

## **FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of November 28, 2007**

**(unapproved)**

**The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, November 28, 2007, in the Jeannette Martin Room of Capen Hall (567) to discuss the following agenda:**

1. **Approval of the meetings of October 17, 24, 31, 2007.**
2. **Report of the Chair**
3. **Students with Disabilities**

**Randy Borst**

4. **Office of Postdoctoral Scholars**
5. **New Business: Grade Submission Policies – Bill Baumer**
6. **Adjournment**

### **Item 1: Approval of the minutes for the meetings of October 17, 24, 31, 2007.**

The minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Item 2: Report of the Chair**

- The chair reported that the Graduate School Executive Committee met on Nov 15 to discuss:
  - + policies and procedures for reinstatement of graduate students who had taken a leave of absence
  - + enrollment projections
  - + changes to doctoral exit survey
  - + changes to academic grievance and integrity policy and procedures to exclude bringing external lawyers into the procedures.
- Search for the deal of School of Nursing : 4 candidates interviewed

- Search for the new dean for the school of management: hope to have someone in place by Fall 2009
- Peter Nickerson reported on the Sustainability Conference, which took place on Nov 12-14, 2007 at Saratoga Springs . The SUNY Board of Trustees passed a Sustainability Policy and the Faculty Senate took on the role of publicizing that through the conference. Governor Spritzer's wife gave the keynote. UB's Facilities Representative Walter Simpson gave a presentation. A publication may ensue.

### **Item 3: Funding for Students with Disabilities**

The invitation to have Randy Borst attend the FSEC was generated by a question Professor Rittner brought up in the Sept meeting of the FSEC in the context of a particular event, namely identifying and installing software in a computer lab for a blind student. Randy Borst, also representative of the Professional Staff Senate, then discussed the funding opportunities available. The funding for the office comes from a variety of places: a small percentage of the Health services portion of the comprehensive students' fee covers the salaries of Randy Borst and the receptionist and that leaves an OTPS budget that generally comes in around \$19,000 depending on what the student enrollment is for any particular academic/fiscal year. That OTPS covers everything the office does, from staff travel to student workers to notetakers that are paid a small stipend. Any services for the classroom also comes out of that amount e.g. sign language interpreters contracted with Deaf Adult Services. Two new positions are funded by the Undergraduate Initiative: 1/ counselor SL3 to improve student opportunities, improve their experience, work on a one on one basis and assist Borst with intake procedures 2/ direct service coordinators, services for over 2000 tests per year. The Secretary who runs the front office is funded by the business office (former employee of the business office) who is about to become an assistant director. Her salary provided by on going annual grant from the Research Foundation. Also a small grant around \$2500 legislative grant that is passed annually by the State legislator and that the office has been getting for the last 12 years. Used to buy things, to support staff travel, etc. unrestricted. Supplements the Student Fee.

Randy Borst's recommendation is that services be in a separate budget because often 2/3 or more of his OTPS can go toward sign language interpretation for instance. In that case, no money is left to do anything else. For other services offered students for purposes that are outside the classroom

environment (graduation) or the academic setting (meeting with an academic advisor), the University makes the department responsible to pay for auxiliary expenses. CIT provides access to computer services in the form of 5 accessible work stations that have speech to text software, screen enhancement software, speaking software so the computer can talk, track ball instead of mouse. However, CIT only provides these for its own labs. With regard employees with disabilities, Randy Borst commented that there is no centralized University funding for reasonable accommodations. Randy Borst's office meets with people, make written recommendations for the reasonable accommodations, and deans and departments work that out.

The chair asked if there were any discrimination issues involved here. Randy Borst responded that the legal term was discrimination by method of administration. It is not a departmental responsibility, it is the university's responsibility to accommodate students. The office of civil rights is the agency that looks into these things to make sure that students are not turned away for other than academic reasons.

