FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of March 10, 1999 (approved)

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on March 10, 1999 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

1. Mission Review**Item 1: Mission Review**

The Chair stated that copies of Draft Number 2, Revision E of the Mission Review Document, the most recent version, had been mailed to members of FSEC on Monday. Today's meeting will consist solely of discussion of the Document.

Provost Triggle has been dealing with the issue of mission review for about five weeks. He has tried to make the evolving document widely accessible, copying Deans and members of FSEC and putting every major iteration of it up on the web. He has received a relatively few number of written comments, has responded to each of them and has incorporated a significant number of them into the Document. The nature of the Document is iterative; he is open to receiving and responding to additional comments.

The Provost has limited the coverage of the Document in order not to dilute its impact. Just because something isn't specifically mentioned or someone's name isn't specifically there, doesn't mean it has been automatically written out. The intent is to limit the trees specified so the woods are visible.

The Chair noted that UB's Mission Statement and a letter responding to SUNY's thirty seven questions will be added to the package. The Provost added that the letter transmitting the package to Provost Salins will explain that mission review was done in four parts over several years: the first part is our Mission Statement; the second part is Provost Headrick's Planning Document which set out what we are, where we are, and a variety of places we might go to; the third part is the Mission Review Document which is a broad statement of

mission set against an even broader context of changes in higher education in the next twenty to thirty years; the fourth part is a distillation of the whole answering the specific questions set by SUNY.

There were comments from the floor:

- could you share the guidelines which came from SUNY regarding consultation and cooperation with faculty in responding to mission review? (Professor Holstun)
- will share all the guidelines for the process; am only responsible for the past five weeks of the entire process and have tried to be as open as possible (Provost Triggle)
- are the appendices also open to change? (Professor Thompson)
- will consider changes to anything except numerical ratings or factual data which have been already been reported; document subject to change even after it has been submitted to SUNY (Provost Triggle)have several suggestions and questions regarding the Document (Professor Welch)

  1. (p.6, "Universities will change because many of the assumptions under which they have operated are increasing invalid...") SUNY thinks in the box of Department of Education requirements; would be better to substitute "under question" for "invalid"

  2. (p.12, "The concept of 'University Professor' may take on entirely new meaning with advising and teaching being carried on a several institutions...") sounds like the University of Phoenix or the hegira part time faculty make from one institution to another; one of our strengths is a core of stable faculty with a commitment to students and research

- will be delivering lectures at the University of Edmonton which will be simultaneously broadcast to the University of Calgary and the University of British Columbia; that is the model this statement contemplates (Provost Triggle)

3. (p.14, "**We will focus such major investments for organized research and scholarship in the broad areas of...**") add the

phrase "**in science and engineering**" following "**scholarship**" to re-enforce the scope of the section

- added next paragraph to explain why particular areas have been selected for focus (Provost Triggle)

4. (p.23, "We will expand this mission by establishing a downtown center for working professionals...") would this be a replacement for the EOC?

- it's an expansion of EOC; EOC will have to be relocated since Erie County has bought the building in which it is currently housed; talking with Erie County Community College about locating part of EOC in the Old Post Office and part in ECC's Advanced Training Center (President Greiner)

- the issue of UB cooperation with other SUNY institutions has been discussed in FSEC; this collaboration would be a good step (Professor Welch)

- being downtown could also put us in a competitive position; for example if the School of Management were to offer a section of its part time MBA program downtown or the College of Arts and Sciences an attractive Master's program downtown, professionals who work downtown might find those programs attractive; doing extension work and distance education will help us fund the resident student experience; the School of Management is talking about mounting an MBA program in New York City which would be a great way of raising UB's visibility down state (President Greiner)

    5. (p.31, "The time taken to complete this initial communications process...") the word "initial" suggests this is a new process when it is, in fact, the continuation of a process

- showing progress from Provost Headrick's Planning Document to the formation of the College of Arts and Sciences and the merger of the School of Information and Library

Studies with the Department of Communications is the point we're trying to make to SUNY (President Greiner)

6. text on public service lists three loci for public service, the Institute for Local Governance and Regional Growth, the School of Social Work and the Graduate School of Education; do you see public service as being assigned to these entities rather than being a part of the ethos of the entire University faculty as the Faculty Senate has discussed?

- these are examples of public service not an all inclusive list; there is specific mention in that section of the Faculty Senate Public Service Committee (Provost Triggle)

7. on p.25 there are two parts to be written, **principal graduate center** and**major undergraduate locus**; would you share your developing ideas on these?

