Faculty Assembly Meeting
February 16th, 2011
Secretary: Kristin Kenneavy

1. Approval of Minutes

Motion to accept. Seconded. Minutes approved via voice vote.

2. Faculty Assembly President's Report (*Jim Morley*)

a. Results of the By-Laws Ballot: The current governance structure has been approved. At the last Faculty assembly meeting on January 19th, we agreed to accept the results based on 2/3 of votes cast. Pres. Morley pointed out that the system is fluid and can be amended. The results are as follows:

> 144 votes cast. 6 were abstentions, which do not count in the denominator for the p ercentages that follow.
>
> In favor of the current system: 114/138 = 82.6%
>
> Not in favor of the current system: 24/138 = 17.4%

b. Once per Week Courses: The FAEC has not had time to fully investigate this matter, partially due to snow days. ARC has also been very busy. Pres. Morley asked for forbearance from faculty members and assured the Faculty Assembly that this issue will be addressed.

c. Executive Council Activities and Upcoming Motions:

(1) Discussion of possibly lengthening winter break. The short duration of the break poses a problem of academic rigor for courses offered during that time period. One possible solution is to have a shorter grading period at the end of Spring semester. Provost is willing to consider this option. President Morley asked the FA to think about this and discuss. There may be a decision item on this topic at the next FA meeting.
(2) Academic Commons. There is only one option available, the back of the Atrium. A wall will be built around that area and the space will be soundproof. Not much funding was available. Faculty and staff need to use the space, and potentially we could obtain a better space in the future.
(3) The Provost's Office will be publishing the release time that faculty members receive on the Provost's website in the interests of transparency.
(4) Potential task force on course scheduling and lunch (3 hour classes would be a part of this). Again, Pres. Morley asked the faculty to just think about this prior to the next FA meeting.
(5) Jim Morley, Alex Olbrecht and President Mercer will take a trip to Lehigh University to investigate student binge-drinking issues.

3. <u>Decision Item: to approve a Task Force to review how Separately Budgeted Research (SBR) is allocated</u>.

Rationale: SBR was instituted at another point in the history of the college. Faulty have changed and research needs have also changed with the faculty. Many feel it is time to review how we allocate the amounts of these monies and how or why these rewards are linked to restrictions on summer teaching.

Sam Mustafa, representative to the FAEC from AIS, described the purpose of the taskforce. Faculty members appear to have interest in and complaints about SBR. The program may not be working for how faculty do research at the present time. Issues may include: Purpose of the funding (replace teaching, field research, etc…), appropriateness of a one-size-fits-all modeI, partial funding of requests, the amount taken out for taxes, timing of the dispersement of funds, and prohibition against teaching in the second half of the summer. Prof. Mustafa has volunteered to collect volunteers. In the past, it has been customary to have unit reps, but this is an all-faculty concern. It was proposed that the taskforce be populated by those who have experiences with the SBR process, those who have experience with AFT rules about this, etc.... Please contact Sam Mustafa if interested in serving by next Wednesday. The size of the taskforce is not set in stone. The FAEC and then come back with the membership next month at the AFT. The taskforce will choose its own chair.

Irene Kuchta, AFT president, spoke. SBR is contractual and AFT is not opposed to negotiating for a different process. FAEC worked with the Accelerated Tenure Committee and by working together from the beginning, the process was streamlined. Process and compensation is a union issue so including someone who can represent the AFT would be beneficial.

Motion to constitute the committee. Seconded. Vote by clicker. N = 87

In favor 97%

Opposed 0%

Abstain 3%

4. <u>Academic Review Committee Report</u> (*Emma Rainforth*, *please see ARC website for detailed reports*)

• Review/approval of new course requests, course revisions, courses submitted after having been offered as first time pilots, and program revisions. For additional details please refer to the ARC Minutes and the ARC Activity Log, both on the ARC website.
• Review and approval of proposed minors in Art History, Visual Arts, and Criminology. These items have been presented to the Faculty Assembly Executive, and are Decision Items for the February Faculty Assembly meeting.
• Cross-listing policy has been presented to Provost's Council, and is likely to be voted on at their February 24th meeting.
• Writing Across the Curriculum: the WAC sub-committee has developed a revised WAC program, which has been presented to Units by their WAC reps. This proposal will be presented for approval at the March 9th Faculty Assembly meeting.

