

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of May 3, 2000 - (approved)
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The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on May 3, 2000 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

1. [Approval of the minutes of April 19, 2000](#)
2. [Report of the Chair](#)
3. Report of the President/Provost
4. [Update on the general education issue - Professor Gold](#)
5. [Conversation with leaders of faculty governance in the College of Arts & Sciences - Professors Bunn, Thornton and Coburn](#)
6. Executive session
7. [Old/new business](#)

Item 1: Update on the general education issue

Professor Gold wrote the report laying out UB's plan to comply with the SUNY Board of Trustees' general education requirement. The report advocated keeping UB's own general education program in place with as little change as possible. Professor Gold then negotiated with UB's liaison from the SUNY Provost's Advisory Committee on General Education who is prepared to make the following recommendations to Provost Salins.

The liaison will recommend no change to UB's program with regard to Writing, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, World Civilizations, Jr./Sr. Science, Foreign Language, Library Skills and Critical Thinking. However, he will recommend that the Literature and Arts component require both a Humanities course and an Arts course. The impact of this change will probably be minimal since there is unused seating capacity in courses in these areas.

The American History component of the Trustees' program has presented the most difficulty for the SUNY campuses. Faculty think its learning outcomes are more appropriately high school level and are concerned that the Trustees' intent is to pre-empt American Pluralism courses. The American History

component requires three elements: a narrative of American history, a course on American institutions, and a course on the changing role of America in the world. In practice it appears there is some room for flexibility. SUNY Central is not able to sustain the workload of examining in detail the syllabi of all relevant courses for compliance with the Trustees' guidelines, so there is discussion of broad criteria for compliance. For example the Provost will accept a less comprehensive narrative of American History than originally was discussed. As a consequence about half of UB's American Pluralism sections and cognates will probably meet the guidelines in that they already include, or the instructor is willing to include, some American history narrative, for example a US history text as part of the course readings. An American History Regents score of 85 may also satisfy the narrative requirement, so some students could take an American Pluralism course that did not satisfy the Trustees' guidelines. However, UB will have to significantly increase the number of US History 1 and 2 sections offered and will probably hire adjuncts to teach them. Provost Salins has stressed that there will be no extra resources to pay for the changes. This is a problem is shared by all the SUNY campuses..

UB asked for a series of waivers. Approval of a foreign language waiver for professional school students is expected. However, the General Education waiver for transfer students with AA or AS degrees has been denied. Our request that American Sign Language be accepted to meet the foreign language requirement has been denied. Our request that the Writing requirement be waived for students with an SAT of 730 or greater has been denied. Since UB is in substantial compliance already and has a plan for full compliance, our request to delay full implementation till Fall 2001 will probably be approved.

According to the American Association of Colleges and Universities initiatives very similar to the Trustees' have been undertaken in 32 states. SUNY is not alone in facing these issues.

There were questions and comments:

- [who is making the decision to accept or reject programs? \(Professor Meacham\)](#)
- [the Provost's Advisory Council which is made up of faculty and administrators from the SUNY campuses \(Professor Gold\)](#)

- the Council is purely advisory to Provost Salins who seems to be making all the decisions himself (Vice Provost Goodman)
- will other SUNY campuses have more difficulty with the requirement than UB? (Professor Nickerson)
- there are campuses without a language or writing requirement; UB's program is substantially more rigorous, so what satisfies a requirement at one campus might not get in the door here; a SUNY transcript will have to be developed that can be understood among the SUNY schools (Professor Gold)
- the rejection of a waiver of the general education for transfer students with an AA or an AS is a serious blow to the articulation agreements worked out with the two year campuses and will impose a substantial administrative burden on the transfer process (Vice Provost Goodman)
- urge that the matter of assessment be given immediate attention in the Fall (Professor Welch)
- will American Pluralism courses survive on the SUNY campuses? (Vice Provost Fischer)
- other campuses have smaller pieces of what we consider the entire package of American Pluralism; many of their courses probably lack the narrative history component that would satisfy the American History requirement; however, American Pluralism is a central piece of the curriculum on so many campuses that the attempt to replace it will fail in the long run (Professor Gold)
- all SUNY campuses will be equally hurt by the denial of a waiver for transfer students (Professor Baumer)
- private colleges are not bound by these rules, and will be more attractive to transfer students (Vice Provost Goodman)
- is the SUNY Faculty Senate doing follow up on the Trustees' General Education requirement? need to explain why the pre-emption of the curriculum by the Trustees was bad (Professor Baumer)
- there have been a number of resolutions about the lack of faculty involvement in the development of the requirement, but the SUNY Faculty Senate has not tried to construct an alternative proposal (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- there is a strong sense in the SUNY Faculty Senate and among the campus governance units that each campus should be reasonably autonomous in setting curriculum (Professor Welch)

- we should ask the Academic Planning Committee to compare UB's general education requirements and the Trustees' requirement and to draft a resolution in support of the one which is better (Professor Schack)
- several years ago the SUNY Senate wrote a very good report on General Education in SUNY; the vote of no confidence in the Trustees by the SUNY Faculty Senate and the 64 SUNY governance units was in response to the Trustees failure to recognize the work that went into the report (Professor Meacham)

Item 2: Approval of the minutes of April 19, 2000

The minutes of April 19, 2000 were approved.

