FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of September 2, 1998 (approved)

E-MAIL: ZBFACSEN@ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on September 2, 1998 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

Item 1: **Report of the Chair**

The Chair attended the Executive Committee of the Professional Staff Senate. The Committee discussed the implications of the RAM, and the UB Recognition Program. The Committee also talked about two issues involving service to governance. An issue of special importance to the PSS is the difficulty their member sometimes have in getting release time to serve. The PSS is also concerned about how service to governance is recognized, especially with reference to the UB Recognition Program; this is an area in which Faculty Senate may share an interest.

The Chair referred the issue of the 25% rule to the Medical Faculty Council. The Budget Priorities Committee still has an interest in the issue as it relates to academic units on a 12 month operating basis, especially since more units may be adopting a 12 month operating basis.

The Chair accepted with regret the resignation of Professor Jameson as Chair of the Athletics and Recreation Committee. Professor Jameson's report on wellness is a model report.

We need to recruit members for EPPC and a new Chair of the Athletics and Recreation Committee. The Chair has obtained a list of newer faculty members and is working on obtaining a list of recently promoted faculty. Both groups may be a good source for including new people in governance.

Dr. Gresham has announced another round of the Faculty Development Public Service Initiative.

The Chair continues to monitor Faculty Senate Committees and responses to/implementation of Faculty Senate Resolutions. There is, however, no activity to report.

Item 2: Report of the President/Provost

There was no report of the President/Provost.

Item 3: Charging the Educational Programs and Policy Committee

The Chair introduced Professor Barbara Tedlock, Chair of EPPC, and Vice Provost Goodman.

Vice Provost Goodman suggested two topics appropriate for EPPC to consider. The first is the model to be adopted for teaching computer skills to students entering under the Student Initiated Access to Computers Initiative. The second involves a proposed expansion of the General Education Curriculum to all undergraduate students. The Senate voted to establish the General Education Curriculum for Arts and Sciences undergraduates only, rather than all

undergraduate students, because of the lack of an appropriate administrative structure and the lack of a budget model which would support a greater scope for the Curriculum. The College of Arts and Sciences now provides the administrative structure for expansion of the program, and the budget model now gives a portion of the tuition generated to departments that provide instruction for the Curriculum. Expansion does, however, raise a number of issues. For example the language requirement is not universally supported; accreditation issues are also raised. EPPC should be involved in the discussion that will precede expansion of the Curriculum.

Senior Vice Provost Tufariello outlined some of the existing resources for teaching students computer skills, noting the need to coordinate efforts. He stressed the need to develop a method of assessing incoming students' computer proficiency. The Chair opened the floor to comments:

- teaching computer skills could be combined with teaching library skills, an ongoing program in the Libraries (Professor Adams)
- students doing well in the skills assessment test could be excused from classes; faculty may also benefit from computer skills assessment (Professor Malone)
- levels of computer proficiency have already been defined

so EPPC need not develop standards de novo; the University could specify what levels are expected at different stages of a student's career at UB, or what level is required for a specific course (Professor Meacham)

- an Educational Technology Laboratory is being put together; to provide hardware and software support for faculty (Senior Vice Provost Tufariello)
- five high impact courses have been targeted to meet the expectation of students for technologically sophisticated courses: Computer Sciences 101, English 101, Chemistry 101, Psychology 101, and World Civilization 101. Professor Fischer's Working Group is collaborating with teaching teams for these courses (Professor Fischer)

The focus of the discussion turned to the expansion of the General Education Curriculum when Professor Malone asked about the relationship of UB's General Education Curriculum to the general education program being discussed for SUNY. Vice Provost Goodman responded that SUNY Provost Salins is interested in developing an assessment instrument to be administered across SUNY, probably in the junior year. An institution's budget would be affected in part by the success of its students on the test. Provost Salins would like to see a test in place by next Spring. A test of basic literacy and mathematical skills might be acceptable on principle, but a test with cultural content would be problematic. UB would have to consider modifying its curriculum to bring it into compliance.

