# Faculty Senate Executive Committee

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on April 19, 2000 in Capen 567 to consider the following agenda:

1. Approval of the minutes of March 29 and April 5, 2000
2. Report of the Chair
3. Report of the President/Provost
4. Report from the Student Life Committee -- Classroom Behavior
5. Report from the Teaching and Learning Committee -- Assessments of Instructional Effectiveness
6. Old/new business

**Item 1: Approval of the minutes of March 29 and April 5, 2000**

The minutes of March 29 and April 5, 2000 were approved.

**Item 2: Report of the Chair**

The Chair reported that:

1. he attended the installation of the officers of the Student Association; outstanding clubs were also recognized

2. at the April 26 FSEC meeting Vice Provost Goodman and Associate Dean Gold will discuss General Education and the current status of the SUNY mandates, and the Athletics and Recreation Committee will report on the budget for intercollegiate athletics, setting a context for the figures; if possible the report will be presented at the May 2 Faculty Senate meeting; the Budget Priorities Committee will also review the report; a similar report on recreation is projected for the Fall; at the May 3 FSEC meeting, the last of the academic year, Professors Bunn and Thornton will talk about their work in establishing the governance unit for the College of Arts & Sciences and issues on which the Senate can work with the College, and the FSEC will discuss issues for the future; Provost Triggle will host his last executive session with the FSEC on May 10

3. Provost designate Capaldi has agreed to meet with the FSEC early in the Fall, date to be negotiated
4. the Student Life Committee reviewed a policy on student conduct in the classroom
5. he completed a draft schedule of Faculty Senate and the FSEC for the 2000-2001 academic year and would like feed

There were comments from the floor:

- there is much concern on other SUNY campuses about the General Education Requirement; the SUNY Faculty Senate will be discussing the issue soon (Professor Malone)
- the College of Arts & Sciences is holding a recognition ceremony for undergraduates on May 3 which may cause a conflict for Professor Bunn and FSEC members from the College (Professor Baumer)

**Item 3: Report of the President/Provost**

The President reported in executive session.

**Item 4: Report from the Student Life Committee -- Classroom Behavior**

Professor Ludwig, Chair of the Student Life Committee, presented drafts of two documents, *Obstruction or disruption in the classroom - policies* and *Obstruction or disruption in the classroom - strategies*, which arise from FSEC discussions with Vice President Black. The Committee suggests that the *Student Rules and Regulations*include a section on classroom etiquette, and *Strategies* lists examples of disruptive behavior. Syllabi should contain or cite that section of the *Rules. Policies* sets out escalating steps that faculty are authorized to take if faced with disruptive behavior which interferes with the functioning of the class.

There were comments from the floor:

- am concerned about loading up syllabus; explain the difference between bullets 2 and 3 of *Policies*, both of which authorize the faculty member to ask a student to leave class (Professor Schack)
- citing the *Rules* in a syllabus is adequate (Professor Ludwig)

- if the President promulgates these policies, they could be included in the *Undergraduate Catalog* and cited from there; important that the policies be written down and available (Professor Malone)
- could be made part of the orientation process and UB 101 (Dean Ricotta)
- many faculty are unaware of what their rights are and need to understand the process (Professor Tamburlin)
- bullet 2 of *Policies* sets out the faculty member's unilateral right to ask a disruptive student to leave for a class period; bullet 3 says that the faculty member can also seek a student's suspension or dismissal from the class subject to the Student Conduct Regulations and due process proceedings (Professor Ludwig)
- *Policies* should contain only a clear statement of faculty rights; advice on how to handle students could be read as imposing procedural obligations on faculty (Professor Swartz)
- will put all advice in *Strategies* (Professor Ludwig)
- a strategy I have used is to leave the classroom for 10 minutes, telling the students to restore order (Professor Fourtner)
- as a student, would find a universal code of conduct helpful in dealing with different professors; a clear statement of a professor's rights in the classroom gives students advance warning ; students want electronic devices turned off during class (Mr. Celock)
- believe I have the right to give a disruptive student a failing grade for the course; if I am wrong in that belief the *Policies* should so specify; students tell me that they were told in orientation that there is no obligation to go to a recitation till after having gone to the lecture; they also tell me that resident hall advisors say that one doesn't have to go to classes; might give students clear advice to the contrary in orientation (Professor Baumer)
- have heard the story about recitations from other students but not from resident hall advisors (Mr. Celock)
- some departments may have that policy about recitations (Professor Schack)

