FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of February 17, 1999 (unapproved)

E-MAIL: ZBFACSEN@ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on February 17, 1999 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

1. Approval of the Minutes of February 3, 1999
2. Report of the Chair
3. Report of the President/Provost
4. CIT Crisis
5. Mission Review
6. Senate Report of the SUNY Senate Meeting in Cortland
7. Old/new business

Item 1: Report of the Chair

The Chair reported that:

- Provost Triggle and the Deans met on Monday February 15; there was considerable discussion of CIT; the principal topic, however, was the Spring enrollment shortfall; budget and overcommitment of resources were also discussed; Provost Triggle indicated that there will be lobbying of the Legislature to improve the SUNY budget; the Alumni Association has also lobbied the Legislature; Vice Provost Sullivan talked about attributing courses to the units for accounting purposes; there is still no way to account for instructors from multiple departments; for double majors there is a 50/50 split; IFR supported programs and study abroad programs are not allowed to be counted; a snapshot taken at the end of the third week of classes drives the SUNY allocation of state tax dollars for UB; Vice Provost Goodman spoke about declining undergraduate enrollment, noting that enrollment is everyone's problem, and discussing strategies that might help, viz., direct mail, telecounseling, NYC

Office, Academic Excellence Scholarships, and deans and faculty letters to accepted freshmen; retention issues were also raised; Spring mid semester grades will be requested for freshmen entering this semester; UB 101 and block scheduling for last semester were considered successful; Interim Vice Provost Thompson reported that graduate applications and admissions are down considerably; since graduate recruitment is accomplished through the schools and departments it is difficult for central administration to deal with the problem

- elections for SUNY Senators are completed; Professor Kramer announced that Professors Woodson and Boot were elected as Senators and Dr. Durand and Ms. Mancuso were elected their alternates

- Professor Cerny from the Department of Physical Therapy, Exercise Science, and Nutrition has agreed to chair the Committee on Athletics and Recreation; FSEC will charge the Committee at its March 3, 1999 meeting

- he attended One Night, the event organized by the Alcohol Review Board and co-sponsored by the Faculty Senate; the speaker Michael Green was very effective

- today's meeting will end at 4 PM to allow the Chair to participate in a discussion on faculty governance in Professor Johnstone's course on higher education; we need to have a short executive session as well

- governance leaders met in conjunction with the meeting of the SUNY Faculty Senate in Cortland; the governance leaders discussed General Education and the action of the Board of Trustees, the varying levels of support for campus governance and campus governance leaders, and the distribution of discretionary money and met with the Chair of the Senate Governance Committee which is working on a document dealing with evaluation of administrators; apparently there is an annual SUNY evaluation of campus Presidents for which no faculty participation is sought

- he attended the meeting of the Graduate School Executive Committee; the Committee passed a new policy on time limits to degrees (4 years for the Masters, 7 for the Ph.D.) and age of course work to be applied to graduate degrees (no more than 10 years old unless petitioned at the time of admission); programs may impose more stringent requirements; declining applications for graduate programs was discussed

- at the FSEC meeting of Feb 3, the formation of two ad hoc subcommittees was discussed; one subcommittee was to deal with implications for UB of the General Education Requirement; the second subcommittee was to examine implications of changes in the graduate faculty, probably renewal of appointments; notes for the second subcommittee are not clear and would appreciate help in reconstructing its scope and thrust.

- the following Committees have scheduled meetings: Budget Priorities, Public Service, EPPC, Admissions and Retention, Academic Planning, Academic Freedom and Responsibility and Tenure and Privileges

The Chair asked for questions:

- elaborate on the SUNY review of Presidents (Professor Swartz)
- don't know if President Greiner has been so evaluated; imagine that the process is an informal one (Professor Nickerson)
- think the Chancellor talks informally to the President; there is a formal five year review (Professor Malone)
- SUNY Faculty Senate developed a procedure for a formal five year review, but have not heard of its being used recently (Professor Nickerson)

Item 2: Approval of the Minutes of February 3, 1999

The Minutes of February 3, 1999 were approved subject to the correction of a misspelling of Dean Lopos' name.

