

Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Minutes of January 19, 2000 - (approved)

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The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on January 19, 2000 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

1. [Approval of the minutes of December 1, 8, and 15, 1999](#)
2. [Report of the Chair](#)
3. [Report of the President/Provost](#)
4. [Report of the Grading Committee](#)
5. [Reply of the President on the Resolution on Alert to Instructional Staff](#)
6. [Old/New Business](#)

Item 1: Approval of the minutes of December 1, 8, and 15, 1999

The minutes of December 1, 8, and 15, 1999 were approved.

Item 2: Report of the Chair

The Chair welcomed Professor Easley, the new representative from the School of Dental Medicine. He then reported that:

- on his behalf Professor Kramer attended a meeting of the University Council; among the highlights of the meeting were the introduction of new member Victor Rice, an announcement of a \$3.8 M grant to the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences from the Howard Hughes Institute, a report by the student member of the University Council, Silvia Muller, and a discussion of the labor rates applicable to the South Lake Village project
- he has agreed to co-sponsor with Millard Fillmore College a video conference on February 3 entitled "Internet Issues in Higher Education: Virtual Universities: On-line and On target?"
- the Professional Staff Senate is sponsoring a Wellness Day on February 11; Dr. Coles added that the event is open to all faculty, professional staff, support staff and graduate students; there will be many activities offered, including free blood screening and demonstrations and lectures

- the Calendar Committee is making progress on drafting a new academic calendar and will return to the Executive Committee for comments on its work
- Chancellor King addressed the SUNY Senate Executive Committee at its meeting last week which Professor Adams-Volpe attended; Professor Adams-Volpe added that she was impressed with his energy, enthusiasm and sense of commitment; the Chancellor plans to focus on communication within SUNY to which end he expects to visit the campuses, on alumni and corporate giving and on a rational tuition approach for SUNY; he will be at UB on Friday January 28 to attend a reception for the SUNY Senate which is meeting here January 27-January 29
- Vice Provost Goodman has provided the FSEC with the executive summary from a two volume report written under the aegis of the College of Arts & Sciences by Professor Peter Gold for a SUNY committee charged with assessing campuses' compliance with SUNY's general education guidelines; at the Chair's invitation the Vice Provost discussed implementation issues: UB is requesting short term implementation deferments of the Oral Proficiency requirement and of the requirement of both an arts course and a humanities course; UB is also requesting a program waiver of the Foreign Language requirement for students in enumerated professional programs; the guidelines will strongly impact transfer enrollments; UB now waives its general education requirement for transfer students with an A.A./A.S. degree, but since SUNY has reserved to itself the determination of what courses satisfy its general education requirement, it will have to put an assessment mechanism in place, and in the interim advisement of transfer students will be very difficult

There were questions from the floor:

- are we unwilling to accept the one semester language requirement for professional schools? (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- UB's requirements are in most respects more demanding than SUNY's requirements, and it is an unresolved question whether UB's requirements replace, exist in tandem with or are replaced by SUNY's requirements (Vice Provost Goodman)
- seems we are failing in our duty to raise questions as to whether the SUNY requirements are satisfactory (Professor Swartz)
- SUNY Senate is raising concerns (Professor Nickerson)
- clear violation of the principle that faculty control the curriculum, but it is the role of the faculty, not administrative officers, to assert that principle (Vice Provost Goodman)

- faculty at Stony Brook have heard that SUNY plans to approve specific syllabi and textbooks and will test for specific content (Professor Malone)
- a SUNY committee on which Dean Grant serves will review syllabi and textbooks, but it has not yet been suggested that the committee will mandate specific textbooks to be used; another SUNY committee on which Professor Meacham is serving is discussing assessment issues (Vice Provost Goodman)
- at the SUNY Senate Executive Committee meeting, SUNY officials explained that the committee will look at sample readings, not the entire reading list for a course and will not look at syllabi (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- SUNY asked for and we have provided course descriptions (Vice Provost Goodman)
- will SUNY supply additional resources for its general education requirements? (Professor Malone)
- not part of the plan (Provost Triggler)
- will the language requirement be applied to students studying for a B.A. in Computer Sciences? (Professor Sridhar)
- yes (Vice Provost Goodman)
- ask one of our Senate committees to come up with a solid position statement on the adequacy of the SUNY general education requirement which we can take to the SUNY Senate and the Board of Trustees (Professor Baumer)
- expect SUNY's attitude would be that faculty in place constitute the resource for implementing its general education requirement; the correct question is what will we give up teaching in order to do so; it is self-evident we should maintain both SUNY's and UB's separate requirements and we should continue to waive UB's requirements for transfer students (Professor Schack)