Peter Nickerson asked about the tests that are administered to students to discover disabilities. He asked why some of the issues students have with learning disabilities were not discovered in high school. Randy Borst clarified that the testing was not a diagnostic testing. What he was talking about was assisting students during testing situations. Almost everyone has a comprehensive long ranging record of special education when they arrive, and since it is very rare to have a disability bubble up in college, so there is no diagnostic testing. 2% students are self-identified as disabled but there are more who don't feel they need academic adjustment.

Peter Hovarth asked about the budget of the office compared to other institutions. Randy Borst explained that in terms of funding, UB comes in very low. Most universities of our caliber are providing a wider range of and more in depth services. The chair asked about the "variable and unrestricted" \$22,500 from the state legislature. Randy Borst explained that it is flat amount given to SUNY, and there is formula that SUNY uses based on the # of registered students with the University who are eligible to receive services. Gayle Brazeau inquired whether there was a growth in students in need. Randy Borst confirmed that the population had been growing steadily. The chair asked whether Randy Borst and his office were participating in the proposal on the redevelopment of the physical campus.

Randy Borst stated that he was particularly concerned with the educational aspects of the project, the planning and designing of academic programs so that UB can build more access, and courses are taught and services provided in such a way that they are more user-friendly for the most # of people. Gayle Brazeau asked about the handicapped doors which are motored and which everyone uses. She asked what could be done to prevent overuse because the devices sometimes break when people who actually need to use them push the button. Randy Borst also pointed out that it was also environmentally unsound to use these doors since they remain open longer and more cold air gets into buildings. This cannot, however, be regulated.

#### **Item 4: Office of Postdoctoral Scholars -- Marilyn Morris (Pharmaceutical Sciences)**

During the first year the office was operating, Marilyn Morris was focused on establishing professional programming, in identifying postdocs, and being able to communicate with them. She instituted a Postdoctoral Association at UB.

Her goals for this year = to establish Policies and procedures. A postdoctoral Advisory Committee was set up to help. The issues she discussed included: 1/ salary 2/ time limits 3/ recruitment 4/evaluation 5/grievance process

Marilyn Morris handed out material:

- Policies and procedures (a draft)
- about the distribution of postdocs at UB: there are 305; only 32.5% are female; 67.5% are male (national average is 50/50). 222 are international postdocs (73%). The largest # of postdocs are with the Roswell Park Cancer Institute (29.8%), the College of Arts and Sciences (24.6%), and the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (21%). Most funded through grants.

UB postdoctoral Scholar Data (NSF/NIH Postdoc Survey Results from 2006)

- A survey of other Public AAU Schools to see if they had policies in place, what the minimum recommended salary is, if it is enforced, if there is a time limit.

The minimum recommended salary: the values range from 36.9 to 39.75 (U of Minnesota) = lowest one.

Marilyn Morris's recommendation that the **minimum salary** at UBbe of \$30 000. NIH salaries are in the mid 30,000s.

Marilyn Morris mentioned that due to the lack of policies and procedures, some individuals had been postdocs for 15 years, and that **time limits** had to become part of the discussion. A question was asked about fringe benefits. Marilyn Morris stated that the benefits are the regular benefits of any research foundation employee. For anyone funded on a grant through a PI, the PI is charged the regular 35%. The issue of titles used to refer to individuals was also of concern: research associate, research assistant professor, visiting scholars which sometimes fail to identify scholars as postdocs.

Marilyn Morris then provided a **Definition of postdocs** : appointee was recently awarded a PhD, equivalent doctorate or terminal degree in an appropriate field. Most universities have a 5-year limit. The Advisory Committee felt that an additional 1 to 2 year period would be appropriate if justified.

Titles :

Postdoctoral associate or senior postdoctoral associate: funded through a PI's grant

Postdoctoral fellows: individuals with their own fellowship or on a training grant; they are in a no man's land (not a grad student, not an employee). They can get health insurance similar to that of a graduate student.

