

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC) Meeting Minutes

February 29, 2012, 9 to 11:15am

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

Secretary: Rebecca Root

I. President Morley's Report

a. Caps: Pres. Mercer sent out an email to all faculty earlier this week to report that the Board of Trustees voted to eliminate tenure caps. This is gratifying to the FAEC and the faculty as a whole, as this was a major issue of concern last semester. The 75% cap on associate and full professor positions has not been rescinded. It is unclear to the FAEC whether promotion caps are required by statute and if there is a need to request their removal.

b. Administration Policies: Pres. Morley reported that the Provost's Council has approved a new policy regarding how to assign offices to faculty members, a procedure that will affect faculty relocated due to renovations. He thought faculty should have input into the "procedures" for assigning office locations as there is no present procedure beyond the discretion of Deans. The Provost's and Deans' Councils have also approved the new advising procedure, by which students (other than first years students) will need to meet with their academic advisors to receive advising and have a hold lifted from their accounts before they can register for each semester.

c. Planning for Faculty Conference: The March 7 Faculty Conference (11:30-2:30) will consist of an address by Pres. Mercer and then time dedicated to the Strategic Planning process. Pres. Morley will leave most of the planning for that to Prof. Steve Rice and the other faculty members of the SP Task Force.

II. Meeting with Prof. Emma Rainforth, Chair of ARC

a. Program Review: Prof. Rainforth drew attention to the distinction between what ARC does (approve curriculum in academic programs) and what the Provost's Office has undertaken (both assessing outcomes in academic programs as well as the annual program reviews). She noted that it is wise to think of program review itself as involving three phases: assessment, the annual program review reports, and then ultimately bring those two phases together to judge the strengths, health and future of the program. She also noted that using a 3 year cycle of data in the academic program review documents seems problematic; a 5 year cycle of data gives a much more accurate picture of the health of a program. She also noted that any decision to merge two academic programs or otherwise fundamentally alter an academic program would require ARC approval.

b. ARC and GECCO: Pres. Morley asked Prof. Rainforth to clarify the relationship between ARC and GECCo. Prof. Rainforth noted that if GECCo proposes curricular changes, those would have to come to ARC for recommendation for approval. Otherwise, GECCo reports to the FA and/or the FAEC. Communication between ARC and GECCo

is facilitated in large part through ARC members who also serve on GECCo. Right now, GECCo's focus is on assessment. Prof. Rob Mentore is the Chair of GECCo.

c. ARC Progress: Prof. Rainforth reported that ARC's change of deadlines for course revisions/proposals has worked very well, and that ARC reps. are currently working with conveners to identify courses that are "on the books" but that are not being taught. Such courses should be eliminated, as they give a misleading impression to students that they will be regularly offered.

d. CEC: She also raised the results of recent assessment of CEC. Most faculty are including CEC in their syllabi and courses, and students generally fulfill the requirements as spelled out in the syllabi. However, faculty often do not ask students to demonstrate how the CEC is tied to the goals of the course. Discussed how this might be remedied, including a discussion at FA about how to demonstrate the intentionality of CEC in courses or revision of the language in the ARC sample syllabus so as to spell this out.

e. Improving Communication Between Faculty and Administration: Prof. Rainforth noted that each semester, Pres. Mercer holds one Communication Meeting with the professional staff and a second one with managers. Those are opportunities for the President to communicate initiatives and answer questions. Faculty does not have a comparable, institutionalized meeting for communication between the President and faculty, and she wonders if we need something similar. We need to hear more frequently from the President and Provost about new initiatives and policies, particularly as some information communicated to deans does not get clearly relayed to conveners or the full faculty.

f. Faculty vs. Administration Roles: Last semester, a number of concerns were raised at FA that adult learner and other programs were being implemented and advertised without first receiving ARC approval. ARC has made it plain to the Office of the Provost and to CIPL that all academic programs here need to be brought to ARC for approval first, so this appears to be straightened out.

At this point, Prof. Rainforth departed.

III. Preparation for Meeting with Provost Barnett

a. Improving Communication Between Faculty and Administration: Pres. Morley reported that he has raised the issue of increasing communication between conveners and the Office of the Provost with Provost Barnett. She generally agreed in principle but does not want to in any way weaken the role of the deans in communication with conveners. Some FAEC reps have asked faculty in their units about whether they want periodic meetings between the Office of the Provost and conveners. The response from SSSH faculty was generally yes, while ASB faculty liked the idea of increased communication but preferred communication via memos notifying conveners of new initiatives from the Office of the Provost. **Action:** Secretary Root will ask Provost Barnett for an email contact list for conveners. FAEC reps. will continue soliciting input from faculty.