There was a motion (seconded) to refer the matter to Educational Programs and Policies Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

- he is seeking nominations for a faculty representative to the IT Steering Committee, for a co-chair for the Information and Library Resources Committee, and for faculty and senior administrative officers to review applications for the Faculty Fellows in Administration program
- the President has referred the Faculty Senate Resolution on Promotions Processes for Centers and Institutes to the Provost for further review and appropriate action; the President has rejected the Faculty Senate Resolution on Changes in the Oversight of Graduate and Professional Education; the President will discuss the issue with us early in

this semester; the Ad Hoc Committee To Deal With Graduate Education Issues needs to meet with the Provost and the Deans to determine if there is any common ground

- the Teaching and Learning Committee is working on its Resolution on Student Evaluation of Instruction to make it ready for a second Senate reading in February

Item 3: Report of the Provost

The Provost gave an update on the 2000/2001 Executive Budget request. The Executive Budget recommends a \$75 M increase in support for SUNY, of which \$ 55.8 M is for negotiated salary increases and \$24.1 M is for enrollment, sponsored research matching and inflation and from which \$5.6 M in 1999/2000 Legislative additions has been minused. This is an improvement from last year's Executive Budget and sets the minimum amount that SUNY will get. SUNY System Administration, however, projects the continuation of the \$5.6 M in Legislative additions and so expects state tax support of \$80.2 M.

There were questions for the Provost:

- is there speculation that the budget will be on time because it's an election year? (Professor Malone)
- to the extent that legislative behavior influences election results, it would seem to have a positive effect (Provost Triggles)
- am I correct in understanding that the money found by SUNY to pay for salary increases was distributed proportionally among the campuses? (Professor Schack)
- don't believe so, but will check with Senior Vice President Wagner (Provost Triggles)
- in December requested a list of new faculty hires and retirements (Professor Swartz)
- will give them to the Chair (Provost Triggles)
- any information on the Jobs 2000 program? (Dr. Coles)
- although it has substantial funding the administrative structure for running the program has yet to be created, but the New York State Science and Technology Foundation is being dismantled; there will probably be a gap (Provost Triggles)
- is there money for inflation? (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- there is \$24.1 M item, two thirds of which will be used for inflation (Provost Triggles)

Item 4: Report of the Grading Committee

Professor Baumer outlined the provisions of the December 15, 1999 version of the report of the Grading Committee. The Committee is recommending the adoption of a graduated scale of credit hours attempted, cumulative GPA, and credit hours completed to define "reasonable academic progress". Since federal regulations require a student to be making reasonable academic progress to be eligible for financial aid, for many students failure to make reasonable academic progress amounts to de facto dismissal. The Committee believes dismissal should be de jure for all students. The Committee is concerned that the student who is rendered ineligible for financial aid may incur substantial debt trying to continue before being dismissed for academic or financial cause.

While the Committee's recommendations treat transfer students on a par with students who start UB as first semester freshmen, transfer courses, i.e. courses taken elsewhere after matriculation at UB, can have negative consequences. The Committee recommends that in the calculation of reasonable academic progress transfer courses be included in total credit hours attempted but excluded from cumulative GPA and credit hours completed.

The report includes language specifying that students who are not in good academic standing are ineligible to participate in University extra-curricular activities. The intent is bar active participation, not spectatorship. Other documents already in place may make this provision unnecessary, and it may be outside of the Faculty Senate's jurisdiction.