There was a motion (seconded) to put this resolution on the agenda for the May 2 Faculty Senate meeting. The motion passed.

**Item 5: Report from the Teaching and Learning Committee**

The Chair, noting that the report contains a number of action items which would be turned into resolutions, suggested that if the FSEC agrees, the report would get its first reading at the May 2 Faculty Senate meeting, with the second reading to follow in the Fall. Professor Gentile, Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee, walked the FSEC through the report. The first several pages of the report set the context, stating that teaching and learning is a two way street requiring actions by teacher and student. A series of recommendations follows.

University policy requires that an instructor publish a syllabus for each course. The first recommendation establishes the minimum content of a syllabus: general goals for the course, specific objectives which must be achieved to demonstrate sufficient mastery to receive a passing grade, how attainment of the goals and objectives will be evaluated, what additional support is available, attendance policies, what else is required in the course and how it will be evaluated and the overall grading scheme.

There were comments:

- is this recommendation intended to cover all academic units? (Professor Swartz)
- yes (Professor Gentile)
- before establishing standard contents of syllabi, there should be consultation with the academic units so that various traditions are represented, leading to fuller compliance (Professor Swartz)
- the first reading will give units a chance to comment on the specifics of the content, and the document can be shared with the Deans for their comments before a vote on the resolution in the Fall (Professor Nickerson)
- where precisely is the document requiring syllabi and how honored is the requirement? (Professor Malone)
- Committee will find and cite the document (Professor Gentile)
- in other discussions, I have understood that the document covers only undergraduate courses (Professor Swartz)
- syllabus is basic communication between teacher and student and this list outlines only the minimum content (Professor Cedric Smith)

- there is a wide difference among departments in the way syllabi look; for example, have seen syllabi whose course objectives just list chapters to be covered, which is an argument for broader consultation (Professor Schroeder)

- there is discussion in SUNY that may result in assessment standards being imposed on campuses; this recommendation is a great first step (Professor Adams-Volpe)

- my experience in the Educational Technology Center is that many faculty have a hard time stating their teaching goals, and it is useful to do so (Professor Booth)

- stating teaching objectives may be more helpful for accrediting agencies than in promoting student learning (Professor Swartz)

- can give objective teaching goals in my humanities courses, but not behavioral ones; for example, my goal for my World Civilization course is that students know the major civilizations up to the 15th Century, I will assess mastery on the basis of the students' exam essays (Professor Baumer)

- that would satisfy the requirements for a statement of goals and assessment criteria (Professor Gentile)

- the School of Dental Medicine separately requires syllabi; if the university document covers only undergraduates, it may be that some of the professional and graduate schools have their own requirement (Professor Easley)

- The second recommendation lists items of information which should be included in the teaching portfolio. These suggestions piggy- on the list provided by the President's Review Board.

There were comments from the floor:

- the PRB's *Checklist for Promotion Dossiers* limits the teaching portfolio to about 30 pages; the Committee's recommendation specifies information about each course taught be included in the dossier and this may not be possible (Professor Adams-Volpe)

- many faculty are already tenured and at professor rank, so this provision would not affect them (Professor Swartz)

The third recommendation asks the Provost to "initiate and fund a high-profile, long-range, systematic and comprehensive professional development effort for faculty to continue expanding and improving their instructional repertoires." There is a perception on campus that the administration is willing to fund faculty in learning how to use technology to teach, but has not been willing to support low technology teaching. There needs to be this parallel effort, perhaps offered through the Educational Technology Center.

