

**Faculty Assembly
November 30, 2011, 1:00-2:30 pm
Trustees Pavilion**

Minutes prepared by FA Secretary Prof. Rebecca Root.

Report of FA President Jim Morley

Over the last two weeks, serious issues have arisen regarding tenure. The FAEC developed a resolution in response to the denial of tenure to a faculty member based on “programmatically needs”. As that decision has been reversed, and pending further discussion, the FAEC is not bringing forward this resolution for a vote at this time, but wishes to share its contents with the FA. It reads:

“Resolution: In an action that is unprecedented for decades, the Ramapo administration recently denied the tenure of a candidate who had been approved by the peer review process, not for reasons of academic quality or standards, but for ‘programmatically needs.’ No clear definition of these ‘needs’ was provided in advance, nor any evidence of a situation that would require such extraordinary action. The lack of a clearly stated policy, equitably applied to all tenure candidates, violates the requirement of the contract that criteria for reappointment decisions be applied uniformly to all candidates. We strongly object to this unwarranted intervention in our tenure process.”

Thanks to all those who helped on this matter, including the AIS faculty, Prof. Susan Hangen (chair of the all-college Tenure Committee), Irene Kutcha (Librarian and Union Local President), and the Ramapo students who led a letter-writing campaign in defense of the liberal arts and AIS faculty.

It is clear that more challenges lie ahead, and that programmatically needs will be part of tenure decisions in future. President Mercer’s email of November 29, 2011 (attached) regarding tenure caps suggests a need to strategize to protect all faculty, but particularly the dozens of faculty without tenure who now face the possibility of being denied tenure and reappointment due to these caps. A disciplined and civil response from the faculty is required. Pres. Morley suggests: 1) Requesting more information about tenure caps, such as whether these are in fact required by the state of New Jersey; 2) Educating ourselves about the college budget, as it is impossible to engage in genuine faculty governance without deep engagement with the budget, which will enable us to advise the administration on how to make spending cuts without sacrificing academic programs. (Note that there will be budget training workshops in the Spring); 3) Engaging in student advising to direct students towards under-enrolled programs; 4) Redirecting college admissions so that we accept students into programs in the humanities; 5) Otherwise reinforcing our commitments to humanities programs so as to maintain our liberal arts identity (and perhaps a spring conference dedicated to discussing Martha Nussbaum’s recent book on this issue) and 6) Fully committing to faculty governance as a means to defend tenure.

Remember that elections for FA president will take place by mail-in ballot in the days ahead. Units should elect their representatives to the FAEC in February.

Motion to close this meeting of the FA. Seconded and approved.

Resolution: The Faculty Assembly requests that the Provost's Council table the vote on the "Procedure on Minimum Requirements for the Baccalaureate Degree" until the Office of the Provost provides ARC with a rationale for the policy and a study on the projected impacts of this change, and ARC reviews the policy and makes a recommendation to the Faculty Assembly.

Resolution is approved by 94% of votes cast. 141 faculty members voting.

A **proposed resolution** was introduced from the floor. The motion was moved and seconded. It calls for the administration to 1) retain an outside, third-party, financial auditor to audit both the college and the Ramapo Foundation, and 2) retain an outside, third-party, systems auditor to assess the efficiency and capacity of current administrative systems of the college, and recommend cost-saving measures possible in the administration of the college (ie. executive, academic and student affairs). These requests would be made to President Mercer first, but possibly the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees or the full Board of Trustees if the request is not accepted and met by President Mercer.

FAEC will consult with the author of the motion on the floor at its next meeting, regarding wording. It was agreed by faculty present that an emergency meeting should be held on Wednesday December 7 to complete the discussion.