There were comments and questions:

- consider removing the language about extra-curricular activities or referring that language to the Committee
(Professor Malone)
- provision on transfer courses seems harsh (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- provision on calculating academic good standing needs to be rephrased to make it clear that when a percentage is calculated the numerator and denominator of that percentage should be only courses taken at UB
(Vice Provost Goodman, Professor Charles Smith)

- would be useful to provide ground on the provisions for warnings and probation; federal regulations allow the requirement of good academic standing to be waived in case of serious illness of the student or in the student's immediate family, which provision should be retained by UB (Professor Welch)
- graduated reasonable academic progress scale would only be used in lieu of "extreme hardship" and "improved course completion and GPA", but not of "serious illness" which would be retained as a grounds for a waiver of the requirement of academic good standing (Professor Baumer)
- would also accept "extreme hardship" as grounds for waiver, e.g., bankruptcy of the supporting family or the breakup of a close relationship (Professor Welch)
- at present UB functions under a set of complex and relatively strict rules regarding academic good standing and timely progress toward the degree which are driven by Faculty Senate resolutions; students who are not in good standing (i.e. on probation) and students who are not making timely progress toward the degree are sent warning letters; the Grading Committee is introducing a third concept, reasonable academic progress, which would tighten up the dismissal process (Vice Provost Goodman)
- with the suggested provision about transfer courses student advisors will have to be very careful about suggesting that marginal students take courses outside of UB (Dr. Coles)
- as I understand the transfer course provision, if a student takes a course outside UB and gets a D, he gets credit for the course, but his GPA is not pulled down by the D as it would be if he had gotten the D at UB (Professor Fournier)
- the resolution does not change academic good standing policies, so in both of the circumstances suggested by Professor Fournier, the student would as a consequence of the D be on probation; the transfer course provision is relevant only to the concept of reasonable academic progress (Vice Provost Goodman)
- to aid Senators in voting knowledgeably suggest crafting a new document that makes clear what are the current policies and what specifically is the new proposal; concur that "extreme hardship" should be defined more generously than just serious illness; might add additional criteria to reasonable academic progress, e.g. progress in one's major and progress in the general education requirements (Professor Schack)
- believe there are only sequencing requirements, generally in one's major, rather than any suggested progression of courses that could be monitored; a different issue that we may need to consider arises in the context of re-admission to the University after academic dismissal; past failure should be recorded on the transcript, but not have consequences after a re-admission (Professor Baumer)
- UB does have a Fresh Start program (Professor Nickerson)

- can provide copies of the relevant sections of the *Undergraduate Catalog* on the rules of good academic standing and timely progress toward the degree rather than having the Grading Committee draft something new; many students graduate with more than the 120 credit hour requirement, and the Senate should consider whether the graduated scale for satisfactory academic progress should be applied for courses above 120 credit hours (Vice Provost Goodman)
- if the language dealing with participation in extra-curricular activities is left in the recommendation, the Committee should say who is responsible for monitoring this (Professor Malone)
- don't believe we can dismiss a student whose GPA drops below 2.0 above the 120 credit hour requirement; hopefully, the constant monitoring that this recommendation would involve will minimize the number of students who get in trouble (Professor Fournier)
- adding a reference to the *Undergraduate Catalog* to the report would be adequate to help faculty; limit graduated scale to cover just under the 120 credit hour requirement (Professor Schack)
- report uses GPA in section 1 to mean GPA for all courses taken by the student and in section 2 to mean GPA for courses taken at UB; resolve that discrepancy and the report will be clear (Professor Charles Smith)

There was a motion (seconded) to include the Grading Committee's report on the agenda for the January 25 Faculty Senate meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 5: Reply from the President on the Resolution on Alert to Instructional Staff

The President, on the advice of SUNY counsel, has returned the Alert to the FSEC. SUNY counsel feels the word "confidential" should be removed from the Alert. The Chair asked for advice on how to handle the matter.

- suggest a resolution asking the President to implement the Alert with any revisions he deems necessary (Professor Schack)
- could simply acknowledge that the President has advised the FSEC that when he promulgates the Alert he will remove the word "confidential" (Professor Meacham)
- is there objection to the change? (Professor Nickerson)
- the confidentiality provision was non-controversial during Faculty Senate discussion; inform the President that the suggested change conforms to the intent of the Senate (Professor Schack)

There was a motion (seconded) to advise the President that the FSEC considers the terms he proposes to delete to be non-substantial and therefore the FSEC has no objection to the change. There was discussion of the motion:

- the Office of Equity, Diversity and Affirmative Action would have a duty to follow up on an egregious case even if doing so compromised confidentiality; the remaining phrase "professionally competent" is a sufficient guarantee of confidentiality when it is possible (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- agree with that reading of "professionally competent" (Professor Meacham)

The motion passed unanimously.

