

Approved December 12, 2007

Executive Council
November 28, 2007
Board Room

Members Present: Eric Karlin, Steve Rice, Susan Eisner, Maria Vail, Jim Morley, Erin Augis, Anita Stellenwerf, Amruth Kumar, Marcia Sexton, Provost Beth Barnett

Members Absent: Lisa Cassidy (Absent due to teaching conflict), Irene Kuchta

Executive Council meeting 8:00a-9:30a

1. Parking Update

President Karlin updated Executive Council on a parking proposal sent from President Mercer. General consensus was to bring the proposal to the faculty for discussion and a vote at the December 12 Faculty Assembly. Council members reaffirmed the need for the College to provide adequate free parking for faculty/staff as the community expands numerically and geographically. It also reaffirmed the need to review the number of already reserved parking spaces, especially given the proposal to charge faculty/staff for these new 50 spaces.

Action Item: Councilors Stellenwerf and Kumar will lead the parking discussion at Faculty Assembly.

2. Provost's Council [see also Item #2 below]

President Karlin informed Executive Council on the composition and objective of the newly formed Provost's Council. The Council will be made up of campus wide representatives plus faculty representatives from all units with the charge to discuss academic policies. For example: proposed policy to not allow students at the junior/senior level to take classes at a community college. Council members discussed several questions regarding the purpose of the Council including its authority and existence as a decision making body or consultative body and its jurisdiction as compared with existing bodies.

Action Item: Executive Council will discuss the Provost's Council and its charge with Provost Barnett when everyone meets at 9:30a.

3. Faculty Retirement Policy [see also Item #3 below]

Executive Council members discussed changes to the faculty retirement policy. Phased retirement is no longer part of the contract. Past practice has been to hire a temporary faculty replacement for one year and then a decision is made on hiring a permanent replacement. Financial implications of retirement are a main concern.

4. Search Committees

Executive Council members expressed concern that some Search Committees have been told that a failed search might well result in loss of the line being searched. The Council expressed concern that this might result in hiring unwisely lest the line be lost.

Action Item: Executive Council will discuss this with Provost Barnett when she joins the session at 9:30a.

5. Personnel Subcommittee

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Councilor Stellenwerf reported that she and Councilor Kuchta are completing background conversations with constituencies, including the Union, and will present recommendations early in the Spring semester. Councilors suggested that this background might form the foundation for a larger Task Force incorporating the various constituencies so that recommendations can be formulated upfront with consultation/input and outcomes expedited.

6. Shared Governance Follow-Up

The Executive Council continued its discussion of shared governance at the College, as the present form is a two-year pilot scheduled to end with this academic year. A presentation by the members of the Executive Council on their perceptions of how the present governance structure has worked will be a main agenda item of the December 12 Faculty Assembly.

Executive Council meeting with Provost Barnett 9:30a-11:00

1. Proposal on junior/senior level students taking classes at community colleges to transfer back to Ramapo

This proposal was suggested at the Provost's Council and Executive Council suggested it be sent to ARC before its final review at the Provost's Council. This policy, if accepted, would apply to students entering the College in Fall 2008 and beyond. It cannot be applied retroactively. Because of CEP implementation there is a backlog of General Education and required courses that many students still need to take to graduate in a timely manner. Members present also discussed the overall quality of a Ramapo education.

Action Item: Enrollment Management is reviewing the number of sections offered for General Education courses.

2. Provost's Council [see also Item #2 above]

Provost Barnett provided clarification on the charge and purpose of the Provost's Council. The purpose of the Council is to discuss academic policies and serve as a communication/consultative body. Some Executive Council members expressed concern that non-academic constituents will impact academic decisions. Continued discussion suggested reciprocity with academic representation on Student Affairs or other departmental advisory groups.

Action Item: The Provost's Council will meet on December 20, 2007, from 10:00a-12:00p.

3. Retirement Policy [see also Item #3 above]

Provost Barnett reported that phased retirement has one more cycle to complete before it is no longer available. Past practice has been to offer a faculty member one year at full pay but half time teaching (in the year prior to retirement). In the first year following retirement, a faculty member may request from the unit dean and be granted the opportunity to teach up to half a load at overload pay. No replacement is made for faculty who were granted this opportunity. The Provost also stressed that faculty in the phased retirement program are not automatically replaced upon retiring and there is a procedure for position redistribution.

Additional discussion brought up the topic of failed searches resulting in losing faculty lines. Provost Barnett informed Executive Council that if there is a history of failed searches for a particular position, the position is re-evaluated and may be re-assigned; in practice, searches have generally been renewed for up to 3 times.

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Suggestion: It was suggested by Executive Council that an emeritus adjunct status or similar category be looked into as a means to retain experienced faculty beyond retirement, that searches should do an in-progress check re: robustness of the pool to allow additional recruitment measures to avert a failed search, and that Committees be allowed 1 failed search before the line is returned to the pot.

4. Dean Search Task Force

Provost Barnett provided an update on the Dean Search Task Force. The Task Force has created a draft of the selection process and solicited feedback. Revisions will be incorporated before a final submission. A review of dean job descriptions and dean evaluations will follow.

5. Scholarship Task Force

President Karlin informed Provost Barnett of the Executive Council's decision to create a Task Force to look into support for faculty scholarship. The Task Force will look at the current funding available for faculty scholarship and suggest ways to enhance it including streamlining procedures. Those present also discussed perceived disparity of fund dispersal among units, faculty-student research funds, and how much funding faculty can count on throughout the year. **Action Item:** Provost Barnett will discuss the charge and composition of the administrative membership on the Task Force with President Mercer.

6. Mentoring/Orientation

Everyone present agreed that there is a need for organized mentoring and orientation practices especially for newer faculty. Councilor Eisner reminded everyone that there is an Executive Council sub-committee soliciting feedback on mentoring and orientation. Additional discussion touched on the topics of a clear definition of mentoring, orientation of the mission pillars and how they impact teaching and opportunities for and appropriateness of service for untenured faculty.

Action Item: Mentoring Subcommittee (Cassidy, Eisner, Karlin, Kumar, and Morley) is meeting later today and will report recommendations as soon as formulated.

7. Meeting times

Finding adequate time in the weekly schedule for meetings is on the agenda for Thursday's dean's meeting. Members present also engaged in discussions of classroom space availability and reallocations of classroom space.

8. Ongoing Consultation

Provost Barnett offered to meet with Executive Council outside of the scheduled Executive Council meeting time, earlier or later in the day as needed to further discuss specific topics.

Revised and submitted by M. Sexton, December 10, 2007