

Approved December 12, 2007

Executive Council  
December 5, 2007  
Board Room

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

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

Executive Council Meeting 9:00a-9:30a

1. Faculty Assembly President's Update

President Karlin updated members of Executive Council on President Mercer's signing of the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment document at the Green Meets Green Conference on Friday, November 30, 2007. More information will be forthcoming when President Mercer meets with Executive Council at 9:30a. Members of the Environmental Alliance Club will also make a brief presentation of the document after President Mercer concludes his remarks. President Karlin also updated Executive Council on the parking proposal that will be voted on at the December 12 Faculty Assembly meeting.

**Action Item:** President Karlin, Councilors Stellenwerf and Kumar will develop the wording for the ballot.

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

1. Scholarship Task Force

Executive Council discussed the proposed Scholarship Task Force with President Mercer and Provost Barnett. The purpose of the Task Force will be to look at methods for streamlining application processes for faculty scholarship funds, reviewing of deadlines, external i.e. Foundation funds vs. Academic Affairs funds and merging funds if possible. Membership on the Task Force will consist of faculty and administrative representation.

**Action Item:** President Mercer will charge the Scholarship Task Force once representatives are assembled.

2. Scholarship Funding

President Karlin reported that there has been some confusion over the distribution of funds for travel. Provost Barnett stated that the additional \$100,000 for travel will be divided among the units based on the number of faculty. The deadline to apply for these funds is January 2, 2008. The funds must be used this academic year. Provost Barnett assured Executive Council that these funds for faculty development are not to be used for other expenditures. Those present restated the importance of criteria and transparency and suggested of providing an end of the year report on what was spent by whom. Provost Barnett reminded Executive Council that this information is available in her office as part of the annual financial report but will discuss it further.

**Action Item:** Provost Barnett will discuss travel funds distribution, criteria, and reporting with the deans.

3. Environmental Alliance Club-Paul Coraggio, Allison Petryk

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Students from the Environmental Alliance Club gave a brief summary of their efforts following President Mercer's signing of the American College & University President's Climate Commitment. Activities recommended by students include formation of a guiding committee, creation of a campus plan to make Ramapo climate neutral, review of Ramapo's greenhouse gas emissions, integration of sustainability into the curriculum, and participation in a national teach-in on January 31, 2008, to discuss global warming. Executive Council commended the students for their leadership, commitment, and activism on this issue. Discussion regarding consultation, integration with ongoing Sustainability efforts, and implementation ensued. President Mercer also provided remarks and indicated his commitment to sustainability as part of the Strategic Plan.

**Action Item:** President Mercer will mention the American College & University President's Climate Commitment as part of his report at the December 12 Faculty Assembly.

#### 4. General Education-Martha Ecker

Vice President Ecker provided an update on General Education and assessment efforts. The General Education Task Force is developing regular assessment procedures and will be piloting a project to use both qualitative and quantitative methods to assess a variety of courses including Social Issues, Perspectives of Business, Readings in the Humanities, and College English. The project can only be piloted as the learning goals/objectives to be assessed have not yet been finalized. Executive Council suggested follow up academic conversation on the proposed learning goals/objectives, and presentation by the Committee on the proposed assessment plan to be rolled out.

**Action Item:** Provost Barnett will provide an update on these projects at the December 12 Faculty Assembly.

#### 5. Faculty Searches

Members of Executive Council expressed continuing concerns that search committees are being informed that failed searches will result in losing the line. Provost Barnett reminded Executive Council that this is not current practice. Review of the position is generally conducted after three failed searches or a fundamental shift in priorities. Councilor Eisner suggested that searches in progress should also review their processes, requirements, and other situational factors if the candidate pool is not robust. President Mercer also commented on the anticipated budget cuts for next fiscal year but not as an impact on failed faculty searches.

#### 6. All College Meeting time slot

Members present discussed continuing issues and concerns with scheduling time for all-college meetings and other events, proposed Monday/Wednesday Tuesday/Thursday schedules, and adjuncts teaching in the Wednesday mid-afternoon time slot. The current schedule does not make possible a sufficient amount of common open time when full-time faculty are not teaching. Provost Barnett informed Executive Council that the deans reviewed and rejected a proposal of cutting break times in Wednesday morning classes which would have made possible an earlier start to Wednesday College meetings without dramatically altering the class schedule. President Karlin informed the group that the current configuration of only two hours of College meeting time on Wednesday results in a draft meeting schedule for Spring 2008 with only one hour allotted for College meetings to be held in that slot including Unit Councils, Faculty Assembly, and Convening Groups. President Karlin has previously reported increased requests for College

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meetings to be held in that time slot, especially from Convening Groups. Provost Barnett reported that the Fall 2008 schedule will move all-college meeting time to 11:30a-2:45p on Wednesdays providing a teaching slot from 3:00p-6:15p. Reverting to last year's practice, full-time faculty will be asked to not teach during the College meeting slot.

#### 7. Constituent Assembly Update

President Mercer reported that the Board of Trustees needs to approve the Strategic Plan. Following the approval, he will send out a call for participation in the Constituent Assembly.

#### 8. Summer 2008

Provost Barnett updated the group on Summer 2008 including special programs for high school students. Credit and non-credit courses will be available and the schedule is being set. It is planned that the programs be residential but there are options for non-residents. Course outlines for distance learning courses must be submitted to the Provost this week with decisions to be made by a still-being-formulated Committee before the holiday break. The Provost also reminded everyone that the TEC will be offering workshops for faculty interested in teaching an online/distance learning course. Councilors expressed concerns that there seems to be little change in approach to the regular summer session and recalled prior discussion regarding the potential for a suite of "guaranteed go" courses that would encourage faculty to offer courses and students to enroll. The importance of coordinating various innovations/programs so that the impact of each on the other is optimized was also stated.

#### 9. Parking

President Karlin thanked President Mercer for his parking proposal which will be voted on at the December 12 Faculty Assembly. Councilors Stellenwerf and Kumar asked President Mercer to consider a few additional factors.

#### 10. Ongoing Consultation

**Action Item:** Executive Council will respond to Provost Barnett's offer to make additional off-site meeting time for in-depth discussion of specific topics including General Education learning goals/objectives and the faculty life cycle.

#### 11. President Mercer's report

President Mercer provided a brief update on the SCI report and the development of a debt management policy from the Board of Trustees Financial Subcommittee. The Enrollment Management Plan is progressing and the number of applications is up by 15 percent.

#### 12. Mentoring

President Karlin informed President Mercer and Provost Barnett that the Executive Council has a Subcommittee on Mentoring and Faculty Orientation in place and that subsequent recommendations would be formulated and discussed. The President and Provost affirmed their interest in this initiative.

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