Item 3: Senate report on the SUNY Senate meeting in Cortland

Professor Fisher reported on the SUNY Senate meeting at Cortland. The meeting was well attended. Chancellor Ryan was not present.

Professor Fisher attended meetings in the health sciences area. Funding for health sciences is being significantly cut. None the less, several initiatives were proposed in the meetings and Senator Donald Dunn, Executive Vice Chancellor, received them favorably. There will be a Health Sciences Convention funded by Provost Salins. There may be an initiative for universal pre-natal care in New York.

Provost Salins discussed mission review. He also said he hoped to build better relations with the SUNY Senate.

There are two candidates for President of the SUNY Faculty Senate, Joe Flynn from College of Technology at Alfred and Joe Hildreth from Potsdam.

Several resolutions were adopted. One resolution called for open searches for senior SUNY administrators, one decried the lack of full funding for salary increases and the lack of inflationary money for ongoing projects, one opposed changes in TAP. There was a resolution commending the UUP Delegate Assembly for its quick and effective response to the General Education Requirement. The Plenary Session of the Faculty Senate concluded by condemning the actions of the Board of Trustees, the Chancellor, the Provost and the Chancellery towards the President of the SUNY Faculty Senate and authorizing the creation of a Committee to document the resolutions passed by the Senate and to expect a timely written response from the Board of Trustees.

Item 4: CIT Crisis

The Chair introduced Hinrich Martens, Associate Vice President for Computing and Information Technology, and Voldemar Innus, Senior Associate Vice President and Chief Information Officer. Tongue in cheek, he warned them that they had lots of explaining to do.

Mr. Innus outlined the course of the recent central e-mail system outage. On February 7 new equipment, designed to improve system performance, was installed following all appropriate procedures, but when the newly configured system was restarted, the entire file system and two up files (8.5 M files) were corrupted. CIT staff had no idea what had caused the problem. The first action was to restore some basic services, so the main mail hub was physically broken apart to build an interim system. The interim system could support about 800 users, but at peak there can normally be up to 1800 users. By February 12 the tape ups were loaded and able to be brought on the system. Because the interim system had been created from physical parts of the e-mail hub and was falling behind in delivering mail, CIT decided to stop the interim system at Friday midnight and focus all resources on bringing the hub together and bringing the system up. New mail was delivered first and older mail was delivered over the course of the next several days. CIT's highest priority during the outage was to insure minimal loss of e-mail, and in fact there were only a few short periods during which e-mail was lost.

CIT believes the problem was caused by a bug in the software. The software manufacturer, Veritas, will probably try to model the failure, but currently they have only suspicions of what went wrong.

CIT used the web CIT Alert to keep the University community informed about what was happening blow by blow and what the plan was for bringing the e-mail system up. CIT sent off faxes Friday evening to all University office faxes explaining what was happening.

As a result of the outage the IT Coordination Committee will put together a representative University wide committee. It will look at what further steps we should build into our e-mail strategy, recommend plans for the quickest recovery from a disaster, and review our current infrastructure for recommendations for adding further robustness to e-mail.

The Chair invited questions:

- was anything done to alert students that the interim system would be brought down Friday night? (Mr. Celock)

- the CIT Alert had the information by about 3 PM (Mr. Innus)
- could an e-mail message have been sent via the interim system warning students the system would disappear (Mr. Celock)
- given the through put of the interim system, the message wouldn't have been delivered till the system came up (Mr. Innus)
- could the shut down have been delayed a few days while students were informed? (Mr. Celock)
- no, needed the parts of the interim system to rebuild the regular system (Mr. Martens)
- what are you doing to insure that the probability of the software failing again is small ?(Professor Malone)
- we decided about a year ago to make the e-mail system fail safe; we are about 2/3's done in implementing the plan; it will take additional investment in redundant systems to make our system fail safe(Mr. Innus)
- need to explore possibilities other than just throwing money at e-mail (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- we have invested in full hardware redundancy, in automatic fail over capabilities, in separating the UNIX time sharing system from the e-mail system, and in introducing a client-server approach to e-mail support; we have learned, however, that our up system does not have the capacity we need; for example our system takes five days instead of one to two days to do a full up; we also learned we need a better disaster recovery plan; we will investigate alternate architectures and methods of providing service (Mr. Martens)
- use faculty expertise in computing on the committee; explore what other institutions are doing (Professor Sridhar)
- don't put new software on all three machines at the same time (Professor Baumer)
- our point of failure was that we had only one system managing all three copies; suspect that the size of our file was the cause of the problem, so have broken the file into twelve smaller components (Mr. Martens)
- another lesson is that if we have inactive files, get rid of them (Professor Welch)

