

Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Minutes of September 29, 1999 - (approved)

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The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on September 29, 1999 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

1. [Approval of the minutes of September 8, 1999](#)
2. [Report of the Chair](#)
3. [Report of the President/Provost](#)
4. [Enrollment Update](#)
5. [Report of the Educational Programs and Policies Committee](#)
6. [Old/New Business](#)

Item 1: Approval of the minutes of September 8, 1999

The minutes of September 8, 1999 were approved.

Item 2: Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that:

- he attended a meeting of the SUNY Senate governance leaders and new SUNY Senators; the principal item of business was the appointment of the Reverend Butts as President of Old Westbury College after a search which did not comply with the guidelines developed by the Board of Trustees and during which questions of conflict of interest involving contemplated land transfers were raised (notwithstanding the above, the Board of Trustees confirmed the Reverend Butts' appointment at its September 22 meeting); also discussed were

the General Education requirements developed by the Board of Trustees and to be implemented by a Faculty-Administration Committee

- he attended a meeting of the Graduate School Executive Committee; issues discussed were the outside reader and potential conflicts of interest, multiple Master's and other joint degree programs and the use of the same courses for multiple degrees, what is meant by a significant additional amount of course work beyond the single degree requirement as stipulated in SUNY guidelines, and the requirement of on line applications since Records and Registration will soon accept only on line information on incoming graduate students
- he attended the Deans Meeting; the budget and how to deal with the structural deficit were discussed
- Provost Triggie canceled his presentation to the October 5 Faculty Senate meeting; Dean Shulman has agreed to fill in and will discuss issues facing the School of Social Work and his service as the Chair of Faculty Governance at Boston University under President Silber
- the Senate Budget Priorities Committee met and discussed the budget and hiring freeze in the College of Arts and Sciences; Professor Hamlen, Provost Triggie and the Chair will meet to review establishing a subcommittee to investigate and report on the budgetary issues related to the shortfalls; the Committee also talked about the political context for budgeting in SUNY
- President Greiner has responded to the FSEC resolution on grade replacement, indicating that the policy is in effect (calculations will be done by hand if necessary); Senior Associate Vice President Innus will report to FSEC at our October 20 meeting
- the Academic Planning Committee prepared a report on the deletion of a Department in the School of Dental Medicine; the report focuses on the process of faculty consultation and not the substance of the academic decision; the Committee heard from both a proponent and an opponent of the deletion
 - although the report focuses on process, the Committee is interested in and discussed the substance of the academic decision (Professor Welch)
 - seems appropriate to focus on process even though there is continued disagreement about the academic substance of the abolition of the Department (Professor Schack)

- what is meant when the report says that there will be "maintenance of much of the curriculum"?
(Professor)
 - a small number of courses will be dropped; the Committee was satisfied that the School's review included assessing the impact of not offering the courses and a finding that there were no curricular objections (Professor Welch)
 - There was a motion (seconded) to receive and file the report. The motion passed.
 - the Committee is also reviewing the briefing book assembled by the administration for the Mission Review participants to assist the administration in presenting faculty views on issues (Professor Welch)
 - will the briefing material be put up on the web? (Professor Sridhar)
 - don't know; will include a large amount of documentation (Professor Welch)
 - dialogue will continue after this visit (Professor Nickerson)
 - what faculty interaction will be included during the visit? (Professor Schack)
 - disinterested faculty have been invited to participate, but Albany has limited the number of participants
(Vice Provost Fischer)
 - Professor Nickerson, Professor Welch and Dr. Coles have been invited to participate; additional faculty have also been invited (Professor Nickerson)
 - find out who the additional faculty are (Professor Malone)
 - will the Committee have access to faculty who disagreed with the Provost's mission document?
(Professor Schack)
- *The Spectrum* published an article that said there was an impending review of President Greiner; know there is an informal annual review done by the SUNY Chancellor and Provost, but do not know about a periodic review process that gets faculty and student input; am concerned that the Senate have input
- in conversation Chancellor Ryan said nothing about such a review and President Greiner is unaware of a scheduled review (Professor Malone)

Item 3: Enrollment update

Vice Provost Goodman reported on the status of enrollment. UB's official Fall 1999 head count is 24,257, an increase of 887 from last year. Full time incoming freshmen number

3,196, an increase of 372. The larger freshman class is in part a result of modernizing the Admissions Office's recruitment procedures. Efforts of the academic staff and Access '99 also helped. Increasing the recruitment of transfer students has been less successful; with 1,365 transfers we fell 10 short of our SUNY target. We did, however, hold our own with 59 more transfer students than last year. The Vice Provost reported with very great satisfaction that the total of 9,569 continuing and returning full time students is 279 above the SUNY target and 361 over last year's total. In Fall 1998 81.7 % of the 1997 freshman class returned as sophomores; this Fall 84.2% of the 1998 freshman class returned. This improved return rate reflects improvements such as on-line registration, UB 101, and mid-semester grades. The higher academic profile of the 1998 class also was a factor.