Item 3: Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that:

1. he attended the meeting of the President with the Chairs of the College of Arts & Sciences; the President distributed information about each Department to the respective chair
2. the UB Council met and heard about progress with the research mission of UB; Sylvia Muller, the outgoing student representative, reported on smoking issues; the Chair of the UB Council wants to continue discussion of the issue; the Council passed resolutions recognizing Provost Triggler and Ms. Muller
3. the FSEC will meet in executive session with Provost Triggler on May 10 at 1 PM; there will be a brief public session at about 2:00 PM to review a resolution on the Libraries and the promotions check list
4. President Greiner has responded favorably to the Faculty Senate resolution on the assessment of IT and referred the matter to Chief Information Officer Innus
5. Professor Fisher is completing his term as SUNY Senator

There were comments from the floor:

- are there any plans for the FSEC to meet during the Summer? (Professor Swartz)

- no; will meet with the new Provost the second week of classes, but if she requests an earlier meeting we would schedule one (Professor Nickerson)

Item 4: Conversation with the leaders of faculty governance in the College of Arts & Sciences

Professor Bunn, Chair of the Policy Committee of the College of Arts & Sciences, introduced Professor Thornton, Vice Chair of the Policy Committee, and Professor Coburn, Chair of the Budget Committee. He thanked the FSEC for forwarding the report of the Faculty Senate Budget Committee's on the budget shortfall in the College to the Policy Committee; the report has been given to the Budget Committee.

Professor Bunn outlined some highlights of the College's Bylaws. Article III, section 2 says that "the voting faculty of the College shall review, prior to adoption, all proposals regarding the formation, renaming, re-organization, or dissolution of its academic units." Section 3 states that "the voting faculty has the authority to initiate, approve or disapprove standards and policies regarding (a) curriculum; (b) evaluation of students' academic work; (c) enrollment, recruitment and retention of students; (d) issues relating to student life; (e) admissions; (f) graduation of students and awarding academic degrees; (g) conduct and evaluation of academic research and teaching; (h) appointment, promotion, and tenure of faculty." The role of the Policy Committee is delineated in Article V, section 2: "The Policy Committee represents, and acts on behalf of, the faculty of the College...in an advisory capacity to the Dean, and shall recommend to the Dean members of appointed decanal committees." There is a Steering Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Policy Committee, and which acts as the Committee on Committees. The Bylaws stipulates two standing committees: the Committee on Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure and the Elections Committee. The Standing Orders lists additional standing committees.

The Policy Committee and the Steering Committee have been meeting since February. They focused on two resolutions which address the most pressing issues facing the College. The first resolution calls upon the UB and CAS administrations to lift the CAS hiring freeze by the end of the 1999-2000 academic year, to increase CAS TA/GA stipends, to remove the requirement that undergraduate CAS courses must have a minimum enrollment of 15 students, and to provide the CAS

Budget Committee with information that it requests. The second resolution states that the CAS faculty do not have confidence in priorities established in the University and in CAS without significant faculty participation and endorsement, and as a specific instance the CAS faculty neither have confidence in nor support the plans adopted in response to the College's fiscal shortfall. Both resolutions were adopted by CAS faculty with 90 % of the ballots cast being affirmative.

The Policy Committee asks that the Faculty Senate continue monitoring the development of faculty governance in the College. A strong College is important for the University as a whole, and the College's faculty and administration have been angered and stressed by events. The working of the College needs to be regularized.