- one outcome may be a recommendation to limit an individual's files (Mr. Martens)
- is there a way to quickly specify large numbers of files to be deleted? (Professor Malone)
- use select all, blacken out what you don't want and press delete (Mr. Martens)
- tried that, didn't work; take seriously the suggestion of posting information other than electronically (Professor Malone)
- one suggestion is to notify sender that message hasn't been delivered (Mr. Innus)

Item 5: Mission Review

Provost Triggle explained that he had taken the mission review document prepared by Tom Headrick and set it in the broader context of where higher education is going generally, and at SUNY and UB in particular. He also incorporated statements from Provost Headrick's Academic Planning Report. Above all he tried to make the document readable, using appendices for detailed analysis of programs and departments.

The core thrust of the document is that we have to make choices. If we fail to make those choices we have condemned ourselves.

The document still has uncompleted sections. Being written by one person, the report has a consistent tone and vision, but is liable to reflect personal idiosyncrasies. The Provost welcomes comments and suggestions.

Professor Welch, Chair of the Academic Planning Committee, added that the campus mission review was initiated by SUNY Central but reflects a SUNY wide interest in having more clearly defined, understandable, and appropriately funded responsibilities. In January 1998 each campus received a set of 37 detailed questions and a timetable for their completion. The instructions stated that the review should be done "in accordance with local custom and what works best for the campus community..." The instructions also stated that the document should be "shared with faculty governance." In October Provost Headrick shared his initial draft response with the Committee and later two subsequent iterations. Provost Triggle's is a very considerable retailoring of the Headrick document.

The System Administration will send a team to the campus to meet with "no more than six interlocutors," including the President, the Provost and a representative of elected faculty leadership. There will be a conversation about the mission review document. The result, hopefully, would be a clarification of the UB's mission.

The Chair asked for questions:

- understand that the Academic Planning Committee was enjoined to confidentiality; would you elaborate? (Professor Swartz)
- the first draft was to be kept within the Committee because the Provost had not shared the draft with anyone else on campus; the second draft was more widely shared on campus but the Committee kept its discussions within the Committee until the beginning of the second semester; this draft is in a state to be made public for discussion (Professor Welch)
- what has been sent to Albany and how close to final is this document? (Professor Swartz)
- nothing has been sent to Albany; the time table is to send the document by the end of the month; the UB Mission Statement will be added to the package (President Greiner)
- why is the executive summary more of a philosophy statement than an overview? (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- will write the executive summary at the very last and it will be an overview of the points developed in the document (Provost Triggle)
- accepting that libraries may "serve as an electronic clearing-house...rather than as a classic repository," none the less you present a pie in the sky vision of library technology; change the word clearing house which is insulting (Professor Adams-Volpe)
- the mission review document should encompass several decades in its thinking and within that time frame technology that is not yet available, will be available; have no problem with changing the word clearing house; submit all suggestions in writing; will reply to all suggestions (Provost Triggle)

