

Approved October 31, 2007

Executive Council  
October 10, 2007  
ASB 230

Members Present: Eric Karlin, Susan Eisner, Steve Rice, Amruth Kumar, Maria Vail, Anita Stellenwerf, Irene Kuchta, Marcia Sexton, Jim Morley, Erin Augis, Jonathan Lipkin, George Gonpu, Martha Ecker, Ed Shannon, Susan Kurzmann, Donna Crawley, Larry D'Antonio

Members Absent: Lisa Cassidy (absent due to teaching conflict)

Executive Council meeting 9:00a-10:00a

1. Sabbaticals

Councilors present discussed sabbaticals in the overall context of importance of support for faculty scholarship and the newly negotiated AFT contract. Related discussion topics included the process of granting sabbaticals, criteria and procedures, and the role of sabbatical in the new AFT contract. Executive Council members drafted a statement (resolution) in support of providing full financial support for all sabbaticals allowed by the state. The statement (resolution) is on the agenda for a proposed special Faculty Assembly meeting for Wednesday, October 17, 2007 to provide a forum for all faculty to discuss the importance of support for faculty scholarship at Ramapo College.

2. Master Calendar update

The spring 2008 semester will start the Tuesday after the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. Councilor Kumar followed up from the prior EC meeting with a proposed resolution regarding the start of future Spring semesters, within the context of supporting faculty scholarship and teaching. Comments and feedback should be sent to Councilor Kumar before the end of today. The Resolution would be on the agenda for the next Faculty Assembly meeting.

Executive Council meeting with ARC 10:00a-11:00a

1. Update from ARC

Members of ARC met with the Executive Council and ARC Chairman Jonathan Lipkin provided an update of activities. The ARC Committee continues to revise the ARC manual in an effort to streamline procedures and has reviewed study abroad procedures. At the request of Provost Barnett, ARC is maintaining a record of minor changes especially those impacting the Registrar. Pre-requisite changes go from the convening group through dean to the Registrar rather than through ARC. The ARC Committee requested that ARC deadlines be incorporated into the academic calendar along with deadlines for catalog changes, whose deadline might be reconsidered. In an effort to lessen the amount of paper used for syllabi the committee will post standard clauses on the ARC website. Course enrollment guidelines will be returned to the manual. Other items being reviewed by ARC include a proposed Africana major which will require state approval and changing the liberal studies minor to a contract major

2. Student opinion of teaching and learning

ARC Chairman Lipkin provided a brief review of the student opinion evaluation instrument as it pertained to ARC. There was general discussion among all present regarding the purpose of student evaluations, the importance of aligning them with effective teaching

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definitions from the Faculty Handbook; the need to use results of such surveys only as 1 measure of teaching effectiveness and to review how they are being used in terms of reappointment, tenure, and promotion; the possibility of using online evaluation forms; the importance of using student evaluation measurements that have been validated; and the difference of using feedback from such evaluations for improvement of instruction vs. demonstration of effectiveness for personnel decisions; and the wisdom of changing only if warranted and supported by literature/data. The flaming nature of online “Rate My Professor” assessment was mentioned, along with caution re: the legality of using anonymous evaluations in personnel decisions.

**Suggestion:** Councilor Eisner suggested that ARC send a representative to the Executive Council subcommittee on personnel to continue dialogue on evaluations of teaching methods. Vice Provost Ecker offered to circulate literature on student evaluations methods including those distributed online.

### 3. Sabbaticals (see also Item #1 above)

President Karlin reviewed items discussed early by the Executive Council regarding the current sabbatical situation and asked for feedback from ARC. ARC’s feedback was consistent with that of the Executive Council.

Revised and submitted by M. Sexton, October 26, 2007