

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC) Meeting Minutes

April 25, 2012, 9:15 to 10:45 am

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

Secretary: Rebecca Root

1. Minutes of the last FAEC meeting approved.

2. President Morley's Report

At the last Provost's Council, Pres. Morley raised the question of the role of the FA and ARC in the approval of the Centers and Institutes. The Provost responded that the FA is free to determine this; if we believe approval by those bodies is required, then so be it. Pres. Morley recommended that the incoming FAEC get in the habit of regularly reviewing the agenda and minutes of Provost's Council meetings. Pres. Morley will attend, along with incoming FAEC Rep. Jennefer Mazza, a meeting being organized by the administration to review their recently-submitted Middle States report regarding progress on MS recommendations on faculty governance. (VP Weiss noted that she has not been able to obtain a copy of this report.) Pres. Morley and VP Weiss will be meeting shortly to nail down details for the May 22 Faculty Conference.

3. Online Student Evaluations

On April 18, the FA voted not to endorse Rep. Crawley's recommendations regarding online student evaluations. Our understanding is that the faculty wishes to maintain the status quo: online student evaluations should remain optional, and the faculty does not wish to move forward with a full rollout of online student evaluations for all courses.

4. Dean's Survey

On April 18, the FA voted to remit the proposed dean's survey to the FAEC for revision. Pres. Morley worked with Prof. Kristin Kenneavy (SSHS) to eliminate double-barreled questions and alter a few words. This version was distributed to the FAEC for review.

Rep. Risch proposed eliminating question 8 (an open-ended question asking for comments) because it created redundancy with question 9. The FAEC agreed to eliminate question 8 and approved the survey with this change.

At FA, a few comments from the floor also objected to the idea that the qualitative responses would only be available to the FAEC. Is our position now that all results (quantitative and qualitative) will be sent to the faculty in each unit? This question will be resolved at next week's FAEC meeting.

Pres. Morley proposed that we set aside a short segment of our time on the May 22 Faculty Conference day to have a brief discussion and decision of the revised dean's

survey. The FAEC will develop two resolutions for the FA to vote upon: one to approve the revised questions, and one regarding the distribution of results.

5. Joint Meeting with Incoming FAEC Officers (10-10:45 am)

Incoming FAEC Reps. Murray Sabrin (ASB), Ken McMurdy (TAS), Bob Becklen (SSHS), Irene Kuchta (Library), and Tae Kwak (At Large, AIS) joined us. From the current FAEC, VP Weiss will be returning as FA President, Rep. Crawley will return as an At Large Rep, and Secretary Root will remain in her role next year. VP Weiss chaired this portion of the meeting.

Everyone introduced themselves. Outgoing FAEC reps offered a few words about their experiences on the Council, while incoming FAEC reps either posed questions or noted expectations/priorities for next year. For example, VP Weiss indicated that she intends to reduce the amount of time the FAEC meets and start meetings on time. As FA President, she will meet regularly with key stakeholders so as to anticipate issues. Prof. Sabrin highlighted financial concerns of the college, and wondered whether the FAEC should develop a sort of handbook clarifying procedures and responsibilities, as well as a list of short, medium and long term goals and a process for achieving them. Librarian Kuchta suggested that the first order of business next year should be amending the bylaw that states that we need 60% of faculty voting to amend bylaws. Prof. Becklen noted that the administration often makes important decisions during the summer.

Pres. Morley argued that the FAEC has become more effective over his 8 years in faculty governance, but thinks there are basic structural problems in faculty governance. Rep. Mustafa noted that the FAEC increasingly serves as an intermediary between faculty and administration, which he believes is not something the bylaws anticipated. He also noted that the FAEC does a better job advocating for the faculty during a crisis, but in non-crisis situations the FA is often suspicious of the FAEC's intervention in issues of relevance to them. Rep. Goldberg noted a tension between dealing with crises and managing long-term priorities. Rep. Greene highlighted ongoing problems of communication between faculty and administration. Many committees (like those of the BoT) do not meet often, and the faculty reps on those committees are not in close contact with the FAEC. She and Rep. Crawley also noted that often 1-2 faculty members do serve on a committee organized by the administration, which creates a sense among the administrators that they are consulting the faculty, but those faculty reps do not solicit broader faculty input or report to the FA. Then when that committee announces a decision, the broader faculty feels as though this is the administration acting unilaterally. The FAEC needs to do a better job tracking what committees exist, what faculty serve on them, and what those committees are doing (probably by having them report to and solicit feedback from the FAEC or FA periodically). VP Weiss noted a need to get more information from the administration, but not allow that role to displace the FAEC's own agenda. She noted discontent with how FA currently functions, including issues of sometimes rigid application and at other times non-application of the Rules of Order. Rep. Olbrecht noted that we will need to replace him as parliamentarian and that he remains on the Budget Committee of the BoT.

VP Weiss reviewed the FAEC Priorities for 2011-12 and current status on each. The discussion then turned to what major issues are likely to dominate the agenda this Fall. Issues raised included construction on campus, the Faculty Budget Committee, and Middle States. As three of the FAEC Reps. next year also serve on the Faculty Budget Committee, there will be close contact between the two. Similarly, Librarian Kuchta's simultaneous roles in the AFT and FAEC next year will help ensure continued close cooperation between those bodies.

Pres. Morley clarified that no member of the FAEC is invited to attend the Deans' Council due to our collective bargaining agreements. Though we have institutionalized periodic (perhaps once-a-semester) meetings between the FAEC and President's Cabinet, there was consensus that it would be advisable to obtain minutes from the President's Cabinet meetings.