

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of April 16, 2008 (unapproved)

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, April 16, 2008, in the Jeannette Martin Room of Capen Hall (567) to discuss the following agenda:

1. Report of the Chair
2. Report of the President/Provost
3. Discussion with Dr. Josie Capuana, Administrative Director, University Honors College
4. Report of the Faculty Senate Facilities Planning Committee, Robert Wetherhold, Chair
5. Old/New Business
6. Executive Session (if needed)
7. Adjournment

Item 1. Report of the Chair

- The chair mentioned the exhibition of Karl Appel's work in the lobby of the president's office. Next Tues, April 22, urged the faculty to sign up for the workshop Bob Shibley is pleading for faculty to register for the Master Plan Forum. Basic workshops directed at different constituencies from 2-3:30pm over 300 staff have signed up and less than 50 faculty, location center of the arts. Parking will be available.
- Peter Grollitsch will air their concerns about the drop/add policy and will be invited to the May meeting.
- Right before the meeting Grading Committee request to restore to the Academic Integrity the prohibition of an attorney to serve as an advisor. Final action at the 6 May meeting.
- The chair of the computer services committee is stepping down and expressed concerns because there are 15 people on the committee and only 3 or 4 show up. Troy Wood of Chemistry has expressed willingness to serve as chair.

- Facilities Planning committee did meet and Bob Wetherhold will be joining the FSEC today.
- President and Provost are at the New Institute on Jewish culture press conference.
- Last year, honors programs switched to honors college

Item 2. Report of the President/Provost

n/a.

Item 3. Discussion with Dr. Josie Capuana, Administrative Director, University Honors College

Josie Capuana, administrative director of the University Honors College, spoke about the move of UB's Honors Program to college status in October. She reported that over 100 faculty attended the ceremony, faculty who, over the years, had been connected with the program either as mentors or teachers. Capuana stated that in preparation for moving from a program to a college, the academic requirement for honors had been changed the year before to 4 years. Initially, when the program was developed, the requirement was 2 four-hour seminar courses and a colloquium. Now the requirements involved a four-year experience that included the previous requirements but also additional elements chosen with the help of an advisor. Students are given many more options than in the past for earning an honors degree, Capuana stressed: for instance, if a course is completed with a B or better, they can have it count as an honors seminar. They can do study abroad and have that count toward honors as well or do double degrees. They can participate in an undergraduate research project. The change, she reported, had been a very positive experience both in terms of program development and student recruitment. It had been motivated by the fact, she explained, that students were already doing a lot of these things. Capuana also mentioned that the freshman class would be bringing in about 325 honors students this fall who will receive between \$2500 and \$3000 per year for four years. 25 of these students will be "Presidential scholars," she added, i.e. they will be receiving full tuition to the university.

Capuana explained that the new program is very labor intensive and requires a lot of academic advisement. There is mandatory advisement at least once in the fall, once in the spring of the freshman year, then in the spring of sophomore year and once in the fall of the students' junior year. It is mandatory, i.e. students are stopped from registering if they miss their appointment. The latter is a substantial meeting since it is an hour-long talk where the students' long range goals are discussed.

Capuana also reported that the academic requirements for students to remain in the Honors College had been raised. Freshmen who are honors students must now maintain a 3.3 GPA instead of a 3.2 GPA. Sophomore-, junior- and senior-year requirements remain unchanged at 3.5. The reason only the freshman requirement was changed was because the honors scholars who fell below 3.3 in their first year were typically unable to turn their grades around fast enough to remain in the college in subsequent years. Capuana said that about 10 percent of honors scholars drop below the eligibility level each year and lose their scholarship support. Even so, few of these students choose to transfer to other institutions.

Capuana pointed out that the Honors College functioned very much as a "clearing house" for prestigious national scholarships. A UB student this year received a Barry Goldwater Scholarship, and two others received honorable mentions. In addition, this year's winners of scholarships from the National Science Foundation included two UB honors scholars, as well as two graduate students who were honors scholars as UB undergraduates. Last but not least, the past three recipients of the prestigious Morris K. Udall Scholarship were also UB students, and this year's winner, Capuana said, was also a finalist for a Harry S. Truman Scholarship.

Capuana then addressed the difficulty of identifying the best candidates for honors. This was, she stated, the biggest obstacle to boosting the number of UB students earning national scholarships. She urged faculty to direct students involved in interesting research toward the Honors College, even if they were not officially enrolled in the program.