- currently the ETC has no one on its staff with a ground in pedagogy; would be great to add that competency (Professor Booth)
- not enough to say that it would be a good thing for teaching to be recognized and supported; have to give a cogent reason why money should be spent (Professor Malone)
- untenured faculty focus on their research and only after achieving tenure will they spend time on teaching, at which point it's a little late; chairs and deans need to encourage junior faculty to develop their teaching skills (Professor Cedric Smith)
- the teaching portfolio will motivate untenured faculty to focus on teaching skills (Professor Gentile)
- the Office of Teaching Effectiveness offered a good new faculty orientation which helped with teaching skills, how to prepare a syllabus, and how to write a grant proposal; adequacy of teaching affects student retention (Professor Tamburlin)
- are there graduate courses on teaching offered to doctoral students? (Professor Schroeder)
- there are some, but nothing systematic; the recommendation suggests creation of such classes (Professor Gentile)
- chaired a SUNY committee that recommended the creation of how to teach courses at the university centers, which recommendation was vetoed by their Presidents who felt their graduate students should spend their time on research (Professor Malone)
- Law School has a tradition of visiting other faculty members' classes; this allows for feed, constructive criticism and visibility of teaching (Professor Swartz)
- some departments of the Medical School also have this tradition; should encourage this practice as an effective way to train (Professor Cedric Smith)
- believe UUP views this practice as faculty evaluating other faculty and thus assuming a management role; should check with the UUP on this (Professor Malone)

The fourth recommendation is that UB promulgate a list of student academic responsibilities, the fifth is that the Methods of Inquiry Program be strengthened and better publicized, and the sixth is for discussion with various campus student organizations about the above issues.

MOI courses are excellent (Professor Nickerson)

- important for students to learn how to take charge of their own education, so that even if an instructor is not clear they figure out how to work around her (Professor Swartz)
- students who have taken MOI at the same time as my class think they significantly raised their letter grades (Professor Tamburlin)
- might co-ordinate MOI with the University Experience Course; might arrange to have MOI listed in the undergraduate course schedule (Professor Baumer)

There was a motion (seconded) to put the report on the agenda of the May 2 Faculty Senate meeting. The motion passed.

**Item 6: Old/new business**

Professor Easley asked about the referral to the Academic Planning Committee of the matter of the dissolution of the Department of Oral Health Services and Informatics. The Chair replied that the matter had been referred to the Committee, which is scheduled to meet May 5.

There being no other old/new business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn McMann Kramer
Secretary of Faculty Senate

**Present:**

**Chair:** P. Nickerson

**Secretary:** M. Kramer

**Arts & Sciences:** W. Baumer, C. Fourtner, S. Schack

**Dental Medicine:** M. Easley

**Education:** T. Schroeder

**Engineering & Applied Sciences:** D. Malone

**Health Related Professions:** J. Tamburlin

**Law:** L. Swartz

**Medicine & Biomedical Sciences:** Cedric Smith

**SUNY Senators:** J. Adams-Volpe, H. Durand

**University Libraries:** A. Booth

**University Officers:** W. Greiner, President

**Guests:**

B. Ricotta, Dean of Students

J. Ludwig, Chair, Student Life Committee

R. Gentile, Chair, Teaching and Learning Committee

J. Celock, Red Jacket Hall Council

M. McGinnis, *Reporter*

P. Graser, *The Spectrum*

Z. Ansar, *The Spectrum*

**Excused:**

**Architecture:** R. Shibley

**Information Studies:** C. Jorgensen

**SUNY Senators:** J. Fisher

**Absent:**

**Arts & Sciences:** J. Meacham, Charles Smith

**Management:** J. Boot

**Medicine & Biomedical Sciences:** B. Albini

**Nursing:** E. Parese

**Pharmacy:** N.

**SUNY Senators:** J. Boot