Reps. Crawley and Weiss proposed that the FAEC designate one member with the responsibility for regularly reading the minutes from the Deans' Council so that we are aware of developments there. They also proposed that we communicate with the faculty representatives to the Board of Trustees. Secretary Root will verify when the terms for the current faculty representatives to the BoT end.

b. Faculty vs. Administration Roles: Rep. Weiss raised an issue of concern. A faculty member in SSSH communicated to her a concern that some programs are hiring Assistant Deans and program directors who are not faculty members and are not eligible for tenure. These roles appear to include some authority over curriculum in convening groups or academic programs, which would therefore place non-faculty in the role of running academic programs, which is contrary to the current division of faculty and administrative roles at the college. (NB: On March 7, Provost Barnett clarified that Assistant Deans are eligible for tenure and are hired only in programs with national accreditation.)

IV. Meeting with Provost Barnett

a. Convening Group Membership: The Provost's Office has recently circulated a document to all deans and conveners on which each faculty member's primary and secondary convening group affiliations are to be listed. Years ago, during a major reorganization of the college and curriculum, there was an agreement that all faculty would identify with a primary convening group (and therefore unit). The Provost noted that there are few clear guidelines as to how membership in a convening group is established, other than what the terms of our contracts state. She explained that, while faculty are free to participate in additional convening groups other than their primary and secondary ones, the administration does not want faculty to feel pressure to do so. Indeed, they would prefer faculty energies to be devoted to their primary and secondary convening groups, as those are the programs to which they are responsible. Faculty who wish to teach a course in a convening group other than their primary or secondary need the approval of their dean.

b. Communication between Faculty and Administration: Provost Barnett is open to ways to enhance communication between her office and conveners.

c. Annual Program Review: In March, a revised version of the annual program review documents will go to conveners with data from institutional offices included in them. Provost Barnett described program evaluation as involving three steps: assessment of student learning outcomes (well underway), annual program reviews (starting this semester, with the purpose of systematically collecting operational data for the program), and a third stage which will use the data in those first two phases as the basis of a planning statement. The three steps will be integrated into a single report due in the summer. It should "close the loop" by using the data in the first two stages to explain the strengths and weaknesses of a program and to plan what steps a program wants to take in future. After conveners submit their annual program reviews, there will be a meeting

between conveners and deans to work on this. Also, the Deans' Council has a retreat over summer to work on academic planning for the coming academic year. In the past, that planning was based on what each dean saw as their unit's needs, but now these convening group reports (including the assessment, operational data, and planning information) will inform that discussion directly.

Within the administration, some re-organization is taking place that will also affect planning. For example, SPIF is being moved out of the purview of Institutional Effectiveness, so now the three Vice Presidents in the administration will review SPIF requests. SWOT analysis will now be a responsibility of Institutional Effectiveness, so they will examine questions like how changing demographics or demand for academic programs can help guide planning at the college.

d. Academic Advising: Beginning with in Fall 2012 (so during registration for Spring 2013), all students other than first year students will be required to receive academic advising before registration. Academic advisors will have to lift a hold in the student's account before he or she can register. All faculty should have received advising training before then. Holds should not be lifted by Unit Secretaries. In response to a concern that this may raise equity issues (i.e., some faculty have many more advisees than others), Provost Barnett noted that, at least in some units, Unit Secretaries assign advisees to faculty, and stated she will raise this issue with deans to make sure inequities are addressed in advance of the new policy's implementation.

e. Deans' Evaluations and Reappointment: The FAEC would like to strengthen the voice of the faculty in deans' evaluation and reappointment, and the Provost welcomes that. The FAEC requested that the Provost provide a copy of the survey instrument used in the last round of deans' evaluations, so that revisions can be suggested to the Provost. The input faculty give via that instrument goes to the Provost and is confidential. However, the FAEC might develop an additional instrument with results available to the faculty.

f. Scheduling Courses for 2012-13: There is a major shortage of classrooms, so deans will most likely be asking convening groups to reschedule some classes.

V. Minutes

The minutes from the Feb. 22 meeting of the FAEC will be reviewed and approved at next week's meeting.