

Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Minutes of December 10th, 2008

(unapproved)

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, December 10th, 2008, in the Jeannette Martin Room of Capen Hall (567) to discuss the following:

1. Report of the Chair
2. Report of the President/Provost
3. Discussion of the Grade/Repeat/Summer Program—Bruce McCombe, Dean of the College of arts and Sciences
4. Approval of the SUNY Transfer and Articulation Resolution—Professor William Baumer, SUNY Senator
5. Old/New business
6. Executive Session (if needed)
7. Adjournment

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The chair reported that the General Education Task force that is being put together by the Provost and the Senate office will probably meet in mid January

He announced that a Brief Executive Session would be held today to accept nominations for the Budget Priorities Committee.

Item 2. Report of the President

President John Simpson reported on the meeting he had with members of the Western New York delegation to the State Legislature. They discussed the impact of the state's fiscal problems as UB moves forward with its "UB 2020" strategic plan. He urged legislators to support various regulatory reforms that are needed for UB to grow and to pursue growth strategies commonly used by other large research universities nationwide. These reforms include tuition reform, which, Simpson explained, will enable UB to develop a predictable

and rational tuition plan that is responsive to the needs of students. He added that the state historically has used tuition increases to make up for shortfalls in the state budget according to a policy of "tuition roulette" which entails completely unexpected tuition increases. What is more, under current state policy, UB and other SUNY schools have not received revenue produced by tuition increases, Simpson pointed out. Besides a new "rational" tuition policy, other reforms would include allowing UB to purchase goods and services without prior state approval since the current regulation that requires pre-approval for even small purchases delays projects and stands in the way of efficient business practices. Simpson also mentioned the need for more flexibility for future construction projects involving state land and more flexibility to lease, purchase or sell land to maximize educational and commercial-development opportunities. These reforms "will allow UB to provide additional access to an enhanced university education," the President stated. He concluded by reporting what was remarkable about the meeting yesterday was that, unlike a year ago, the politicians at the WNY delegation "almost stampeded one another to stand up and endorse his suggestions."

Item 3. Discussion of Grade Repeat/Summer Program – Bruce McCombe, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Bruce Pitman, Associate Dean for Research

Dean McCombe addressed the issue of course repeaters among undergraduates. Over the last few years, students have been increasingly repeating courses either for a higher grade or to erase a previous resignation from their transcript. This is a serious problem, the dean reported, since it causes over-enrollment and keeps out students who have never had the opportunity of taking these courses or who may need these courses to graduate from signing up. What is more, the dean stated, UB has no policy in place to limit the number of times students can repeat a course. As a result, between 2003 and 2007, the total number of repeaters in CAS has almost doubled, dean McCombe reported, rising from 462 to 859. This means that about 9 percents of students in CAS have taken the same course twice. In one extreme case, one student took the same mathematics course ten times, the dean added. This is an abuse of a system that was put into place for other reasons, and it should be addressed, the dean emphasized. The courses that are affected the most are largely in the sciences and psychology where repeaters have risen as high as 20 percent. Seats were

added to a number of courses “at a substantial cost both to the department and to the college,” the dean reported. Indeed, after 15 credit hours, students do not have to pay extra tuition for up to 4 additional credits and sometimes even more if they get a waiver.

Dean McCombe further reported that, along with the Faculty Senate’s Grading Committee chaired by Bill Baumer, CAS has been working on a proposal to limit the number of times students can register for a course. In addition, course repeaters would have to repeat their courses during the summer session. Baumer explained that students unable to stay in Buffalo over the summer would be allowed to take a comparable course at another SUNY campus unless they wanted to retake the course for a higher grade (in which case they would be limited to UB’s summer session).

Professor Brazeau said that failing a course twice is a sign that maybe the student should choose a new career path. Senators also discussed the impact of this policy on low-income students who do not receive tuition assistance over the summer.

Item 4. Approval of the SUNY Transfer and Articulation Resolution –

Professor William H. Baumer, SUNY Senator

Professor Baumer circulated a copy of the Joint Committee on Transfer and Articulation Resolution (7.30.08). He explained that the set of resolutions offers a clear record what courses can and will be transferred and preserves the ability of the senior campuses to look at courses and determine if there is an equivalence. The resolution was adopted by the State University Faculty Senate, as well as by the Faculty Council of Community Colleges (exactly in the same wording), so it embodies an agreement of the different bodies involved. The motion to support the resolution was unanimously approved.

The FSEC went into executive session.

Item 5: Old New Business

Item 6: Executive Session (if necessary)

Item 7: Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carine Mardorossian, Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Attendance

(P = present; E = excused; A = absent)

Chair:

Robert Hoeing (P)

Secretary:

Carine Mardorossian (P)

Arts & Sciences:

Robert Adelman (P)

Sampson Blair (A)

Stanley Bruckenstein (A)

Melvyn Churchill (P)

Stephen Dyson (P)

Dental Medicine:

Thomas Mang (P)

Educational Opportunity Center:

TBA

Engineering & Applied Sciences:

Paschalis Alexandridis (P)

Sargur Srihari (A)

Graduate School of Education:

Janina Brutt-Griffler (P)

Law:

Mark Bartholomew (A)

Management:

Hodan Isse (P)

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences:

Peter Nickerson (P)

Philip Glick (A)

James Hassett (A)

Charles Hershey (E)

Nursing:

Sherry Pomeroy (A)

Linda Steeg (A)

Pharmacy:

Gayle Brazeau (P)

School of Public Health and Health Professions:

Robert Burkard (P)

Social Work:

Robert Keefe (A)

SUNY Senators:

William H. Baumer (P)

Peter Bradford (P)

Henry Durand (A)

Marilyn McMann Kramer (P)

Parliamentarian:

William H. Baumer (P)

University Libraries:

Dorothy Tao (P)

Guests:

Kevin Fryling (The Reporter)

Janiece Kiedrowski (Professional Staff Senate)

John Simpson (President)

Mike Ryan (VPUE)

Bruce Pitman (CAS Dean for Research)

Todd Hennessey (Grading Committee)

CAS Jeri Jaeger (Associate Dean)