- **major undergraduate locus** has been written and basically describes what our undergraduate programs are, what our general education mission and requirements have been and how well we have satisfied them, etc., issues aimed at making undergraduate life happier and more well rounded; **principal graduate center** is a half page description of where our graduate programs are, what they are, which are unique to UB and what the strengths are (Provost Triggle)
- description of undergraduate programs will answer some of SUNY's specific questions; description of graduate programs might be a good place to discuss the College of Arts and Sciences' major role in graduate education (Professor Welch)
- no intent to imply that the College of Arts and Sciences only serves an undergraduate mission; may be able to tinker with section headings to recognize graduate, as well as undergraduate responsibilities, more explicitly (Provost Triggle)
- just right to focus on the College's role in undergraduate education; the College was created because of undergraduate concerns; graduate education was just as well served by the old three Faculties structure; to say the College has a special role in

undergraduate education does not diminish its faculties graduate work or research (President Greiner)

- Provost Headrick's Planning Document is cited as the source document for the Mission Review Document, but the two don't read that way; the imminent electronic future of publication that the Mission Review Document envisions is not congruent with the more gradual evolution described by the Planning Document nor is it supported by evidence or by practical experience; the Mission Review Document hugely overstates the case as to electronic publication and also as to changes in instruction; technology will make the 400 student lecture class an insupportable paradigm, but will not replace human contact as the best learning method; a more likely outcome of technological intrusion into teaching is that an undergraduate degree from a research university with an intensive personal education will be more valuable because it will be a scarcer commodity; Provost Headrick recognized that an undergraduate and a master's degree are becoming the same signal to employers that a high school and undergraduate degree were fifty years ago and his Planning Document moved UB in that direction; the Mission Review Document is full of surety in its answers to what the future will be, although there is plenty of room for uncertainty and it commits us to a constellation of technological outcomes that have not been discussed, or agreed to by the academy (Professor Schack)

- would the question be resolved by a faculty vote? give Provost Triggle a paragraph which says that there is not a consensus of the faculty on the time frame for these changes (President Greiner)

- am quoting from the document: "Finally we need to recognize that, '*we are living between two revolutions - a paper revolution that is not fully spent and an electronic revolution that is not fully developed.*' Such interfaces are notoriously unstable and final directions very difficult to predict."; that is not a statement of surety (Provost Triggle

- too dangerous not to plan for rapid change; need to ensure that twenty years from now UB is one of the 100 still remaining research institutions (President Greiner)

- if you base your plan on fears that are not very likely to happen, you put the whole plan in question; very disturbed that the Mission Review Document appears to diminish the importance of departments, whereas while Provost Headrick was interested in interdisciplinary activity, he recognized the value of the departmental structure; don't see how a well designed set of University directions to which we are to fit our hiring can be focused on four fashionable research areas and not have as part of them the disciplinary health of core disciplines; faculty do not support the weakening of departmental structures as demonstrated by faculty concerns raised in Provost Headrick's discussion of Centers and Institutes; Provost Headrick's Planning Document contained several major thrusts which are not present in the Mission Review Document; for example the Planning Document established a goal of having a quarter of UB's doctoral programs in the top quartile of rankings and the rest in the top half of programs in the nation; he also provided ground such as financial profiles and peer group analysis to support as realistic what sounds like an overly ambitious goal; another major thrust was recognizing the Master's level of education as the standard student credential at UB, an idea given little mention in the Mission Review Document; major goals of the Planning Document had only a two year life span which doesn't reflect well on our staying power; the Planning Document enjoyed considerable faculty support, offered a more moderate view of the future and would be a better document to submit for mission review (Professor Schack)
- (addressed to Professor Schack) your comments on technology are based on an earlier version of the Mission Review Document and are erroneous; faculty hires are the single most expensive investment the University makes and must be considered in light of the overall goals of the University; can't afford to spread resources in all directions (Provost Triggle)
- the four investment areas are focused on organized research and graduate education in the sciences; that is not the only thing the institution is going to do over the next several years; these four areas are important first because we already have great strength in them that cuts across Arts & Sciences, Health Sciences, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Engineering; must work cooperatively because many of our

departments are too small to make headway by themselves; read the Planning Document as leading in the same direction as the Mission Review Document; secondly these areas are important because SMART-NY would provide extra funding for them; we will be investing in areas like Caribbean Studies and Latin American Studies but doing less in French and German; hiring in the next five years will be critical; we will not replace retiring faculty with faculty who look just like them even if that makes the faculty uncomfortable; if the Provost overstates, it is to energize people; the e-mail crash a few weeks ago provided an epiphany as to the speed of technological change (President Greiner)