EPPC has two holdover items on its docket: the creation of criteria to determine if courses, either ones currently being taught or ones proposed, meet University standards, and the rethinking a proposal on residency requirements in the major. The Committee could also examine issues arising from the rapid development of joint Bachelors and Masters programs, but will need to do so expeditiously since some proposed programs have been approved by SUNY and are awaiting final approval from Albany.

Professors Boot and Schack raised questions about controls to prevent economic incentives arising from the new budget model from overriding pedagogically sound practices, for example, class size limitations. Vice Provost Goodman responded that the new budget model will shift the balance to attracting and keeping good students. He added that for some years, UB has done very little to assess our educational programs; the new budget model makes it important that UB put assessment programs in place.

Professor Churchill raised the point that given the captive audience of the General Education Curriculum, there is incentive to give courses with little substance and high grades. Professor Welch responded that there are some oversight committees; World Civilization has a committee that works with faculty teaching that course. Professor Schack indicated that the oversight committees are not particularly energetic.

Professor Goodman returned to UB's need to put assessment programs, especially learning outcomes assessment, in place. He believes that learning outcomes assessment can be meaningfully done only in the larger context of the major. First faculty must agree on the purposes of the major that apply to all students in the major. This is extremely difficult to accomplish in an environment like UB's with its many programs, many faculty and students with a wide range of goals and needs. It is easier to measure things like how employable students coming from a program are and how satisfied students are, i.e. performance indicators. UB is doing that kind of assessment.

The Chair recognized Steven Cosme, the Academics Director for the Student Association, who asked what follow-up there was on the teacher performance evaluations done by the students at the end of every semester. Vice Provost Goodman replied that while these assessments are valuable, they measure student satisfaction, not the learning that occurred.

Item 4: Report on Centers and Institutes

Professor Nickerson introduced Professor Ian Hay who chaired the Interdisciplinary Structures Committee. The Provost charged the Committee with inventorying existing interdisciplinary structures and taking a look at the criteria for establishing, funding, running, and closing down such structures in the context of research, teaching and service. The Committee broke into four Task Groups: Inventory, Finance/Future Planning, Credit, and Teaching/Service. Each Task Group drafted a subreport that then went to the Committee for discussion. The Committee felt:

- interdisciplinary activities are an essential element of the future of UB
- the current inventory is unsatisfactory; the Committee developed a questionnaire to be used in future inventories
- there are barriers to interdisciplinary activities, mostly in the area of credit, academic and financial

- common nomenclature and common mechanisms for establishing, funding, reporting on and terminating interdisciplinary structures need to be developed
- planning bodies to examine future prospects for further interdisciplinary activity should be established
- Responsibility Centered Management (RCM) may hinder interdisciplinary activities.

The Chair invited comments on the report:

- the report needs to give more ground about indirect costs,IDC, and to provide a glossary of terminology in the sponsored research area for the benefit of faculty who don't routinely have contact with it (Professor Smith)
- the Committee itself had to piece together information on where indirect costs go since complete information was not available (Professor Oak)
- supporting research through Interdisciplinary Structures (IDS) is appropriate; support for teaching should come from tuition and for service from the state budget (Professor Hay)
- IDS would be an appropriate topic for the Committee on Research and Creative Activities to examine (Professor Nickerson)
- All Funds Budgeting approach makes it very difficult to track the specific use of specific funds (Professor Malone)
- ideas for new interdisciplinary activities should come from faculty members, and also from the Review Group which the Committee recommends establishing to oversee and to fund interdisciplinary activity (Professor Hay)
- interdisciplinary groups should exist because of their academic, intellectual value, not because they are "cash cows" (Professor Oak)
- although promotion and tenure decisions should remain the primary responsibility of departments, there should be a statement evaluating interdisciplinary activities of faculty included in dossiers (Professor Hay)
- Centers should not be competitive with departments but each should be of mutual value to the other (Professor Oak)

