

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC) Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2012, 9:15 to 10:50am

Present: Jim Morley, Elaine Risch, Donna Crawley, Peggy Greene, Beba Shamash

Absent: Max Goldberg, Sam Mustafa, Alex Olbrecht, Jillian Weiss

Secretary: Rebecca Root

1. Approval of the minutes for FAEC meeting of February 1. Motion seconded, approved.

2. President Morley's Report

Pres. Morley reported that he has a meeting scheduled with Pres. Mercer to prepare the action document following up on the Jan. 18 FAEC meeting with the President's Cabinet.

Pres. Morley has also been in contact with Assoc. VP for Academic Affairs/Employee Relations Judith Jeney, AFT Local Pres. Irene Kuchta, and Provost Beth Barnett to discuss the issue of whether clearer criteria for promotion to Full Professor are needed. Response from the FAEC Councilors was that much more discussion is needed before we move forward with any proposal to the FA on this. Discussed whether units themselves have a clear sense of the criteria or ever address this issue in Unit Councils.

3. Strategic Planning Process

Pres. Morley has been in contact with Prof. Steve Rice, one of the faculty members of the Strategic Planning Task Force. For the second part of today's Faculty Conference, Prof. Rice and the other faculty members of the SPTF plan to address Ramapo's Mission Statement and to engage faculty in a discussion of whether and how to revise it. Participants will work in break-out groups to facilitate dialogue.

4. Review of Feb. 1 Faculty Assembly Meeting, and Ideas for Enhancing Cross-Campus Communication

Discussed whether a Task Force to deal with the Academic Commons is necessary now, or whether that should be formed once the project is closer to implementation. Consensus was reached that a Task Force should be put together once the project is approved and real planning begins.

The concept for the space is to be multipurpose, with faculty and staff using it during the day, but open to students in the evenings. There would be café and meeting space, and perhaps in the summer the space could be used to host conferences. (Special Assistant to President Mercer) Brittany Goldstein, (FA Pres.) Jim Morley, (Assoc. VP for Residential Life) Pat Chang, and (Assoc. VP for Administration & Finance) Dick Roberts are the current committee members working on this, and they have been meeting periodically to investigate external funding possibilities.

Discussed the status and charge of the Faculty Budget Committee. The original version of the charge was read at FA rather than the edited version reflecting the FAEC's input. At the next FA, Pres. Morley will clear up any ambiguity, perhaps by reading the correct charge. The FAEC sincerely thanks Prof. Jason Hecht for the work he is undertaking with this committee. Pres. Morley will ask him for the final list of committee members within the next week.

During and after the last FA, two faculty members proposed either closing all meetings of the FA or closing part of each FA. However, there is already a mechanism in the bylaws for closing a meeting of the FA, so it does not seem necessary to rigidly impose this for each FA meeting in advance. There was also consensus on the FAEC that it would be wise to go to a closed FA at least once each semester, as last semester the closed session seemed fruitful in terms of allowing for freer expression of opinion. That (at least one closed session each semester) will be the tentative plan for this semester and beyond. However, the FAEC also noted the need to increase, rather than cut off, communication between the FA and the administration, particularly Pres. Mercer and Provost Barnett.

Discussed when Pres. Mercer might address the faculty. Consensus emerged that the March 7 faculty conference would be a good opportunity for this, because the President could address developments at the February 27 Board of Trustees's meeting, at which we hope to see the tenure cap issue resolved. The rest of the faculty conference will most likely be dedicated to the Strategic Planning Task Force.

Agreed that there is a need for someone who knows what's going on with physical plant issues should appear along with Provost Barnett at an FA this semester to address concerns. Pres. Morley will contact Prof. Eric Weiner about this, as he is the faculty representative to the Capital Improvement committee of the Board of Trustees.