

## **Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC) Meeting Minutes**

October 5, 2011, 9:15 to 10:55am

Present: Jim Morley, Donna Crawley, Alex Olbrecht, Max Goldberg, Jillian Weiss, Elaine Risch, Peggy Greene, Sam Mustafa

Absent: Ruma Sen

Secretary: Rebecca Root

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### **A. Minutes for FAEC meeting of September 28, 2011 approved.**

### **B. Annual agenda items**

1. Priority 1: Revising the procedures for SBR. Tabled until FAEC receives SBR Task Force report.
2. Priority 2: Streamlining promotion and tenure procedures, with the aim of reducing paperwork.
  - a. Rep. Olbrecht confirms that ASB is indeed using an older version of the Sedona software. He suspects the new version, which Judith Jeney told the FAEC about last week, is superior to that in use in ASB.
  - b. Action: Pres. Morley will contact Judith Jeney to determine:
    - i. Whether trials of the software have already been conducted, or if there are plans to hold such trials.
    - ii. Whether there will be access to scanners and technical support for those who wish to use Sedona.
    - iii. Whether we can schedule a demonstration of Sedona for the members of the FAEC.
3. Priority 3: Implementing online course evaluations that satisfy faculty concerns, namely the degree to which students will complete them, and the need for the reports generated by these evaluations to be in a clear format that provides information faculty will be able to use.
  - a. Discussion of whether switching to online evaluations would allow for student comments in evaluations to be included in reappointment and other packets in future. (Currently, the student comments are not in packets in part because it would require administrative staff to type them all up; this would not be an issue if the comments can be pulled up via the software.)
  - b. Discussion of the questions on student evaluations, and whether asking students to assess whether the course met the stated learning objectives in the syllabus might be more useful than the current questions.
  - c. Action: For now, the priority is to address the mechanics, namely return rates

and the reports generated by evaluations. Rep. Crawley and Emma Rainforth will meet Monday to discuss this issue. Rep. Crawley will also look into whether faculty would be able to add their own questions to the online student evaluations.

4. Priority 4: Ensuring an authentic and effective faculty voice in the upcoming Strategic Plan.

- a. At FA, Provost Barnett suggested that one faculty member from each school would be invited to participate in the process. It appears that deans are approaching individuals within schools to ask them to serve in this process.
- b. The FAEC would prefer that the faculty participants be chosen:
  - i. By the faculty
  - ii. Based on their skills on expertise rather than one a “one school, one vote” basis. (For example, faculty might be better served by having representatives with expertise in higher education and strategic planning, or with familiarity with specific needs on campus, such as lab space.)
- c. Action: FAEC members will bring their suggestions about appropriate criteria and process for selection of participants. Pres. Morley will talk to Provost Barnett to express FAEC’s desire for an alternative model of faculty participation and ask that deans not proceed with selecting participants.

5. Priority 5: Seeking further refinement of the principle of "shared collegial governance" with the administration. Namely: (i) FAEC will meet with the President’s Cabinet and other key administrators to discuss issues of relevance to the faculty; (ii) At the end of the academic year, FAEC will assess whether these conversations have been effective exercises in shared collegial governance; and (iii) FAEC will seek the inclusion of faculty input into the design of the survey instrument used for deans’ evaluations.

- a. Regarding point (i) above, no meeting with the President’s Cabinet has been scheduled yet. First the FAEC should determine what the agenda of such a meeting would be.
- b. One purpose of such a meeting would be to learn what the Cabinet’s agenda for this year includes. The FAEC can then bring issues relevant to the faculty before the FA for discussion and polling/voting. With the feedback gathered there, the FAEC can then express faculty opinion to the President’s Cabinet.
- c. In addition to asking for the Cabinet’s agenda, the FAEC should share its own agenda with the cabinet. Several of the items on the FAEC Priorities for 2011-12 will require cooperation from the administration, so this is an opportunity to dialog with them about these priorities.

d. Action: Pres. Morley will contact the President's Cabinet to request their agenda and give them the FAEC priorities. He will ultimately schedule a meeting between the two bodies.

e. Discussion of point (ii) above, and what the appropriate role of faculty in the selection and reappointment of deans should be, how to give faculty a voice in this process without compromising the privacy of deans' personnel processes, and whether this is an issue of governance.

f. Pres. Morley reports that Provost Barnett is open to the idea of faculty playing a role in the design of the deans' evaluations currently in use. One possibility raised is adding a question about whether the dean fosters/engages in shared collegial governance within the school.

g. Further discussion tabled until next week.

6. Priority 6: Examining the question of pedagogical standards in online courses.

a. Discussion of whether the review process or standards for online courses should differ from those for in-person courses.

b. Concerns about security are raised. Rep. Crawley notes that new federal guidelines for security measures in online courses will be in place next year, so Ramapo will need to meet these new standards.

c. One suggestion is that conveners' signatures should be required before a course can be taught online. Currently, only new courses or course revisions (involving change to content, but not format) require conveners' approval. Right now the teaching of online courses is at the discretion of the dean.

d. Discussion of amendments to the ARC manual made by the FA in the Spring. Were these amendments included in the new ARC manual?

e. Further discussion tabled for next week.

7. Priority 7: Gaining an Academic Commons on campus to serve as gathering space for faculty. Not discussed.

**C. New business**

1. Pres. Morley will invite Cathy Davey to attend the next FAEC meeting. FAEC wishes to learn from her more about how fundraising is currently conducted, what role faculty play in it, and how the Foundation set its priorities.
2. Preparation for today's faculty conference

3. Agenda items for next FA (Oct 19)

Action: At next week's meetings, FAEC members will bring their suggestions for turning our agenda into decision items that can be brought before the FA. Further discussion tabled until then.

4. New parking policy

Action: Rep. Olbrecht has drafted a letter expressing ASB's objection to the new policy. He will distribute it soon.

5. Print Shop turn-around

At the last FA, faculty expressed dissatisfaction with the 15 day waiting period for documents printed by the Print Shop.

Action: Pres. Morley will raise this issue with the Provost.

6. The AAUP is holding a Conference and Workshops on Faculty Governance in November in Washington, DC. Reps. Greene, Weiss and Olbrecht might be interested in attending.

Action: Pres. Morley will find out whether any funds are available to send those interested to the conference.