Reminder regarding course requests and revisions: Please use the current syllabus template so that you are not in conflict with college policy.

Decision Item 1: Approval of New Minor - Art History

Professors J. Skrzynski and J. Peffer, with the support of the Visual Arts program, have submitted a proposal for a new minor in Art History. The program proposal may be found on the ARC website. The proposed minor utilizes existing courses in the Visual Arts and Art History, and is attractive to students outside of the visual arts area. The ARC supports this new program.

Rationale from proposers: the minor is in keeping with missions of college and Contemporary Arts, it features interdisciplinary courses and uses existing offerings. Experiential learning in galleries and museums is a key component.

Motion to approve. Seconded. N = 83

In favor 98%

Opposed 1%

Abstain 1%

Decision Item 2: Approval of New Minor - Visual Arts

Professor J. Skrzynski, with the support of the Visual Arts program, has submitted a proposal for a new minor in Visual Arts. The program proposal may be found on the ARC website. The proposed minor utilizes existing courses in the Visual Arts and Art History, and is attractive to students outside of the visual arts area. The ARC supports this new program.

Rationale: This minor is consistent with missions of college and Contemporary Arts, it is interdisciplinary, seeks to foster critical assessment of art, and features studio courses.

Motion to approve. Seconded. N = 82

In favor 93%

Opposed 4%

Abstain 4%

Decision Item 3: Approval of New Minor – Criminology

The Sociology convening group has submitted a proposal for a new minor in Criminology, which would be available to students outside of the Sociology major. The program proposal may be found on the ARC website. The proposed minor utilizes existing courses in sociology, law and society, and psychology. The ARC supports this new program.

FAEC asked that this be withdrawn. The minor needs more discussion.

Decision Item 4: Adoption of Draft Manual of Policies and Procedures for Online Learning
As announced in Unit Councils, the ARC has created a draft set of policies and procedures for online courses and programs. The draft may be found on the ARC website. Upon approval by the Faculty Assembly, the ARC will incorporate this document into the ARC Academic and Curricular Guidelines Manual for Fall 2011.
Currently, Ramapo College offers online courses in winter and summer sessions (with a handful of online courses in Fall and Spring). However, there are few consistent procedures with regard to these courses. In this document, which used similar manuals from several institutions as a basis, the ARC has attempted to create a coherent set of procedures to guide our online course offerings. Additional considerations regarding faculty workload our outside the ARC's purview and will need to be discussed by other bodies.
This manual discusses two types of courses: fully online courses (termed Online courses), and courses which combine a significant amount of online work with some face to face meeting time (termed Hybrid courses; these courses might, for instance, meet 3-4 times a semester, or perhaps meet once a week for 90 minutes, half the amount of time of a face-to-face class).

FAEC asked that this be made a discussion item rather than a decision item.

Prof. Rainforth stated that the manual sets forth policies and procedures for online courses. It's a draft manual and would eventually be incorporated into the ARC manual. ARC reviewed comparable manuals at other institutions. Faculty workload is outside of the ARC's purview. Two types of courses are categorized, fully online and hybrid courses, which feature some face to face meetings.

Ensuing discussion:

Clarification of hybrid course; Courses that meet face-to-face for the full three hours but have some online features are not hybrid. Courses that meet for a portion of the three hours are hybrid. Courses that carry the expectation that students will need to do some portion of the work online can be flagged in Banner.

Faculty members must now get approval from convening group and dean before offering an online course. This is an attempt to get the convening group involved in this decision. Some convening groups may not want students to be able to take all online courses (especially without the convening group's knowledge). Do we need the dean's approval for every course that's online? It's a scheduling matter so the dean approves the courses either way. The convening group is the additional gatekeeper.