There were comments from the floor:

- the resolutions which were adopted by the faculty of the College have been portrayed in the media as a general attack on the UB administration, but the faculty understood them as being about specific issues within the College; regret that the sense of the resolutions was obscured (Professor Charles Smith)
- why was there such a small turnout for the vote on the Bylaws? (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- perhaps the Policy Committee did not emphasize enough the importance of the vote (Professor Bunn)
- there were 193 votes cast, of which 160 were in favor of the Bylaws; the Bylaws just weren't contentious (Professor Coburn)
- why did it take four semesters for faculty governance to develop in the College? (Professor Swartz)
- during the first year of the CAS the Bylaws Subcommittee of the Founders Committee drafted bylaws which were discussed and amended by the CAS faculty; a resolution was then passed directing the Dean to conduct a referendum on the bylaws during the first week of the College's second academic year; the Dean, however, thought the bylaws had been adopted and set in motion an election process which was completed in October; the Dean did not call the Policy Committee into existence until February (Professor Schack)

- the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics worked very well without an elaborate bylaws and committee structure; regret that we need this complexity in the College (Professor Fournier)
- the governance structure is a safeguard for faculty (Professor Bunn)
- the preamble to the resolutions says that "Almost every year the caliber of our undergraduate declines..."; there is no data to support that claim, and making the claim damages the future of the University; more care needs to be exercised in making such public pronouncements (Vice Provost Goodman)
- the preamble and the resolutions represent the collective experience of the faculty; our data is our classroom experience (Professor Thornton)
- a major problem of the College is that the merger of personnel from the three Faculties created a non-transparent and non-functioning administration which does not work as a team; it is difficult to get information or to find out who has the authority to deal with a problem (Professor Boot)
- there appear to have been no savings in personnel from the merger, and in fact, more people may have been added (Professor Coburn)
- personnel and financial management officers should have been in place prior to the merger; the three component parts of the College had very different budget experiences; for example, the Faculty of Arts and Letters ran primarily on state funding, while the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics was accustomed to handling large sums of grant money, IFR money and federal money; the lack of understanding of the complexity of budget issues lead directly to the College's overexpenditures (Provost Triggler)
- the faculty of the College feels that this year is not just business as usual, but that the two year freeze on hiring and graduate stipends could be the death blow to the College; the Resolutions were focused on specific issues about which the faculty felt something had to be done (Professor Thornton)
- the statement in the preamble to the Resolutions about the declining quality of our students simply states what is already common knowledge in the music community; SAT and the level of auditions are down in the Department of Music (Professor Charles Smith)

- how much faculty participation will there be in the College's new financial management system?; does the College's Budget Committee agree with the Budget Priorities Committee's analysis of the College's financial situation?; has the Budget Committee thought about developing an alternate plan for coping with the College's financial situation? (Professor Booth)
- the Budget Committee has met only once and does not have well developed plans; we will probably spend our energy looking forward, trying to figure out what commitments are still outstanding and advise the Dean what priority they should be given; the Budget Committee will have to collegially negotiate with the Dean to establish its role (Professor Coburn)
- in addition to its financial problems, the College is having serious difficulty with communication among its administrative ranks and with Chairs and faculty (Professor Fournier)
- if we had the merger to do over again, we would do it very differently; in spite of the freeze there has been about \$1.5 M in new commitments within the College, both for new hires and for salary adjustments to keep critical people; if we denigrate ourselves, people will come to believe us and stay away; the community doesn't buy faculty complaints, believing that faculty are "overpaid, underworked and over privileged" (Provost Triggler)
- we were told that staff savings would result from the merger, but the staff is larger; we were told the merger would help research, but there has been a 10% decrease in research faculty in the College; we were told the merger would help undergraduate education, but there has been a decline in the number of courses offered and an increase in minimum class size; we should consider disbanding the College; the administration should have engaged faculty early and seriously in dealing with the problems (Professor Schack)
- the same number of Colleges of Arts & Sciences are formed as are disbanded in any year (Provost Triggler)
- faculty who teach regularly know that the quality of both graduates and undergraduates is declining; administrators need to be in the classroom and do research; faculty are not self satisfied, but rather deeply dissatisfied that they can't do the teaching and research they want to do (Professor Bunn)
- collegial discussion within the University of issues about the College is healthy; but the discussion in the media has not been useful; the major difficulty in the merger was not a clash of academic cultures, but differences in the administrative cultures among the three Faculties;

with a new financial management system in place by the summer, the difficulties should begin to disappear and there will be quantitative information available to everyone about budgets and rosters; am concerned about a tendency for the College to feel that other units within the University have been treated better by design when there is no data to support that; difficult to generalize about problems since each department is different; for example, the use of adjunct faculty may be appropriate for some departments, but not for others; the quality of students entering UB may have more to do with the state of K through 12 education than with UB's drawing power; today's students may come with different learning styles than faculty are comfortable with; quantitatively the profile of our students is the same as ten years ago; appropriate for the Faculty Senate to take a watching role in the development of the College; need much more communication between the President and the Provost and department chairs about how the institution looks from Capen Hall (President Greiner)

- under the auspices of UNESCO set up a college in Oman, and our first act was to put an information system in place which is what should have happened with the College (Provost Trigg)