- have a written statement that begins "Our University President and our two most recent Provosts have largely bypassed the faculty in the development of the proposed mission statement;" ask that the President take responsibility for the way the mission process has been handled; Provost Headrick worked mostly on his own (sharing drafts with the Academic Planning Committee for the only faculty input) and in the last few weeks Provost Triggle has made substantial changes to the document; received version Number 2, Revision E just before lunch, and have not read it yet; this is not an intellectually meaningful or responsible review process; send this document to Albany because you must respond to them, but then quickly bring faculty much more intimately into the planning process that underlies the document; there is a real danger that Provost Triggle's document will lead us in the opposite direction to what is pedagogically sound and financially viable; in distance learning we will be competing against heavily funded, very prestigious institutions; UB will be more successful in attracting students by offering personal teaching (Professor Swartz)

- agree with everything Professor Swartz said; rather than an electronic University consider freshmen seminars because students are not attracted to distance learning but are attracted to contact with faculty; this document does suggest weakening departments, but the only example of another institution doing that is the University of Phoenix (Professor Holstun)

- quoting from pages 16 and 17 of the document: "...the College of Arts and Sciences also permits us to provide more easily that unique definition of an undergraduate education in a major Research University - the ability to work and learn with faculty who are actively involved in the process of research at the frontiers of knowledge. This heady experience should become the hallmark of undergraduate education in the College of Arts and Sciences and will provide a critical distinction between the University at Buffalo and other less research-intensive institutions." this vision does not describe the University of Phoenix; am astounded at a reading of the document which leads to that conclusion (Provost Triggle)

- spend a lot of time looking at the competition; am not afraid that the University of Phoenix will take our undergraduate students, but am afraid that the Stanfords and Cornells will market their reputations and provide distance undergraduate education at a cost that is attractive to students who now go the state institutions; we have to figure out how to give greater value than they do, and we can't rely on cost differentials to give us an edge; SUNY's 37 questions don't focus on the right issues, so chose to take a different approach following off of the Planning Document; unfortunately took longer than anticipated to complete the Mission Review Document; the technology being suggested for undergraduates would be on campus for added value; UB has bet the farm on making us more of a residential campus with attractive housing and commercial activities and invested in intercollegiate athletics; will use technology in ways that free up resources for more meaningful contact with faculty (President Greiner)

- Access '99 is a model for other uses of technology; people were concerned that students would be burdened by having to provide their own computers, but instead UB has substantially upgraded access to public terminals; the statement that UB would continue to support and expect research from faculty is clearer in Revision A because it lacks the incomplete list of areas included in Revision E; what is meant by "infrastructure" on p.4, bullet 3? (Professor Sridhar)

- deliberately vague; whole set of issues around such things as environmental infrastructure to the infrastructure of social interactions; definition changes from discipline to discipline (Provost Triggle)

- faculty have been getting an erroneous picture from the Document of a totally electronic university; review Document for areas that might give that impression before the Document goes to a broader audience (Professor Sridhar)

- Appendix 2 covers ways in which the annual planning cycles will be involved in measurement of our progress; this is very helpful; suggest make explicit a role in the process for faculty and for the Faculty Senate (Professor Welch)

- if the intent was to raise the anxiety of the faculty, you have been very successful; Nursing has had experience using electronic communication with students and finds that it takes a lot of faculty time (Professor Thompson)

- because of the many changes in the Medical School, am very aware of the lack of consultation with faculty; for example, the Medical School Council was not even aware of the mission review process until last week; consultation helps faculty to buy into changes; concerned with identifying focus areas for research since it is difficult to predict what areas will be productive; another concern is the lack of clear relationships between departmental and interdepartmental structures; students want personal contact with faculty and technology is only an ancillary tool; consult with faculty early in the planning process, rather than only at the end (Professor Albini)

- sent copies of all drafts to the Deans, put the drafts up on the web and sent all department chairs a letter pointing to the draft; nonetheless there is a slowness to communication (Provost Triggle)

- Provost Headrick in presenting his Planning Document to the Faculty Senate said that his worst nightmare was to find that what he had done was not radical enough; politics, finances, and information technology don't allow the slow and deliberative processes that academia holds dear; anxiety has the positive side of focusing attention on important issues; the intent is to integrate technology with face to face teaching, not replace it; might be helpful to put the portion of the Mission Review Document that deals with the Student Centered University adjacent to the portion

that deals with Information Technology to emphasize their positive, symbiotic relation (Vice Provost Fischer)