The manual states that there must be demand for a course, but demand can't be determined in advance. This language is meant to address advising resources. Can the students get help through ITS or at the college level. For most courses, this would be based on past demand. In summer and winter, some courses don't fill. It might actually be easier to fill an online course in the summer or winter as these options might be attractive to students.

Concerns were expressed about minimum quality. Some courses do not appear to actually be rigorous.

Courses that are completely online – how do we know who is doing the work? Federal guidelines stipulate that IDs be checked. Can require the students to turn on their webcam and look at their ID to verify who is taking the course. How do we know that students are writing their work in face to face courses? Middle States also requires that we check IDs for these courses. Some enrolled students may not be Ramapo College students.

There are issues of equivalence. In the past, there was no body that evaluated whether online courses are actually delivering four credit hours worth of work. Is anyone monitoring whether the experiential component is being required? Students think that online courses are easier and involve less work. To address this problem, we could compare online versus the face-to-face format and check learning outcomes. Use assessment methods within the course to see if the students are learning the same material.

Much of the push for online courses seems to be from a marketing perspective and stressed convenience and scheduling. However, the quality of learning is important. How do we evaluate the results? What percent of faculty load, major, and college career should be online? AFT has to deal with some of this. Rigor and success in an online format comes with practice and experience. Courses may not always go well online the first time around.

ARC report does discuss assessment. Peer teaching evaluations of the online courses should be done. Conveners should be monitoring this.

Discussion concluded.

5. <u>Discussion Item: May Faculty Conference</u> (Formerly In-Service)

Faculty are often skeptical about these meetings. But after the Middle States Report, there is certainly a need to confer on unit and convening-group assessment matters and the experiential component of our classes. But apart from these impending matters, this is also an opportunity to engage in issues of shared academic and intellectual interest. To help plan this May meeting, the FAEC requests input from the FA floor on topics and formats for the May conference. To help facilitate discussion please consider the following ideas for sessions:

- Setting the general FA agenda for next year (open mike)
- Concerns of new faculty
- A panel discussion (or panels) on one of several new books critiquing Higher Education.
- A panel discussion on the meaning of the Liberal Arts in America and at Ramapo
- A panel on the meaning of "critical thinking" across the curriculum.
- Disciplines, Inter-disciplines, and Interdisciplinary.
- Inter-nationalizing the curriculum
- Pedagogy matters

CWAC (all college assessment committee) would like some time at the faculty conference. This is a Middle States matter and the faculty members need to meet about these issues. Faculty members asked for evidence that Middle States actually requires an all-college meeting on assessment.

Maya Poran spoke on behalf of the Design Team for Course Enrichment Component (formerly experiential learning). This committee is working on a report to share the data and proposals gathered so far. The Provost has asked for the report in the next few weeks. This group does not yet have an agenda for the conference, but are open to doing something at the conference. Inclusion of this topic will be easier to discuss this once the report is disseminated. Support was expressed for this idea.

It was suggested that we start with the task rather than the time. Faculty members don't want to just have their time filled, they want to know what needs to be done and then figure out how much time those tasks require.

A suggestion was made that some time be devoted to the assessment tasks of convening groups.

It was suggested that we discuss public education generally, and craft a message to the state of New Jersey that public education is worth their money. State funding is an issue and faculty need to speak up on this topic.

Middle States provides external pressure to address assessment and curriculum enhancement. Need to hear faculty voices on these matters.

GECCo would like to have some time to report on student learning outcomes in General Education.

6. <u>New Business</u>

Revising the mission statement of the college: The college might like to obtain a state classification change so we don't have to ask individually for every masters program. It has been suggested that our designation be changed to that of a masters-granting institution. The faculty would like to receive clarification from President Mercer on this issue. We are externally classified as master-granting by Carnegie anyway. This WOULD change the mission of the college because we haven't been focused on masters programs. Do we want more masters programs? There was some discussion as to whether this is a good idea and whether this was only to produce more revenue.

Minors: Faculty members teaching in minors often need to make a special effort to deal with students who do not necessarily have as much background in the subject area. More recognition should be given.

Diversity Convocation is today. 3pm in the Sharp Theatre.

Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Approved.