Item 6: Old/New Business

The Chair asked for suggestions for topics of discussion for the Spring Semester:

- a report on the computer program "Host on Demand" which replaces CICS, SOAR, etc., but by someone other than the Chief Information Officer who is responsible for purchasing the program; understand that the poor functioning of the program is preventing us from processing admissions or sending out bills (Professor Malone)
- a report on progress towards on-line registration; one great advantage to on-line registration is that students would have access to updated course offerings, maximizing registration in extra sections of popular courses (Professor Schack)
- a discussion of the decision to close the information booth near the Center for Tomorrow; we need more such facilities not their elimination (Professor Meacham)
- a discussion of the policy decision of not linking WINGS to <buffalo.edu> (Professor Fournier)
- a discussion of the enforcement of UB's no-smoking in buildings policy (Professor Jorgensen)
- also discuss accommodations for people who are smoking legally (Professor Baumer)
- e.g., "butt huts" (Professor Fisher, Professor Schack)
- a discussion about cleaning public spaces to give UB a more attractive face for recruitment (Professor Charles Smith)
- a discussion of theft of equipment from offices (Dr. Durand)
- annual update on safety issues by John Grela (Professor Nickerson)

- a report on changes in policies for allocating state funds; for example when outfitting a new building one now has to present a detailed plan for the Budget Committee's approval (Professor Schack)
- Budget Priorities Committee should be more proactive in helping to set priorities rather than just being informed after the fact (Dr. Coles)
- a discussion of the issues involved in setting a minimum number of students in a class
 - College of Arts & Sciences has increased the minimum from to 15 students; not clear why it is better to teach two 15 person classes rather than a 150 person class and a 5 person class (Professor Charles Smith)
 - School of Engineering & Applied Sciences has a minimum of 10 students for undergraduate courses and 5 for graduate courses; the minimums keep Albany happy but don't make academic sense (Professor Malone)
 - faculty whose courses are canceled for insufficient students may end up getting paid for not teaching (Professor Sridhar)
- look at work load issues in general; explore creating a mechanism that will ensure that the administration responds to the work of committees in a timely fashion (Professor Jorgensen)
- a discussion of how the report on Sponsored Research Indirect Cost Recovery get updated; a discussion of how money is being allocated below the unit level (Professor Sridhar)
- a report from the Director of Athletics on the state of athletics at UB(Professor Fournier)
- discussion of issues involved in students posting class notes to the Internet (Professor Tamburlin)
- Dental School has demanded that faculty turn over all slides, syllabi, diagrams, drawing, etc. so that the School can sell DVD discs to students; faculty ownership of teaching materials should be discussed (Professor Easley)
- broad discussion of distance learning by Don Jacobs, UB's new distance learning guru (Dr. Durand)

There being no other old/new business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
 Marilyn McManm Kramer
 Secretary of Faculty Senate

Present:

Chair: P Nickerson

Secretary: M. Kramer

Parliamentarian: D. Malone

Architecture: R. Shibley

Arts & Sciences: W. Baumer, C. Fournier, J. Meacham, S. Schack, Charles Smith

Dental Medicine: M. Easley

Engineering & Applied Sciences: R. Sridhar

Health Related Professions: J. Tamburlin

School of Information Studies: C. Jorgensen

Law: L. Swartz

SUNY Senators: J. Adams-Volpe, H. Durand, J. Fisher

University Officers: David Triggles, Provost

Guests:

N. Goodman, Vice Provost

C. Welch, Chair, Academic Planning Committee

W. Coles, Chair, Professional Staff Senate

M. McGinnis, *Reporter*

L. Pallickal, Undergraduate Student Association

J. Celock, Red Jacket Hall Council

K. Levy, Senior Vice Provost

Excused:

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Cedric Smith

Absent:

Graduate School of Education: T. Schroeder

Management: J. Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: B. Albini

Nursing: J. Thompson

Pharmacy: N.

SUNY Senators: J. Boot