

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of April 21, 2004
(unapproved)

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) met at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 21, 2004, in 567 Capen Hall to consider the following agenda:

1. Report of the Chair
2. Report of the President/Provost
3. Report on the Faculty Student Association – M. Green
4. Discussion of the Strengthened Campus-Based Assessment Summary
5. Report of the Research & Creative Activity Committee – J. Ho
6. Old/New business
7. Executive session (if needed)
8. Adjournment

Item 1: Report of the Chair

Chair Peter Nickerson reported:

- Today it was announced that Satish K. Tripathi will be UB's new Provost. He'll start July 1st.
- The UB Sweatshop Advisory Committee indicated that legislation now requires vendors of items for state purchasing to provide information on where their items are manufactured. This includes uniforms purchased by SUNY institutions, but not other state agencies. Additional information is online at <http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/sweatshop>.
- The Student Union Committee is still working on assigning space to student groups in the Student Union. This is challenging because the demand for space exceeds the supply.
- The Greek Advisory Committee met. Their duties include reviewing policies and procedures and hearing complaints against Greek organizations.
- The Faculty Senate (FS) Teaching & Learning Committee is still working on obtaining access to student photographs for class lists. They've also discussed UB's distance education programs and noted that there is no central repository for information on this subject in the Office of the Provost.

- In response to last week's question about anti-plagiarism software, Professor Fabian, director of the Educational Technology Center (ETC), reported that some products have been used successfully in the ETC, and a promising new software package was recently acquired. Faculty interested in testing the new product should check for additional information on the ETC Web site at <http://www.etc.buffalo.edu/>.

Item 2: Report of the President/Provost

None

Item 3: Report on the Faculty Student Association – Mitchell Green

The Faculty Student Association (FSA) handles campus food services (residence hall dining facilities, various eateries, & catering), vending machines, UBCard cash/meal plans, plus a variety of campus shops. FSA director Mitch Green and dietician Anita Hathaway reported on recent and planned developments.

Most campus eateries are now offering vegetarian food choices, and the Richmond dining hall (in the Ellicott complex) has a selection of vegan products. There has been a surge of interest in meatless eating in recent years.

FSA solicits student input to improve food selections and services. Nutrition counseling and information is available to help students make healthier eating choices.

The Baldy Walkway eatery will be refurbished with new furniture over the summer.

Questions & comments:

- Please provide healthier food items in vending machines on the South Campus (Wooldridge)
- Consider opening some eateries earlier so students/faculty can get coffee/tea prior to 8:00 a.m. classes (Jensen)
- The distribution of food services is lopsided to the east side of North Campus. There aren't nearly as many choices around the Natural Sciences Complex (Schack)

Item 4: Discussion of the Strengthened Campus-Based Assessment Summary

Copies of the "Strengthened Campus-based Assessment Summary" document were distributed with the agenda. Chair Nickerson said that strengthened campus-based assessment was put on today's agenda to get input prior to the upcoming discussion at the Spring Plenary meeting of the SUNY Senate. The campus-based approach to assessment represents a big improvement over the originally proposed one-size-fits-all System-wide proposal.

Comments included:

- The new document is modifying the General Education Assessment Review (GEAR) recommendations, which haven't been approved yet. (Adams-Volpe)
- There's skepticism about whether the proposed plan will actually do what it's intended to accomplish. It's also uncertain that we'll gain any information that we don't already have. Furthermore, it's unclear what's going to be done with any information that's collected. (Baumer)
- The proposal calls for SUNY to pay for purchasing and scoring the assessment instruments. If they balk at paying, the costs will be prohibitive to the campuses. (Adams-Volpe)
- Another issue is how we're going to get students to participate. There's no incentive since it won't be a high-stakes test. (Nickerson)
- Is student participation voluntary? How can we get students to take a test seriously if nothing is at stake? Also, avowing future safeguards is foolhardy because there's no way to know how the information will be used in years to come. We'd be more sensible if we expressed skepticism about how information would be used, and to indicate that we'll be watching for misuse. (Schack)
- What options do we have in whether to support the "Strengthened Campus-Based Assessment" proposal? If we don't support it, might the trustees revert to their campus-based assessment scheme? I don't think that either proposal has enough merit to deserve our support. (Schack)
- Although we could dissent and express opposition to any attempt to impose an assessment mandate, it might not be politic to do so. We should consider the politics of cooperating, especially since strengthened campus-based assessment was proposed directly by Chancellor King and supported by the trustees. (Baumer)

- Assessment isn't a bad thing. We do it all the time. We shouldn't take a stand that appears as if we're opposed to assessment per se. (Boot)

Item 5: Report of the Research & Creative Activity Committee – John Ho

Professor Ho reported on the FS Research & Creative Activity Committee, which he chairs. Members recently met with Vice President for Research (VPR) Jaylan Turkkan to discuss the support of interdisciplinary research at UB.

Dr. Turkkan said there's an Interdisciplinary Research & Creative Activities Fund that's used for planning, research, and instrumentation awards. Other Office of the VPR funds are available to support several organized research units or centers. A recently adopted policy on funding interdisciplinary research centers calls for phasing out support after three years. Centers are expected to generate their own funding after that time frame.

Many faculty members think that mandating a time limit on funding centers is unfair and unwarranted. Centers' abilities to sustain themselves vary widely, depending on many factors. Some require long-term institutional support for human and infrastructure needs so they can generate new proposals.

Dr. Turkkan contended that centers that can't support themselves should be funded from deans' budgets if they are worthy. However, it will be very difficult for decanal units to financially support centers they weren't responsible for previously.

Perhaps this contentious subject can be revisited after UB's new provost arrives.

Item 6: Old/New business

None.

Item 7: Executive session (if needed)

None

Item 1: Item 8: Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Will Hepfer

Secretary of the Faculty Senate

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

Chair: P. Nickerson (P)

Secretary: W. Hepfer (P)

Architecture & Planning: GS. Danford (A)

Arts & Sciences: S. Bruckenstein (A), M. Churchill (E), R. Hoeing (P), S. Schack (P), K. Takeuchi (P)

Dental Medicine: M. Donley (P)

Education: L. Malave (A)

Engineering & Applied Sciences: J. Jensen (P), R. Mayne (P)

Informatics: F. Tutzauer (E)

Institutional/General: O. Mixon (A)

Law: L. Swartz (P)

Management: J. Boot (P)

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: J. Hassett (P), G. Logue (A), B. Murray (A), J. Sellick (A)

Nursing: P. Wooldridge (P)

Pharmacy: G. Brazeau (A)

Public Health & Health Professions: C. Crespo (E)

Social Work: Barbara Rittner (E)

SUNY Senators: J. Adams-Volpe (P), W. Baumer (P), M. Kramer (P), P. Nickerson (P)

University Libraries: CA Fabian (P)

Guests:

D. Budniewski (Reporter)

M. Green (FSA), A. Hathaway (FSA)

L. Labinski (Prof. Staff Senate)