- will elaborate on Professor Albini's concern for involving faculty early in a planning process; very complicated undertaking; faculty have been socialized and selected for their roles at a research university to focus with great concentration and energy on their own specific research; now we want faculty to participate in and devote themselves to a substantial reshaping of the university while at the same time increasing their research activity; this is word magic; consultation is only part of how we get from where we are to where we are supposed to be (Professor Swartz)

- if the faculty in the Medical School were unaware of the mission review process, where were their Faculty Senators who were aware ? can't rely on the President and Provost to do all the communication; need to move beyond complaining about process and into discussing content; a thoughtful critique of the Document from the Academic Planning Committee would be helpful; in the mean time will send this Document to Albany to begin a continuing discussion of it with the possibility of more changes being made to it; Judy Adams-Volpe has participated and written to the Provost and is a good model for other faculty participation; we need to move to the next stage of this process (President Greiner)

- send me written comments; some of the objections have heard today are not supported by the text of the Document; read the document carefully (Provost Triggle)

- would like to be able to have more contact with faculty, but Faculty Senate is the group I work with uniquely; Faculty Senate needs to take responsibility for preparing a faculty response (President Greiner)

- putting a document on the web is not the same as engaging faculty (Professor)

- will tell Deans to find the appropriate committee and engage their faculty with the document (President Greiner)

- suggest that our inability to effectively build faculty involvement should be part of FSEC's agenda; suggest also that the Academic Planning Committee should contact all faculty members and channel their comments to the Faculty Senate for discussion

and the preparation of an organized faculty response to the administration (Professor Malave)

- that would be a creative approach to the role of the Faculty Senate; still tend to rely on the Schools and Departments for communication; if that's not working need to speak to Deans and Chairs (President Greiner)
- if you can't send a copy of the Document to every faculty member, you could send a one page letter alerting faculty to the location on the web of a very important document which they should take a look at; responding to SUNY is urgent, but it is not urgent that we commit ourselves to this set of directions; urge that we write a response to SUNY's 37 questions and then separately set up committees to look at the directions proposed by Provost Triggle(Professor Schack)
- will send answers to the 37 questions and the Triggle document as well; the Triggle document does not commit us to anything; it is the beginning basis for on-going discussions (President Greiner)
- the Mission Review Document is long and complex, and many faculty think of it as an exercise from which nothing will emerge' (Professor Tamburlin)
- to save Provosts from burning out again, use the Faculty Senate to help in the early days of planning instead of bringing a finished product to us at the last minute (Professor Holstun)
- we have to get beyond the complaint that faculty weren't adequately consulted; putting the heat on you, the Senators, to get the issue out to the faculty now (President Greiner)
- Senators from the Medical School went to the Dean and he began discussions with the faculty, but that was only 10-12 days ago and that isn't enough time to get a response (Professor Albini)
- web document needs to have appendices added so faculty have access to the entire document (Professor Sridhar)
- several simultaneous, heated cross-discussions ensued dealing with how the Academic Planning Committee should proceed to create a response for the faculty

- the Academic Planning Committee needs a charge before it undertakes to solicit and summarize comments from all the faculty (Professor Welch)
- it would be a more forceful response to issue our own statement pointing out problems and strengths of the Document (Professor Schack)
- planning involves a deliberative process in which the participants talk together rather than singularly talking to the Provost (Professor Swartz)
- the Senate does that best through its committee structure (Professor Nickerson)

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn M. Kramer

Secretary of the 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

Law: Louis Swartz

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Boris Albini

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Samuel Schack

Nursing: Jacqueline Thompson

Pharmacy: Nathan

SUNY Senators: John Fisher, Claude Welch

University Libraries: Dorothy Woodson

University Officers: William Greiner, President; David Triggle, Provost

Guests:

William Fischer, Vice Provost

Sue Wuetcher, *Reporter*

Excused:

Dental Medicine: Robert Baier

Information & Library Studies: George D'Elia

Medicine & Biomedical Sciences: Cedric Smith

SUNY Senators: Judith Adams-Volpe, Dennis malone

Absent:

Architecture & Planning: Shahin Vassigh

Management: John Boot

Natural Sciences & Mathematics: Melvyn Churchill

Social Sciences: William Baumer, Mitchell Harwitz

Ex-Officio: Robert Hoeing