

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC) Meeting Minutes

February 22, 2012, 9:15 to 11am

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

Absent: Elaine Risch

Secretary: Rebecca Root

1. Minutes for FAEC meeting of February 15 approved.

2. Action Document

At the conclusion of the Jan. 18 meeting between the FAEC and the President's Cabinet, President Mercer and FA Pres. Morley agreed to produce an action document detailing steps that will be undertaken to improve communication between faculty and administration. They will be meeting soon to work on it, so Pres. Morley solicited feedback from the FAEC about what should be in the document.

Suggestions included:

- a. A statement that the administration will notify the FAEC about major developments and new policies that affect the faculty.
- b. A commitment to more regular meetings (once per semester) between the Provost's Office and conveners of each unit. However, it was agreed that before this be included in an action document, the FAEC should solicit feedback from conveners as to whether they desire this, particularly given their heavy workload and meeting schedule. Other suggestions were that perhaps the Provost's Office could communicate more regularly with conveners through a weekly or monthly email raising any policy changes being contemplated.
- c. A commitment to periodic meetings (once per semester) between the President's Cabinet and the FAEC. In addition, a representative from the FAEC might attend the President's Cabinet meetings more frequently. Rep. Weiss volunteered to serve in that role.

Action: Pres. Morley will discuss these matters with Pres. Mercer. All FAEC reps should proceed with soliciting feedback about enhancing communication between the Provost's Office and conveners through periodic meetings. Pres. Morley has invited Pres. Mercer to address the March 7 Faculty Conference.

3. Annual Program Review

Discussed last week's meeting with Provost Barnett regarding the Annual Program Review documents.

Action: Pres. Morley will follow up on whether Provost Barnett integrated our suggested changes into these documents. She also met with conveners to discuss this last week. Pres. Morley will request the revised documents.

4. Planning for Upcoming Faculty Conferences (March and May)

The Strategic Planning Task Force is in the process of finishing their revision of the mission statement. By March 7, the faculty reps will be ready to present this to faculty and get feedback about how to proceed with setting priorities for the new SP. So the plan for the March 7 faculty conference will be to have a report from Pres. Mercer (addressing, among other things, what occurred at the late February Board of Trustees meeting) and then breakout sessions led by faculty participants in the SPTF.

Discussed ideas for the May faculty conference dates. Consensus was reached that it would be wise to use that time to address budget issues and receive a progress report from the Faculty Assembly Budget Committee.

5. Faculty Voice in Deans' Evaluations and Reappointment

Pres. Morley asked Provost Barnett about the appointment terms of the deans. Most are coming up for review and reappointment in Fall 2012. During the last deans' reappointment cycle, questionnaires were sent out to faculty by email, but we do not know what percentage of faculty participated or how that information informed the Provost's decision, though we know that such personnel data is kept private. The Provost has said that the faculty is free to revise that questionnaire, or else we can come up with an additional or alternative instrument. Results will remain confidential.

Ramapo no longer has elected deans, which in practice means that units no longer vote on their dean's reappointment. Discussed the lost opportunity to discuss, at the unit level, the dean's performance and provide feedback. Discussed whether a closed unit council would be useful for this purpose. Consensus was reached that there is a need to strengthen faculty voice in this process.

First, we need more information. **Action:** Pres. Morley will ask the Provost to clarify several things for us, including the length of deans' terms and whether that is uniform, the current schedule for reappointment of deans, and the procedure for bringing in external candidates to fill a deans' position. He will also ask for a copy of the questionnaire that was sent to faculty as part of the last cycle of deans' evaluations.

6. New Business

a. Rep. Weiss raised a document that the Provost's Office has circulated to deans and conveners, on which each faculty member is to identify a primary and secondary convening group. It is apparently the policy of the administration that faculty cannot identify with more than two convening groups. What is the rationale for this policy? Are faculty members only being asked what convening groups they have a contractual

obligation to serve, or does this suggest that faculty will be barred from participating in additional convening groups?

Action: Pres. Morley will ask Provost Barnett for the rationale behind this document and policy.

b. Discussed the new policy regarding academic advisement. Again, we do not have much information, but it appears that beginning in Fall 2012, all students (except first year students) will be required to meet with their academic advisors before they can register for classes. It is unclear whether this will be every semester and whether it will require faculty to lift a hold in the students' accounts before they can register. Discussed the benefits this may bring (such as improved advisement, students enrolling in their majors and minors earlier, etc.), but also some logistical problems that may result (such as long lines of students needing their holds lifted at the last minute, or extra work on unit secretaries confronted with such requests when faculty are not available, etc.). Also discussed the need for better advising training in advance of implementation of this policy.

Action: FAEC reps. will solicit feedback from their units about this policy. Pres. Morley will ask Provost Barnett for more details about the policy.

c. The SBR Task Force is continuing its work and will soon meeting with Union leadership to discuss their proposal.

d. Pres. Morley has invited Prof. Emma Rainforth, Chair of ARC, to attend next week's FAEC.

e. Pres. Morley believes the FAEC should examine the criteria for promotion from Associate Professor to Full Professor, which is currently vague. He believes that clearer criteria would be helpful to Unit Personnel Committees. Rep. Crawley suggested that we table the issue until after this year's all-college Personnel Committee concludes its work. The FAEC agreed, so the issue was tabled until sometime after April 1.