

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

April 18, 2012, 9:15 to 11 am

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

Absent: Sam Mustafa

Secretary: Rebecca Root

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### **1. Minutes of the last FAEC meeting approved.**

### **2. President Morley's Report**

At the next FAEC meeting, we are meeting with the incoming FAEC. We will address some of the experiences this FAEC had, including progress on the FAEC priorities for 2011-12, communications with the administration, and looming issues for next year (like the Center for Sustainability and construction on campus).

On May 14, the FAEC will meet with the President's Cabinet. At today's FA, Pres. Morley will encourage faculty to email comments/questions to be addressed at that meeting.

Briefly discussed a number of policies that the Provost's Council will be discussing and/or voting upon this week. Among them is a new set of procedures for the establishment of Centers and Institutes, which is directly relevant to Prof. Vasishth's proposal (discussed below). **Agreed** that in future, proposals coming before the Provost's Council should be distributed to and discussed by the FAEC in advance.

VP Jillian Weiss noted that the administration has scheduled a meeting to discuss the periodic report assessing progress on Middle States' recommendations regarding faculty governance. VP Weiss is unable to attend, so incoming FAEC Rep. Jennefer Mazza will go in her stead.

### **3. Review of FA Agenda (Meeting today)**

**Decided** on the exact language of all three resolutions for decision items on today's agenda. Discussed whether to move to a closed session for the discussion of the survey questions on deans; decided to do so only if a motion to that effect is raised from the floor.

Discussed Prof. Ashwani Vasishth's proposed agenda item regarding the Center for Sustainability. **Decided** that there has been insufficient time for ARC and the FAEC to review the proposal, so it should not be part of a decision item at FA today. Pres. Morley will mention it in his President's Report, and once the proposal is finalized and reviewed by FAEC and ARC, it can come before the FA in the Fall.

### **4. Meeting with Prof. Ashwani Vasishth regarding proposed Center for Sustainability**

In advance of our meeting, a draft version of a proposal for the creation of a Center for Sustainability had been distributed to the FAEC by email. Prof. Vasishth joined us immediately after meeting with ARC to discuss his proposal. The group working on this proposal consists of Prof. Ashwani Vasishth, Prof. Eric Wiener, Prof. Emma Rainforth, and Prof. Sanja Padhy.

He gave us some background about his expertise on sustainability, the various sustainability initiatives on campus, and his vision for a Center to pull these various efforts together into a coherent program with oversight by an Advisory Council and a Director. The proposal includes recommendations for course release time and oversight of the graduate program in sustainability.

He also put this in the context of the Presidents' Climate Commitment, a pledge by college presidents to make their campuses carbon neutral. Pres. Mercer made this commitment a few years ago, but Ramapo has not made consistent progress toward fulfilling that pledge. Prof. Vasishth sees the creation of a Center for Sustainability as a necessary step towards fulfilling the pledge.

Prof. Vasishth noted that the current proposal is not finalized. At this point, he would like to put this before the FA as a discussion item so that he can solicit faculty feedback. He has discussed the proposal with President Mercer and Provost Barnett, and is aware that a new set of procedures for establishing centers and institutes may soon be in place and will be sure to follow those procedures.

The FAEC raised concerns about the procedure for establishing a Center, uncertainty about the differences between Centers and Institutes (and why a Center is needed to oversee the current Institute, graduate program, and other initiatives related to sustainability), and a need to see a final proposal before ARC and the FAEC can move forward on this issue and bring it before the FA.

## **5. Preparation for the May 22 Faculty Conference**

**Decided** that Pres. Morley and VP Weiss will handle the planning for the faculty conference day. The agenda will most likely include some time dedicated to the Strategic Planning Task Force, the Faculty Budget Committee, and some discussion of threats to academic programs based on “programmatically needs” and/or issues in higher education in New Jersey.