**Faculty Assembly Executive Council Minutes**

October 3, 2012, 9:30-10:35am, ASB 230

Present: Donna Crawley, Bob Becklen, Ken McMurdy, Jennefer Mazza, Tae Kwak, Jill Weiss, Murray Sabrin, Jonathan Lipkin

Absent: Irene Kuchta

Secretary: Rebecca Root

**1. Motion to Approve Minutes of Sept. 26.** Five votes to approve, three abstentions: Minutes approved.

**2. FA President’s Report**

1. Pres. Weiss met with Pres. Mercer, who stated that he is generally not in favor of hiring additional Assistant Deans. Pres. Mercer and Provost Barnett are going to discuss this.
2. Pres. Weiss and Provost Barnett have been discussing the meaning of “shared governance” on campus. Provost Barnett stated that what we currently have at Ramapo is not genuine “shared governance” but rather consultation between administration and faculty. Pres. Weiss disagreed with this characterization and had a follow-up email exchange with the Provost, in which the Provost clarified that she is not opposed to shared governance but that faculty at Ramapo are currently not sufficiently engaged to constitute a meaningful shared governance process.

 Rep. Mazza reminded us of the Middle States assessment of the weakness of shared governance. This led to a discussion of the problem of the lack of a clear definition of “shared governance.” Rep. McMurdy agreed to take on the task of researching how other institutions, particularly COPLAC institutions, define the term.

c. Pres. Weiss met with Assoc. VP of Academic Affairs/Employee Relations Judith Jeney to discuss what is happening with the changes to promotion. She clarified that the changes she is working on deal with the procedures, not the criteria.

d. Pres. Weiss met with Assoc. VP of Enrollment Management Chris Romano to discuss enrollment. He is going to send Pres. Weiss a report on Key Performance Indicators.

e. VP Crawley had previously raised the point that the group initially organized to put together the last Middle States report has largely been dismantled since its submission, which might pose difficulties for the follow-up reporting process. Pres. Weiss raised this with Vice Provost Eric Daffron, who will soon be organizing a meeting of those who will be contributing to the Periodic Review report for Middle States. Pres. Weiss will follow up with Vice Provost Daffron to clarify what the procedure is so that faculty can give meaningful feedback.

1. At the Oct. 1 Board of Trustees meeting, Pres. Weiss raised the Executive Council’s major concerns (the hiring of new administrators with power over academic programs, potential threats to promotion and tenure, not hiring new faculty, etc).

 At the meeting, the Provost distributed a report, which Pres. Weiss has now distributed to the Executive Council. Among other points of interest, the report states that the Office of the Provost, the Deans’ Council, and Employee Relations plan to review and revise the criteria for promotion and tenure. After briefly discussing this, consensus emerged that the Executive Council should communicate with the union to ensure that both groups are on the same page.

**3. Concerns with the Search to Hire an Assistant Dean in Social Work**

1. There was a search for a new Social Work faculty member that did not result in hiring. The administration has since decided to hire an Assistant Dean for Social Work to deal with accreditation instead. The job description has apparently been written by Dean Rosenberg, but has not yet been sent out, so the hiring process has not begun.
2. Secretary Root will invite Prof. Mitch Kahn and Prof. Kim Lorber to an upcoming Executive Council meeting so they can share their perspectives.
3. A number of questions and concerns were raised. Do the Social Work or SSHS faculty support the decision to hire an Assistant Dean? Will faculty be in charge of the hiring process? Will the Assistant Dean receive tenure through the process for administrators, yet later become a full-time, tenured member of the faculty without having gone through the faculty tenure process?
4. Discussed possible action on this matter from the union.
5. Pres. Weiss made a motion to approve the following statement:

 “The Faculty Assembly Executive Council expresses its concern that the replacement of a faculty line in Social Work with an Assistant Dean is not in accord with the policies and procedures of the College and the customs and precedents of shared governance at Ramapo College.”

 Seven members of the Executive Council voted to approve, and one abstained. Motion approved.

**4. Proposed Provost Council Policies**

1. On Sept. 27, the Provost’s Council discussed several proposed policies. After 30 days, they will vote on those policies, which deal with issues including the Academic Integrity policy, a new limit to Independent Studies credits per student, and a restriction on teaching overloads for those receiving course release time.
2. Pres. Weiss tasked VP Crawley (who attended the Provost’s Council meeting) with writing a brief summary of the proposed policy changes, and Secretary Root with posting the documents and summary on the FA website so that faculty can examine the policies and provide feedback before the November vote on them.

**5. Conveners’ Meeting Issues**

a. Conveners have raised a number of concerns about recent changes. For example, faculty who miss a class are required to notify the dean and indicate how that class will be made up. Also, deans are now required to include language about programmatic needs in letters for reappointment. New mandatory advising begins this semester for sophomores.

b. Class sizes have been increased and now surpass the caps recommended by ARC. This is not compatible with simultaneously raising academic rigor. At a minimum, the Executive Council would like an explanation from Provost Barnett for why this decision was made. Issue tabled until next meeting.

**6. Changing class schedules**

a. Rep. Sabrin has suggested moving away from the current schedule in part because a single, universal lunch hour overloads the cafeteria and takes course meeting time away. He also thinks we might look at moving the 8am course time slot later to attract more students and hence relieve some scheduling pressure later in the day. In the past, there has been some resistance to the idea of new scheduling arrangements because of the fear they will interfere with student meeting times or popular CEC times, but these concerns should be secondary to our academic mission.

b. Reps will communicate with their units to solicit feedback on these ideas.

**7. Other Business**

 a. The Executive Council will plan to meet from 8:30 to 9:30 next week due to the Faculty Conference.

1. Prof. Hecht told VP Crawley that the Faculty Budget Committee is not yet ready to give the faculty an update on their work. This will be removed from the schedule for the faculty conference.
2. At the last meeting, the Executive Council raised the possibility of asking last year’s all-college Promotions Committee to help lead the faculty conference discussion of promotion. That person was Prof. Max Goldberg-Rugalev (TAS).