Stella Batalama (School of Engineering and Applied Sciences) asked Capuana what the Honors College was doing to reduce the number of honors scholars who moved on to other institutions for graduate study. Capuana said that some honors scholars often leave because they are offered a lot of money by other institutions but that some do decide to stay at UB, particularly those in professional degree

programs and engineering. She then pointed out that individual departments rather than the Honors College were the determining factor in the students' decision to leave or stay.

Item 4. Report of the Faculty Senate Facilities Planning Committee, Robert Wetherhold, Chair

Robert Wetherhold, chair of the senate's Facilities Planning Committee and associate professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering, SEAS, reported on the meeting of the Facilities Planning Committee and its reviewing of the structure of the committees which are active in campus facility planning. The FS Facilities Planning Committee was reactivated earlier this semester to enhance the communication between the committees working on UB's comprehensive physical planning process and the faculty.

Wetherhold explained that there was a very large number of studies of various projects in facilities planning from a variety of points of view. What was needed to address the concerns of faculty was the communication of summaries of these studies, he added. In a study such as Heart of the Campus which has 6 sub-committees, for instance, the FPC recommends that each committee be told at the beginning what other committees are active and what their charges are. It would also be useful if people knew how the committee members are picked (e.g. for given expertise or vested interest). Wetherhold added that "we understand that there is a plan for putting together the elements of more students, more buildings and classrooms, and the financing of the same. What is missing for us is to know what the plan is." Members of his committee, he stressed, felt that information on specific details of the plan was missing. "They are doing the thinking, but we just do not know what the thinking is." In addition, he noted that there was a lack of information on who made decisions on the kind of classrooms being constructed or the kind of technology and equipment that would go into them. Some information on the utilization of classroom space by day, time, and size of space would be useful, Dr. Wetherhold said. He added that Shelly Frederick Assistant Vice Provost, Student Academic Processing Services had been asked to provide this, based on an already-completed space utilization study.

Wetherhold noted the catch 22 UB seemed caught in, namely that funding for facilities construction seemed to depend on scaling up campus enrollment at the same time as an increase in the student population could not happen without more living and learning spaces on campus.

Professor Rittner (School of Social Work) who is currently serving on 4 such committees underlined the importance of not jumping to conclusions by assuming that faculty interests are not represented. Faculty is heavily represented on these committees, she emphasized. What is needed, Chair Hoeing stated, is more communication. The Chair urged faculty to attend the meeting organized by Bob Shibley next week.

Joe Woelfel asked if there was an organized role for departments since these will need to plan for the growth. "This is not just a matter of buildings," he stressed, "but also of hiring plans that need to be given for the next 5 years." Marilyn McMann Kramer asked about the timeframe for the decision-making process. The chair said that they are making decisions based on input, but if faculty do not give input at the many meetings that have been organized to that end, decisions will more than likely be made without it.

Item 5. Old/New Business

Item 6. Executive Session (not needed)

Item 7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:21 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:

Joseph Woelfel (P)

Melvyn Churchill (E)

Sharmistah Bagchi-Sen (A)

Stanley Bruckenstein (A)

Debra Street (P)

Architecture & Planning:

Scott Danford (P)

Dental Medicine:

TBA

Educational Opportunity Center:

TBA

Engineering & Applied Sciences:

Stella Batalama (P)

Rohini Srihari (A)

Graduate School of Education:

Thomas Schroeder (A)

School of Law:

TBA

Management:

Hodan Isse (P)

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences:

David Ellis (A)

James Hassett (A)

Charles Hershey (E)

Peter Ostrow (A)

Nursing:

Cynthia Curran (A)

Pharmacy:

Gayle Brazeau (A)

School of Public Health and Health Professions:

Peter Horvath (P)

Social Work:

Barbara Rittner (P)

SUNY Senators:

William H. Baumer (P)

Peter Bradford (E)

Henry Durand (P)

Marilyn McMann Kramer (P)

Parliamentarian:

William H. Baumer (P)

Ex-officio:

Peter Nickerson (P)

University Libraries:

Dorothy Tao (P)

Guests:

Satish Tripathi (Provost)

Janiece Kiedrowski (Professional Staff Senate)

Kevin Fryling (The Reporter)

Jonathan Clayton (The Spectrum)