committee's activities over the past year. In her absence, Professor Banks had presented the Committee's three resolutions --- the first procedures for reducing unfair salary discrepancies, the second recommending the establishment of a Task Force on Racial Minorities, and the third recommending a policy for recruiting minorities proportional to the available pool in the labor force. The Faculty Senate passed these resolutions at its meeting of November 12, 1997 and were accepted by the President in a letter two weeks later.

The FSCAA met twice during the Spring 1998 semester, and developed three further recommendations:

- *A Junior Faculty Retention and Mentoring Initiative*, under which each junior faculty member be assigned an advocate advisor or committee upon appointment to the University. The rationale for the proposal lay in the disproportionately low retention rate for women faculty; the FSCAA had reason to believe that this applied to racial minorities as well. Professor Acara pointed out that, three semesters ago, there were seventeen African-American assistant professors on tenure track; today, there are only eight. A mentoring program should help to alleviate this problem.
- *The Relocation of the EOP/AA Office to Capen Hall, in the area of the senior administration, and that the Office retain its original name until all appropriate agencies have been consulted and an agreement on the new name has been attained.* The rationale is based on "compelling evidence" that its relocation to the Commons has conveyed a negative message to the community regarding "the administration's commitment to Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action". The proposed relocation to Capen Hall would on the other hand reinforce the University's continued commitment to both.
- *That the Faculty Senate Budget Priorities Committee review and report within the 1998-1999 academic year on the effectiveness of the various schools in responding to the President's directive to use discretionary funds for correcting salary*

*discrepancies*. The rationale is that information on the results of the directive is necessary to assess its effectiveness.

The FSEC moved to schedule a first reading of the first recommendation at the Faculty Senate meeting on May 13.

Regarding the second recommendation, Professor Malone said he was not convinced that moving the Office to Capen Hall would make any difference; in fact, it might be better to leave it in the Commons, since there it is more easily accessible. President Greiner respectfully disagreed that there was any "compelling evidence" for the negative effects of relocating the Office. He suggested the FSCAA meet with Senior Vice-President Wagner to discuss this, and added that, for the Faculty Senate to strongly object to the relocation of any office, there should be some truly compelling case. The FSEC voted to refer the issue to the FSCAA for further deliberation.

President Greiner, addressing the third recommendation, stated that there will be a report on this anyway, "because we are going to study ourselves", and did not foresee any problems arising from this report. The FSEC moved to refer the proposal to the Budget Priorities Committee for deliberation.

### **Item 6: Approval of the Agendas for the Faculty Senate Meetings of May 6 and May 13, 1998**

The agendas for the two Faculty Senate meetings scheduled for May 6 and May 13 were approved.

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert G. Hoeing

Secretary of the Faculty Senate

**Present:**

**Chair:** Peter A. Nickerson

**Secretary:** Robert G. Hoeing

**Architecture & Planning:** Sherri Wallace

**Arts & Letters:** Martha Hyde

**Dental Medicine:** Robert Baier

**Engineering & Applied Sciences:** Ramalingam Sridhar

**Graduate School of Education:** Thomas Schroeder

**Health-Related Professions:** Judith Tamburlin

**Information & Library Studies:** George D'Elia

**Management:** Ramaswamy Ramesh

**Medicine & Biomedical Sciences:** Boris Albin, Ronald Batt, Cedric Smith

**Natural Sciences & Mathematics:** Melvyn Churchill, James Faran

**Social Sciences:** Jack Meacham, Simon Singer

**SUNY Senators:** John Fisher, Maureen Jameson, Dennis Malone, Claude Welch

**University Libraries:** Marilyn Kramer

**University Officers:** William R. Greiner, Nicolas Goodman

**Guests:**

**Faculty Senate Affirmative Action Committee:**

Brenda Moore, Chair

Margaret Acara

**Faculty Senate Grading Committee:**

Thomas Schroeder, Chair

William H. Baumer (*Philosophy*)

Nicholas Goodman (*Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education*)

Todd Hennessey (*Biology*)

Robert Hoeing (*Modern Languages & Literatures*)

Michael Tackett (*Student Representative*)

Bill Coles (*Professional Staff Senate*)

Chris Connelly (*Pre-Professional / SIH*)

Camille Joseph (*Student Association*)

Sue Wuetcher (*The Reporter*)

**Absent:**

**Medicine & Biomedical Sciences:** Herbert Schuel

**Nursing:** Powhatan Wooldridge

**Pharmacy:** Nathan