

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of March 1, 2006

(unapproved)

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) met at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 1, 2006, in 567 Capen Hall to consider the following **agenda**:

1. Approval of the minutes of February 15, 2006
2. Report of the Chair
3. Report of the President/Provost
4. The undergraduate experience & student orientation - D. Black, M. Ryan
5. Interaction re educational technology - CA Fabian
6. Old/New business
7. Executive session (if needed)
8. Adjournment

Item 1: Approval of the minutes of February 15, 2006

The minutes were approved following corrections and clarifications to Item 5 requested by Vice Provost Bruce McCombe:

- Replace the last sentence of the first paragraph with "Graduate admissions oversight and graduate enrollment management are now handled through the Graduate School."
- Replace the first sentence in the second paragraph with "A major endeavor has been planning and implementing Comprehensive Program Reviews across the institution. Such reviews are now in place for the Spring 2006 semester."
- Replace the last sentence in the second paragraph with "Professional Schools are included in the Comprehensive Program Reviews only to the extent that their programs must fit into the overall strategic plan of the University, and that they have joint or other degrees that fall under the purview of the Graduate School."

- Replace the second sentence in the third paragraph with "Their report has been received, and an office is being formed with an associate dean, a professional staff person, and a secretary. That office will also oversee the Comprehensive Program Review process."
- Add a sentence to clarify the final paragraph: "The Graduate School is responsible for coordination of the NRC assessment process at UB."

Item 2: Report of the Chair

Chair Nickerson reported:

- The UB Council met this past Monday and recognized the accomplishments of Robert Rich Sr., who is recently deceased.
- Vice President David Dunn discussed the current situation regarding UB's Department of Radiology residence program. He is working with local radiologists to be certain that a spectrum of clinical training is available as required by the residency review group.
- A committee has been formed to select a recipient for the Norton Medal.
- President Simpson talked about higher education and its global context. He recently attended a session in Washington DC that included President and Mrs. Bush and the Secretary of Education. President Bush talked about a competitiveness initiative and the need for wider and more comprehensive language instruction.
- Law School Dean Nils Olsen and Sociology Professor Robert Granfield spoke about civic engagement and public policy, which is one of the 10 academic areas addressed in the UB2020 planning process.
- An article in yesterday's USA Today newspaper recognized UB for being the only Division 1-A institution to have minorities in three top positions in the Athletics Department.
- Provost Tripathi sent an e-mail recently about "Faculty obligations and responsibilities." One paragraph says "As an additional responsibility for our teaching faculty, UB's Faculty Teaching Responsibilities Policy states: Final examinations shall be offered as officially scheduled, not during the final week of classes." What is your reaction to enforcing this policy?
- The rule is ill-defined. There shouldn't be a rule until the definition of final examination is clarified. Some courses need longer time periods because final exams represent a significant

portion of students' grades, while others can simply have hour-long in-class tests that count the same as others exams given during the semester. (Schack)

- The final exam period exists so faculty have enough instruction time to satisfy academic requirements for a 15-week semester. It also reduces the likelihood of a student having multiple major exams on the same day. (Baumer)
- A final examination usually covers the entire semester's course content; regular exams can be shorter because they only cover a portion of the syllabi. (Welch)

Item 3: Report of the President/Provost

None

Item 4: The undergraduate experience and student orientation - D. Black, M. Ryan

This item was postponed due to a presenter's illness.

Item 5: Interaction re educational technology - CA Fabian

Director of the Educational Technology Center (ETC) Carole Ann Fabian said the ETC has taken on the added role of piloting and testing educational software products for possible classroom use or for research purposes. Today's preliminary report involves two products that might be made available in the fall.

The first are devices called "clickers," also known as personal response systems or audience response systems. Resembling a television remote control, they have been aggressively marketed by some textbook publishers who bundle clickers with their texts. The publishers try to target subjects that are often taught to large classes, e.g. World Civilization or Psych 101. Their sales pitch is that clickers simplify checking attendance and monitoring student comprehension. Calling for students to respond by pressing buttons is also supposed to make students more attentive by increasing

their classroom involvement.

Turning Point Technologies has developed software that enhances clickers' capabilities. Instructors who use their product can view graphic feed of student responses indicating their level of understanding.

If Turning Point clickers are approved for wider use at UB, the software would initially be installed in large technology-equipped classrooms. The ETC would negotiate licensing for campus-wide use and also provide training to faculty on how to use the system. A deal could hopefully be worked out so students would be able to purchase one clicker for around \$28-\$68 that would work in all their classes for four years.