Marilyn Morris then discussed **recruitment and hiring** as a diversity/affirmative action problem. An appropriate form is in the works. International postdocs work on the J1 or H1B visa (which requires a minimum annual salary \$23,400). The cost of living as justification for increasing the salary was discussed. Peter Nickerson commented that the average graduate student salary in the Medical School is \$24,000 so many have voted to bring in postdocs instead (no tuition for them either). In Computer Science, it is even worse because most students get an MA and no PhD so postdocs are heavily recruited.

Marilyn Morris concluded by speaking to the lack of **evaluation** in postdoc land. She recommends that the faculty/mentor write an annual evaluation, which is to the benefit of both faculty and student. Two people objected that postdocs are not jobs, they constitute collegial relationships, and that excessive formalization might be detrimental and discourage people from having postdocs. Marilyn Morris commented that this process indicated "expectations" and that no directions may hurt. This is an extension of the training of graduate student: professional development, grant writing, interviewing skills, stress management (#1 cited by postdocs). The National Postdoc Association has also recommended that expectations be instituted. Dorothy Tao cited the example of a Chinese postdoc whose mentor at UB simply did not work with her and who ended up to leave. For such people, she stated, such guidelines would be helpful and are necessary. Marilyn Morris commented that only 38% of postdocs achieve a faculty position.

**Complaints** : Marilyn Morris cited her office as a place where complaints can be "informally" resolved. Postdocs need the recommendation from their mentor so it usually doesn't go far unless there is a substantial issue such as harassment that would need to be dealt with through another office. Postdocs themselves cannot file a complaint through the research foundation, they are not graduate students, so a policy was drafted with postdocs in mind specifically.

Marilyn Morris thanked the faculty and directed them to the website for further information.

#### **Item 5: New Business**

Professor Baumer spoke to the work of the Grading Committee concerning grade submission processes. The new Student Information System is being developed and Kara Saunders wanted certain items resolved so they could be implemented. The chair asked that unless the Senate had objections, only one reading would be required by the Faculty Senate to ratify the document. No one objected.

Professor Baumer listed the amendments including

- an amendment of grade submission dates (as more accurately specifying the practice): objections by Peter Ostrow and Peter Bradford were accounted for

- an additional specification that an "I" shall not be assigned to a student who has not attended the course
- having "J" grades default to "F" at the end of the following term or upon degree conferral (student can address the problem)
- a proposal addressing specification of grade components so as to prohibit post-term addition of activities to improve course grades (mid-term grade changes are ok)
- conditions under which grade changes are permitted (when a mistake was made, or when faculty have retired, or after degree conferral)

Extended web grading is being put into place so instructors can go and do grade changes online.

The motion was approved to present the document to the Senate. The motion to only have one reading was approved also.

#### **Item 5: Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 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 (A)

Sharmistah Bagchi-Sen (E)

Stanley Bruckenstein (A)

Debra Street (A)

**Architecture & Planning:**

Scott Danford (P)

**Dental Medicine:**

Peter Bradford (E)

**Educational Opportunity Center:**

TBA

**Engineering & Applied Sciences:**

Stella Batalama (P)

Rohini Srihari (P)

**Graduate School of Education:**

Thomas Schroeder (A)

**School of Law:**

TBA

**Management:**

Hodan Isse (P)

**Medicine & Biomedical Sciences:**

David Ellis (P)

James Hassett (A)

Charles Hershey (P)

Peter Ostrow (A)

**Nursing:**

Cynthia Curran (A)

**Pharmacy:**

Gayle Brazeau (P)

**School of Public Health and Health Professions:**

Peter Horvath (P)

**Social Work:**

Barbara Rittner (A)

**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:**

Staish Tripathi (Provost)

Janiece Kiedrowski (Professional Staff Senate)

Mary Cochrane (The Reporter)

Gay Lynne Samsonoff (Graduate Student Association)

Barbara Burke (EDAAA)

David Bray (EDAAA)