Associate Provost Thompson reported on graduate enrollment. This Fall the head count of graduate/professional students is 7,998: 1,954 new full time, 2,935 continuing/returning full time and 3,109 part time. Our SUNY graduate/professional total target was 7,830 so we were about a little more than 2% over target. Last year the graduate/professional head count was 7,707 so we are 3.8% ahead. Looking at other figures, the number of graduate/professional credit hours consumed rose 5% over last year. The Associate Provost presented a College/School breakdown of the enrollment figures. Architecture and Planning enrolled 27 more new students than last year. Arts & Sciences had disappointing new and continuing/returning figures, losing 160 students from 1998. Dental Medicine is essentially stable. Engineering & Applied Sciences worked very hard and increased their enrollment from 667 in 1998 to 854 in 1999. The Graduate School of Education also had a healthy increase from 1095 to 1235. HRP, SILS, and Management all showed modest increases. Medicine & Biomedical Sciences was stable. Nursing declined from 233 to 181. Roswell Park declined a little. Law was stable. Social Work planned for an increase and its enrollment went from 336 to 411. Pharmacy changed its degree to a Pharm.D, so its figures are askew, showing 15 new students last year and 101 this year.

- footnote Pharmacy with an explanation of the change in program to make the figures intelligible; continuing/returning student statistics are substantially down in many schools and we need to focus on the reasons for that (Professor Boot)

- in many cases the decrease reflects efforts to move students through the program in a timely fashion (Associate Provost Thompson)
- are there negative effects from the increased numbers?; speculate on the reasons for the decline in Arts & Sciences; are there figures that show what percentage of non-returning students leave without completion of a degree? (Professor Welch)
- don't want to speculate prematurely on Arts & Sciences; need to see departmental trends and develop strategies (Associate Provost Thompson)
- why do the graduate head counts vary between Vice Provost Goodman's and Associate Provost Thompson's handouts? (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- Vice Provost Goodman's handout counts only full time students in the categories of new and continuing/returning students with a separate category for part time students (Associate Provost Thompson)
- my handout is organized to accommodate budgetary considerations and so aggregates all part time students in one category whether they are new, transfer, or continuing/returning students (Vice Provost Goodman)
- are the increases statistically significant? (Professor Malone)
- can't be sure the increase isn't just normal fluctuation, but believe it reflects the hard work of a lot of people (Associate Provost Thompson)
- what are the enrollment figures at the other SUNY Centers? (Professor Malone)
- haven't yet seen that information (Associate Provost Thompson)
- the increase in enrollment represents \$4/4.5 M added to UB's budget; however, the increase stresses the system; for example there were wait lists for housing, and sections had to be added for some freshman courses which contributed to the Arts & Sciences budget deficit.(Vice Provost Goodman)
- need to look at actual versus marginal costs; if tuition pays only 1/3 of the real cost of education, keeping the tuition revenue is a gain only if there is marginal slack in the system (Professor Welch)
- there is unused capacity in the system, but not in popular programs; we are reaching some limits like class room capacity (Vice Provost Goodman)

Vice Provost Goodman then reported on the freshman admissions profile for students who submitted SAT scores. The mean combined SAT score in 1996 was 1,143; in 1997 it was 1,134; in 1998 it was 1,145, and this year it was 1,137. He suggested that 1998's high

score resulted from the merit scholarship program, and he pointed out that although this year's score dropped, it did not drop to 1997's low even though this year's class is larger than 1997's. He is reasonably pleased with this year's results. The quality of the incoming class is a budgetary decision. Were we to drop the size of the incoming class to 2,000 we could raise the mean combined score to about 1,200.