Item 6: Old/new business

The Chair introduced Mike Schade, Eric Noyes and Evan Saona to discuss their interest in having the UB Foundation adopt a strategy of socially responsible investing. They believe that socially responsible investing has demonstrated itself to be an effective tool for change; Nelson Mandela, for example, believes that socially principled disinvestment in South Africa was in part responsible for the demise of apartheid. They have submitted a proposal to the UB Foundation to create a Socially Responsible Investment Advisory Board, composed of two members of the Foundation's Investment Committee, two members of the faculty and two students. The Committee would meet twice a semester to review the social and environmental implications of the Foundation's investments. The Advisory Committee would also co-ordinate with other universities in voting proxies to influence corporations' policies.

There were comments from the floor:

- the FSA has for the past ten years had a policy of socially responsible investing; am not clear how to distinguish corporations that are socially irresponsible from those which are socially responsible; Nike, for example, is frequently cited as a socially irresponsible corporation for paying its employees in developing countries less; however, those employees themselves may feel very lucky to have a job (Professor Boot)
- is the strategy to disinvest in offending companies, or to invest in those companies to try to influence their policies? (Professor Fournier)
- first try to participate in share holders proxies to reform companies from within; if that doesn't work, then re-invest in socially responsible companies (Mr. Schade)
- different strategies work with different companies; for example, won't ever convince Philip Morris to stop making cigarettes, so don't invest in that company; on the other hand, with 7% of its shareholders voting to stop selling rain forest wood, Home Depot changed its policy (Professor Schack)

There was a motion (seconded) to refer the matter to the Budget Priorities Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

Professor Schack offered the following resolution: "The Faculty Senate requests that the President and Provost provide a written explanation and justification of the differential treatment given to the accumulated budget deficits in the College of Arts & Sciences, which is dedicated to UB's primary missions of research and education, and the Division of Athletics, which is dedicated to a secondary mission. The Senate notes that additional University resources are being used to permit the Division of Athletics to continue modest growth while gradually eliminating its deficit and asks why similar arrangements are not made for CAS which is vital to the primary missions of the University and which has a smaller deficit. In particular the Faculty Senate wishes to know why CAS is being required to eliminate its entire deficit in just two years rather than over a longer period during which hiring of research faculty could occur every year while course offerings and minimum class sizes could be maintained at levels both closer to historic norms and more appropriate for a leading research university of UB's size."

- would be more appropriate to determine whether there were other units that also had deficits, rather than just singling out Athletics (Dr. Durand)

- Vice President Wagner responded to this question by stating that the deficit in the Division of Athletics was a planned one, while that in the CAS was not (Professor Boot)
- the question is one of priorities, not of how the deficits arose; it is the Senate's obligation to demand a response; refer the resolution to the Budget Priorities Committee which should give it priority (Professor Schack)
- the resolution is stronger by focusing on the disparity between the CAS and the Division of Athletics (Professor Charles Smith)
- the real question is why the College was not allowed to repay its deficit over an extended time, not why there is a disparity between the way Athletics and the College were treated; as it stands the resolution is an attack on Athletics which may divert attention away from the College (Professor Fournier)
- if the reference to the Division of Athletics is omitted, there is a far better chance that the President and Provost will respond (Professor Malone)

The sense of the meeting was to refer the resolution to the Budget Priorities Committee.

There being no other old/new business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn McMann Kramer
Secretary of Faculty Senate

Present:

Chair: P. Nickerson

Secretary: M. Kramer

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

Engineering & Applied Sciences: D. Malone

Graduate School of Education: T. Schroeder

Health Related Professions: J. Tamburlin

Law: L. Swartz

Management: J. Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Cedric Smith

Nursing: E. Perese

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

University Libraries: A. Booth

University Officers: W. Greiner, President

D. Triggles, Provost

Guests:

C. Welch, Chair, Academic Planning Committee

S. Wuetcher, *Reporter*

W. Coles, Chair, Professional Staff Senate

N. Goodman, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

P. Gold, Assoc. Dean, Undergraduate Academic Programs & Services

J. Bunn, Chair, Policy Committee, College of Arts & Sciences

T. Thornton, Co-chair, Policy Committee, College of Arts & Sciences

L. Coburn, Chair, Budget Committee, College of Arts & Sciences

M. Schade, Environmental Network

E. Noyes, Environmental Network

E. Saona, Economics Club

W. Fischer, Vice Provost for Faculty Development

Absent:

Architecture: R. Shibley

Dental Medicine: M. Easley

School of Information Studies: C. Jorgensen

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: B. Albini

Pharmacy: N.