- Centers and departments are inherently competitive because they are funded from a fixed pool of resources and staffed from the same pool of faculty; the value of Centers would be more credible if one ever closed itself down (Professor Schack)
- the Committee's report recommends that such structures not exist by default, but have to actively compete for funding to stay in existence (Professor Hay)
- a danger is that Centers will be perceived as doing only research and departments only teaching (Professor Albini)
- some Centers will do both teaching and research (Professor Malave)
- the potential service aspect of the Centers is very exciting; the Committee consulted with Dr. Wim Weivel from the University of Illinois at Chicago's Great Cities Institute who described his experiences building bridges to the community (Professor Hay)
- currently only 10/12 interdisciplinary structures receive University resources; there need to be criteria for recognizing structures as part of the University (Provost Headrick)
- it will be essential that we have information on the scope and activities of the Centers to avoid duplication of effort and to alert faculty to interesting activity (Professor Malave)
- relationships with sister institutions should be considered valid and fostered as interdisciplinary efforts (Professor Meacham)

Item 5: Discussion of the University at Buffalo Recognition Program

The University is considering instituting its own recognition program, eventually dropping the SUNY awards according to a report distributed . There were comments from the floor:

- understand the benefits of UB awards, but don't see any benefit from dropping SUNY awards (Professor Schack)
- the University may be attempting to create a unique identity for itself by substituting its own awards, which would be as prestigious as SUNY awards (Professor Malave)

- since it has been difficult to get nominations for honorary degrees, it may be necessary to build in a process for identifying potential recipients of the UB awards; nice to see in the proposal recognition of public service within the institution, but would also be nice to have recognition of leadership in governance; School and department level recognition programs are also important (Professor Welch)
- University of Albany is giving its own Presidential awards in addition to participating in the SUNY awards; UB should also retain the SUNY awards since they will serve faculty better in promotions to Distinguished Professor rank and in their national professional lives (Professor Adams)
- Professional Staff Senate welcomes the UB awards but is also in favor of retaining the SUNY awards (Dr.Coles)
- also surprised at dropping the Chancellor's Awards (Provost Headrick)
- there was generalized discussion of the procedure for nominating Chancellor's Awards candidates; some Senators felt the process was administratively driven and politicized; there was agreement on the need for better procedures
- there is a need to recognize people who are good in service, teaching and research, rather than focusing on only one aspect (Professor Smith)
- many people would prefer cash to cachet, so add monetary award to the UB awards (Professor Wooldridge)

Item 6: Old/new business

There was no old/new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn M. Kramer

Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Present:

Chair: Peter Nickerson

Secretary: Marilyn Kramer

Arts & Letters: Martha Hyde, Vic Doyno

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Ramalingam Sridhar

Graduate School of Education: Lilliam Malave

Health Related Professions: Judith Tamburlin

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Management: John Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini, Cedric Smith

Natural Science & Mathematics: Melvyn Churchill, Samuel Schack

Nursing: Powhatan Wooldridge

Social Sciences: Jack Meacham

SUNY Senators: Judith Adams, Dennis Malone, Claude Welch

University Libraries: Dorothy Woodson

Ex-Officio: Robert Hoeing

University Officers:

Thomas Headrick, *Provost*

William Fischer, *Vice-Provost*

Nicolas Goodman, *Vice-Provost*

Joseph Tufariello, *Senior Vice-Provost*

-

Guests:

Barbara Tedlock, *Chair, Educational Programs and Policy Committee*

Ian Hay, *Chair, Interdisciplinary Structures Committee*

Lorraine Oak, *Interdisciplinary Structures Committee*

William Coles, *Chair, Professional Staff Senate*

Steven Cosme, *Academic Director, Student Association*

<u>Excused:</u>

Dental Medicine: Robert Baier

SUNY Senators: John Fisher

<u>Absent:</u>

Architecture & Planning: Shahin Vassigh

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Ronald Batt, Herbert Schuel

Pharmacy: Nathan

Social Sciences: Simon Singer