- we lose 14 % of the freshman class in the first semester and an additional 2% at the end of the freshman year; is there anything that could decrease the number of early leavers? (Professor Fourtner)
- have a testing instrument which we administer to freshman that is reasonably successful in identifying students who will have trouble, whether academic or social, in school; worked with some of these students with good success, but this intervention needs to be done on a much larger scale (Vice Provost Goodman)
- the number of top scoring students (1,500-1,600) dropped sharply this year (Professor Sridhar)
- all the students at that score level are Distinguished Honors Scholars and this year we only had money to fund eleven
- are most first semester leavers from outside Western New York? (Professor Woodson)
- leavers are more often local students who are more involved in other than university concerns (Vice Provost Goodman)
- SAT mean math scores have not declined noticeably but students seem less prepared in math (Professor Malone)
- would need a long presentation to comment on students' math skills (Vice Provost Goodman)
- the increases seem minuscule and even within the standard error of measurement (Professor Schroeder)
- don't believe they are within the standard error of measurement (Vice Provost Goodman)
- some students leave because UB is not their cup of tea (Professor Baumer)
- some students leave because they can't get into professional programs (Professor)
- how would UB benefit from raising the mean SAT score to 1,200 (Dr. Durand)
- if high SATs predict high academic achievement then would expect higher retention and graduation rates and classes would be more fun to teach (Vice Provost Goodman)

In response to an Executive Committee request Vice Provost Goodman presented a spread sheet summary of late grades over the last five calendar years. He does not believe there is a problem with late grades.

- late grades, especially for the Spring semester, make counseling athlete students on how to maintain eligibility difficult (Professor Malone)
- grading is a fundamental obligation for faculty and there is rarely a valid reason for submitting grades late (Vice Provost Goodman)
- rather than the total of grades that were submitted late, a count of the number of instructors who submitted late grades would be more meaningful; Law School which in the past had a large problem with this, is not represented on the handout (Professor Boot)
- the percentage of total grades to late grades would seem to be incredibly small (Professor Fournier)

The Vice Provost distributed the *Implementation Guidelines for State University of New York Baccalaureate Candidate General Education Requirement*. The language of resolution of the SUNY Board of Trustees establishing a general education requirement is rather general and would not have posed serious problems for UB. The *Implementation Guidelines*, however, do raise issues. UB's requirements for math and the natural sciences are substantially more rigorous than those outlined in the *Implementation Guidelines*. However, the *Implementation Guidelines* require a course in the basic narrative of American history which UB does not. They require a course in Western civilization and a separate course on other world civilizations, whereas, UB requires a two semester course in world civilization. The *Implementation Guidelines* have separate humanities and arts requirements, whereas UB has treated these as a single requirement. There also appears to be a requirement that all students take one semester of a foreign language. When UB imposes a foreign language requirement, three semesters are needed, but UB does not have a universal language requirement. The *Implementation Guidelines* specify that campuses must establish assessment programs for the specified student learning outcomes rather than skills testing. Finally there is a transferability clause which will be difficult to implement because of the different structure of the Trustees' requirements from UB's. For

example, if a student has satisfied the Trustees' requirement of a course in Western civilization at another SUNY institution, from which semester of UB's World Civilization should the student be exempted? The effect of a course by course transferability is to undermine the principle of the autonomy of the faculty to design programs. Finally the *Implementation Guidelines* require the submission of a description of a compliant curriculum by December 31, 1999 and implementation by Fall semester 2000. The Vice Provost is concerned about UB's ability to meet those deadlines.

- separate out the issue of whether a course fulfills the Trustees' requirements from the issue of whether a course fulfills UB's requirements; a course may fulfill the lesser standards of the Trustees' requirements but not satisfy UB's more rigorous standards (Professor Schack)
- is there still interest in a SUNY-wide test of these knowledge areas? SUNY Senate is asking Senators to supply the name of the person in charge of implementation on their campuses (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- Provost Triggles and Dean Grant feel that the implementation of the Trustees' requirements is within the mandate of the College of Arts and Sciences (Vice Provost Goodman)
- SUNY, not the SUNY Senate, should be dealing with the campuses on issues of implementation; the responsibility for implementation is the Provost's, and would expect there to be consultation with a number of people (President Greiner)
- an urgent response is required (Vice Provost Goodman)
- we should respond in a timely manner, but our first response may be a draft; need time to respond to this matter seriously (President Greiner)

Item 4: Report of the President

The President spoke about his response to FSEC's request that it be informed early of administrative discussions of departmental mergers, consolidations, etc. President Greiner instructed the Provost to inform the Chair of Faculty Senate when such changes were before the Provost. FSEC felt that this response did not involve it at an early enough stage. The President suggested that FSEC deal directly with the Provost in a spirit of comity to work out

the details of how and when notification would be given. A "one size fits all" approach will probably not work given the complexity of such discussions.