Questions & comments:

- Do clickers enhance student learning enough to be worth UB's investment? There's a "gee whiz factor" that's entertaining, but they don't seem to improve much on the type of teaching I used to do. I could tell by looking at my students whether they or not they understood what I was saying. (Simpson)
- Clickers could be helpful in large World Civilization classes because they would enable me to poll students on questions more efficiently. (Welch)
- Many students don't want to raise their hands to indicate they don't know something. Clickers could provide an anonymous way for them to indicate that I need to track on material they don't understand. Clickers would also be useful for taking attendance or giving quizzes. (Danford)
- Has any research been done on the pedagogy of clicker technology? We need to investigate whether they're worth the cost, because money spent on one thing means there are other things we can't do. (Simpson)
- FSEC will refer the issue of clicker technology to the Teaching & Learning Committee for further discussion. (Nickerson)

The ETC has also been testing anti-plagiarism products. The most suitable one for UB seems to be Turnitin's system, and a new round

of testing is just beginning. Faculty members who are interested in participating should contact the ETC.

Every paper checked by Turnitin is returned with a customized "Originality Report." According to a Turnitin brochure, "Results are based on exhaustive searches of billions of pages from both current and archived instances of the Internet, millions of student papers previously submitted to Turnitin, and commercial databases of journal articles and periodicals."

Matches between submitted papers and source material are reported promptly so faculty members can review the information and discern whether plagiarism has been committed.

Questions & comments:

- If we were to use the Turnitin system, would our students be informed that their papers would become part of Turnitin's database? (Booth)
- Policies haven't been determined, because Turnitin hasn't been officially approved yet. Although student papers would be added to the database, they wouldn't be searchable or accessible by anyone beyond the company, so no one's privacy would be violated. (Fabian)
- We should purchase this product right away. I was one of the early testers, and it quickly helped me to catch a student who had submitted a 12-page paper that was copied word-for-word from another source. (Baumer)

Professor Fabian also distributed flyers about Educational Technology Grants that will be available for worthy projects that develop innovative technology tools, applications, or innovative learning objects." Additional information is on the ETC Web site at: http://www.etc.buffalo.edu/_edtechgrant.html. The deadline for submitting RFPs is April 10, 2006.

Item 6: Old/New business

Leslie Meister, the Undergraduate Student Association's (SA) director of student affairs reported that the SA Senate had recently

drafted two resolutions, and she asked for FSEC input on either of them.

The first proposal called for "the Oscar A. Silverman Undergraduate Library to extend its hours of operation 24 hours a day seven days a week."

The second proposal called for "extending the transportation route of the green line shuttle to include Triad Apartments on weekends to meet the demands of the student body."

Questions & comments:

- It's always good to hear that students want to study more, so we should investigate the potential costs and support extending hours as much as the budget will allow. (Schack)
- We could channel this through the Information & Library Resources Committee, which will be meeting soon, and then we could expedite our own FSEC resolution. (Nickerson)
- It doesn't seem like an unreasonable request to have buses go to the Triad Apartments, since they're so close to campus, and it would be much safer than having students cross Maple Road to get a shuttle bus at the Center for Tomorrow. (Schack)
- If buses were to go to the Triad Apartments, which are not affiliated with UB, shouldn't they also go to the off-campus Sweet Home apartments, which run their own shuttle to campus? (Danford)

Professor Baumer previewed several resolutions that the FS Grading Committee plans to present for a first reading at the April 4th FS meeting:

- The length of time a Second Chance student must wait to reapply.
- How soon grades need to be submitted after finals end.
- Length of the Drop/Add period.
- Policy re Incomplete grades.
- Policy re repeating courses.

Professional Staff Senate chair Larry Labinski announced that he is chairing a SUNY Senate ad hoc committee on dealing with difficult college/university presidents. Anyone with suggestions for points the committee should address should contact him.

Item 7: Executive session (if needed)

None

Item 8: Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Will Hepfer
Secretary of the Faculty Senate

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

Chair: Nickerson (P)

Secretary: W. Hepfer (P)

Architecture & Planning: GS Danford (P)

Arts & Sciences: J. Faran (P), R. Hoeing (E), SD Schack (P), D. Street (A), K. Takeuchi (P)

Dental Medicine: M. Donley (P)

Education: L. Malavé (P)

Engineering & Applied Sciences: C. Basaran (A), P. Alexandridis (P)

Informatics: J. Ellison (P)

Law: T. Miller (A)

Management: W. Lin (P)

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: D. Amsterdam (A), M. Dayton

(A), L. Harris (A), J. Hassett (A)

Nursing: P. Wooldridge (A)

Pharmacy: G. Brazeau (A)

Public Health & Health Professions: vacant

Social Work: Barbara Rittner (A)

SUNY Senators: W. Baumer (P), W. Coles (P), H. Durand (E), P. Nickerson (P)

University Libraries: HA Booth (P)

University officers: President JB Simpson

Guests: M. Cochrane (Reporter), CA Fabian (Libraries), V. Hussain (Undergrad. SA), L. Labinski (Prof. Staff Senate), L. Meister (Undergrad. SA), C. Welch (CAS), J. Xu (Grad. SA)