- a critical component of mission review which seems to be lacking in this document is a statement of how we would respond to "performance indicators," especially assessment of education (Professor Malone)
- saving the writing of that section and the Executive Summary until last; the evaluation section is the most difficult and contentious; it needs to represent the different evaluations and accountability mechanisms that are necessarily discipline specific (Provost Triggle)
- the library section seems to take an either or approach that is probably misleading (Professor Smith)
- saw the future last week in the e-mail crash; electronic communication grows rapidly (President Greiner)
- too much emphasis on genome research (Professor Albini)
- preamble doesn't try to cover every base but to point out certain key directions in which we need to focus resources (Provost Triggle)
- the document talks about joint programs with Buffalo State College to impact the high school curriculum; do those exist? (Professor Harwitz)
- there have been preliminary discussions which haven't gone very far, but the name of the game is to share resources and to cooperate rather than compete (Provost Triggle)
- Provost Salins has commented that one of the purposes of mission review is to deal with the issue of program overlap and duplication (President Greiner)
- in the document's discussion of the major intellectual directions there is nothing about the social sciences or humanities; it's really all about science and engineering (Professor Harwitz)
- this document is a great improvement over earlier versions; it is a disappointment that there is nothing in the document about how we fit into the SUNY System; using quotations to start every section of the document is stretching and frequently falls flat (Professor Boot)
- who is the primary audience for this document and did you emphasize or de-emphasize material for that audience? (Professor Meacham)

- wrote the document for the broadest audience who care to read it and tried to make it readable; it picks what we think will be major directions that will shape the future of higher education in general and UB in particular and puts detail in the appendices (Provost Triggle)
- (addressed to Professor Boot) what did you mean by the comment the document doesn't address how we fit into SUNY? (President Greiner)
- UB has historically been stand offish to other SUNY institutions; this document recognizes we must focus on our relative strengths, but our relative strength in an area is in part dependent on the strengths of other SUNY institutions in that area (Professor Boot)
- document can commit only to things the departments have already agreed to (Provost Triggle)
- see UB in the mode of a traditional, comprehensive, public university; as a strategy wouldn't go into discussions with SUNY promising to give up a program just because the program is offered elsewhere in SUNY; some duplication of programs is reasonable (President Greiner)
- only truly unique programs UB has are Law and Pharmacy, so by the "unique" criterion we could shut down everything else; SUNY committed years ago to two comprehensive universities, one up state and one down state; we should hold them to that commitment (Professor Baumer)
- you discuss science in both the science and engineering section and in the arts and sciences section; is that intentional? (Professor Sridhar)
- yes; the science and engineering section discusses the University's commitment of resources for research, while the arts and sciences section discusses how undergraduate education here at UB can be linked to our research function, making us a unique undergraduate experience (Provost Triggle)
- what is the status of the set of questions posed by SUNY Central? (Professor Smith)
- will provide a letter of concordance to reconcile the document and their questions (Provost Triggle)

- if we really do "displace the traditional "Mr. Chipsian" mode of instruction" with technology, our application rate is likely to drop even more dramatically (Professor Holstun)
- the social role of the university will remain, but students will find technologically supported instruction more convenient (Provost Triggle)
- suggest you do not include the comment about more black and Hispanic individuals being in prison than in college (Professor Malave)
- comment is accurate, but will remove it (Provost Triggle)

Item 6: Report of the President/Provost

There was no report of the President/Provost.

Item 7: Old/new business

There was no old/new business.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn M. Kramer

Secretary of Faculty Senate

Present Chair: Peter Nickerson

Secretary: Marilyn Kramer

Arts & Letters: James Holstun

Engineering & Applied Sciences: Ramalingam Sridhar

Graduate School of Education: Lilliam Malave

Health Related Professions: Judith Tamburlin

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Law: Louis Swartz

Management: John Boot

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini, Cedric Smith

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Melvyn Churchill, Samuel Schack

Nursing: Jacqueline Thompson

Social Sciences: William Baumer, Mitchell Harwitz

SUNY Senators: Judith Adams-Volpe, John Fisher, Dennis Malone, Claude Welch

Ex-Officio: Robert Hoeing

University Officers:

William Greiner, *President*

David Triggle, *Provost*

Guests: Jack Meacham, EPPC

Voldemar Innus, Chief Information Officer

Hinrich Martens, CIT

Christopher Connolly, Pre-Professional Special Interest Housing

Suzanne Ley, Undergraduate Student Association

John Celock, *The Spectrum*

Sue Wuetcher, *Reporter*

Excused: Pharmacy: Nathan

Absent: Architecture & Planning: Shahin Vassigh

Dental Medicine: Robert Baier

University Libraries: Dorothy Woodson