The President also announced that there is a Presidential virus circulating on campus. The virus is contained in e-mail messages purporting to come from his office.

Item 5: Report of the Educational Programs and Policies Committee

The Chair introduced Professor Meacham, Chair of the Educational Programs and Policies Committee. Professor Meacham explained that the Committee worked first to build a common vocabulary. It distinguished between assessment, a critical analysis, and evaluation, an assignation of value; it distinguished between summative, which is declarative of value, and formative, which is intended to improve something. It noted that evaluation is more likely to be imposed from the outside while assessment is more likely to be done inside. Evaluation tends to focus on student satisfaction, while assessment focuses on student learning. Evaluation tends to be dead ended, while assessment can be used to improve courses and programs.

Faculty need to be involved in assessment as a matter of accountability and to protect campus autonomy; if we don't assess our programs, someone else will. Additionally accrediting bodies are demanding evidence that an institution has undertaken assessment and made improvements based on it. Finally assessment demonstrates that as faculty our teaching does make a difference in our students.

Assessment should not be of faculty or departments. Assessment should ask what are effective teaching methods, which courses are working best for students, whether the content of the curriculum is doing what we claim for it, and what are the learning outcomes. The steps of an assessment process should be: the identification by faculty of the goals they wish to achieve in a course or a program; the choice of assessment methods and measures; conducting the assessment; and, based on the results of the assessment, making changes in the course or program. The assessment process should be a continuous one, not just a

one-time occurrence. Some departments have a long history of doing such assessment; other departments have no history of assessment. There are many possibilities for how and when assessment takes place, and faculty should construct the most appropriate assessment process for their needs. The outcomes of assessment are varied. Assessment may demonstrate that a program is very effective, and that evidence could be used to support recruitment, grant applications, etc. Other results might be to change teaching methods, add courses, or change requirements, etc.

EPPC has prepared the following resolution based on all the above:

Therefore, Be It Resolved,

That the President of UB is called upon to ensure, through appropriate leadership, collaboration with UB's faculty, provision of resources, and recognition of faculty assessment efforts as significant service to the University, that assessment of all educational programs at UB, including UB's general education program for undergraduate students, be conducted both regularly and frequently.

There were questions from the floor:

- would this kind of assessment cover things like Access '99? (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- yes (Professor Meacham)
- assessment automatically occurs when one course builds on another, so if a student didn't learn in 101, she'll fail in 102 (Professor Boot)
- evidence from an assessment could be used to effect administrative change; for example, it is my observation that transfer students tend to be in the bottom quartile of upper level biology courses, and hard evidence that this is so could justify raising admission standards to the program for transfer students (Professor Fournier)
- in terms of style the resolution might better use the phrase "extensive cooperation with" rather than "collaboration with"; important to complement the call on the President to act with a call to faculty also; suggest adding "And, be it further resolved that the faculty of the University recognize their responsibility to carry out such assessments" (Professor Welch)

- faculty role in assessment implicit in the phrase "collaboration with faculty" (Professor)
- feel strongly that assessment be seen as a faculty responsibility rather than an administrative mandate (Professor Welch)
- the call to the faculty should be first (Vice Provost Fischer)
- operationally what does the resolution mean? for example, in addition to UB-CATS should faculty also do an assessment half way through a course to see how they are doing? (Professor Boot)
- that is one approach, however, the resolution is aimed more at the assessment of programs rather than individual courses (Professor Meacham)
- see that as the responsibility of a department chair (Professor Boot)
- faculty should be responsible, and the chair's role should be that of an instrumentality (Professor Schack)
- agree that responsibility for assessment has to reside with the faculty; centralized assessment would be too costly and would not be responsive to the different needs of the different areas; with the endorsement of the Faculty Senate the administration can legitimately give impetus to undertaking assessment (President Greiner)
- this undertaking is the analog to what is going on in K through 12 education; notice that this resolution has a very different focus than that of the *Implementation Guidelines* which seem to mandate assessment for specific content; how are the two related? (Professor Schroeder)
- the *Implementation Guidelines* suggest that the Trustees are setting the goals of undergraduate general education; this subverts the feed loop aspect of assessment as the EPPC describes it; however, since faculty tend not to recognize broad ownership of the undergraduate curriculum, there needs to be faculty discussion of the goals of undergraduate general education; if the faculty then undertake an assessment process that will go a long way towards responding to the Trustees (Vice Provost Goodman)
- when we talked about the *Implementation Guidelines* we were discussing which courses met which requirements whereas the resolution is concerned with specified learning outcomes; those are very different issues (Professor Meacham)
- the transferability clause in the *Implementation Guidelines* is offensive precisely because it focus on courses not learning outcomes (Vice Provost Goodman)
- the *Guidelines* on one hand talks about assessment and on the other hand about behavioral objectives; faculty need to give a strong critique of the document (Professor Schroeder)

- am skeptical that we will resist the temptation to fall on summative assessment (Professor Charles Smith)
- faculty have to be involved from the ground up and they have to be educated about the goals of assessment; would be good to implement assessment by seeing how it is done on other campuses and to offer faculty development programs (Professor Meacham)
- need to look at what mechanisms the Faculty Senate might put in place to encourage faculty as a whole to participate and to determine how we are advancing in this effort (Professor Schack)
- since there is fear of summative assessment, should make it very clear that formative assessment is being envisioned (Dr. Durand)
- given promotion considerations, would not advise tenure track faculty to focus on assessment (Professor Boot)
- assessment is not about individual faculty but about programs; for example, could assess whether different sequences of taking classes impacts how well students do (Professor Meacham)
- issue is that junior faculty shouldn't be spending a lot of time on assessment (Professor Boot)

The Chair thanked Professor Meacham for a fine presentation of a well-crafted resolution. The resolution will be discussed at the October 5 Faculty Senate meeting, and will be posted on the Faculty Senate e-list so Senators can read it before the meeting.

The Chair then asked the SUNY Senators what they had heard at the SUNY Senate meeting about the Trustees' general education requirement.

- SUNY is quite serious about its timetable for compliance (Professor Nickerson)
- read the message from the SUNY Senate, mentioned by Professor Adams-Volpe, as seeking the faculty member most involved in implementation of the Trustees' program, not the administrative officer (Professor Boot)
- our representative to the upcoming SUNY Senate meeting in Potsdam should find out whether SUNY is still pursuing SUNY-wide achievement testing (Professor Woodson)
- it is still in the folder (Professor Nickerson)
- given the different student body profiles at the various SUNY institutions, a standardized test is meaningless (Vice Provost Goodman)

- the intent is to expose students to a conservative agenda (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- UB students are sophisticated and will score very well on a standardized test (Professor Schroeder)

Item 6: Old/New Business

Professor Kramer asked Professor Boot for the answer to the riddle he had posed to FSEC at its September 1, 1999 meeting. The riddle was: if one spells out the months of the year, what criterion places the months of February, March, April, August, November and December in one group and January, May, June, July, September and October in the second group? Professor Boot responded that the first group of months each contain a letter which is used only once in spelling out the twelve months, while the second group contains no unique letters. The letter "h," for example, appears only in March.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Marilyn M. Kramer

Secretary of Faculty Senate

Present:

Chair: Peter Nickerson

Secretary: Marilyn Kramer

Parliamentarian: Dennis Malone

Arts & Sciences: William Baumer, Charles Fournier, Jack Meacham, Samuel Schack,
Charles Smith

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Ramalingam Sridhar

Graduate School of Education: Thomas Schroeder

Law: Louis Swartz

Management: John Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Cedric Smith

Nursing: Jacqueline Thompson

Pharmacy: Nathan

SUNY Senators: Judith Adams-Volpe, John Boot, Henry Durand

University Libraries: Dorothy Woodson

University Officers: William Greiner, President

Guests:

Christopher Connolly, Pre-Professional Special Interest Housing

John Celock, Red Jacket Hall Council

Olivia Provost, *The Spectrum*

Kenneth Levy, Senior Vice Provost

Joseph Cusker, Office of the Vice President for Research

William Fischer, Vice Provost

Nicolas Goodman, Vice Provost

Myron Thompson, Executive Director, Graduate School

Mara McGinnis, *Reporter*

Claude Welch, Chair, Academic Planning Committee

Excused:

SUNY Senators: John Fisher

Absent:

Dental Medicine: Robert Baier

Health Related Professions: Judith Tamburlin

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini