

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC) Meeting Minutes

October 19, 2011, 9:15 to 11:15am

Present: Jim Morley, Max Goldberg, Elaine Risch, Peggy Greene, Sam Mustafa, Alex Olbrecht, Ruma Sen

In attendance 10:45 to 11:15: Jillian Weiss

Absent: Donna Crawley

Secretary: Rebecca Root

1. Minutes from October 12 meeting approved.

2. President's announcements

- a. Pres. Morley met with Pres. Mercer, who is setting up a committee to handle the planning for the Academic Commons. Brittany Williams Goldstein, Pres. Mercer's assistant will chair the committee, which will also include a student representative, Richard Roberts (VP for Administration & Finance), and Pres. Morley. The understanding is that faculty and staff will have use of the commons during the day, with rooms for meetings and a coffee shop. Student will have use of it in the evenings for cultural and academic-related events.
- b. Pres. Mercer accepts the idea of faculty choosing the faculty representatives to the Strategic Plan committee. Pres. Morley's assumption is that Pres. Mercer will tell the deans not to select participants. Strategic planning begins in late Spring. We do not yet know the number of members of this committee, so it remains difficult to address question of the number of faculty representatives to select.
- c. Pres. Mercer also approves of the idea of the FAEC and President's Cabinet exchanging agendas in advance of meeting.
- d. Judith Jeney will attend today's FA to address questions regarding Sedona software.
- e. Provost Barnett is on board with all FAEC initiatives at this point (such as faculty participation in revision of instrument for deans' evaluation).

3. FAEC priorities for 2011-12

a. Discussion of Sedona software. (See Priority 2.)

Rep. Olbrecht has access to the new version of Sedona and is ready to talk about this at today's FA. Discussion of whether implementation of software will reduce or perhaps expand the quantity of materials candidates for tenure/promotion/reappointment submit.

b. Discussion of online student evaluations. (See Priority 3.)

Rep. Crawley emailed Pres. Morley to report that recent Ramapo trials of online

student evaluations have a 60% return rate. This is a relatively small sample, but the return rate is better than the typical national return rate of 50%. Both are lower than the return rate for paper, in-person evaluations. Discussion of ways to implement online student evaluations via an app students could use on their own smartphones, or else computer labs.

c. Discussion of faculty participation in Strategic Plan. (See Priority 4.)

Discussion of criteria that might be used in selecting faculty members for participation in Strategic Planning. Proposed criteria include:

- i. Overall vision of the future of the college
- ii. Budgeting, accounting or other finance skills
- iii. Representation of different types of programs (liberal arts, sciences, professional programs)
- iv. Strong communication and persuasion skills
- v. Expertise in key areas of planning

Discussion of how faculty participants in Strategic Plan should be chosen. One possibility is simply to have an FA-wide election in which people come forward to stand. However, the danger with that is that too few people might come forward to run.

Decision 1: There should be a representative of the FAEC on the Strategic Plan. Preferably the FA president for 2012-2013 would fulfill this role.

Decision 2: At today's FA, Pres. Morley will put forward the FAEC's proposal to form a nominating committee. This committee will identify criteria for nominating faculty participants in the Strategic Plan; coordinate with faculty members as nominees; and ultimately put these nominees before the FA for a vote. Those who would like to volunteer for one of these seats on the Strategic Planning committee should email Pres. Morley. The nominating committee will most likely be composed of Pres. Morley and two other faculty members, one of them from the full FA.

d. Discussion of shared collegial governance. (See Priority 5.)

Discussion of role of conveners' councils in shared collegial governance. Conveners' councils vary from school to school. Some schools appear not to have one at all, while others meet only when convened by the dean, and perhaps one or two are more empowered in the sense that they sometimes meet independently of the dean and/or present their own agenda items to the dean. Should this be a topic of discussion for FAEC in future? Some skepticism was voiced, and this will not be added to the FAEC's agenda at this time.

4. New parking policy

- a. Rep. Olbrecht has drafted a letter from ASB objecting to the new parking policy. He proposes that the FAEC endorse, reject, or revise this letter to reflect FAEC opinion. Consensus that this will be on the agenda for the next FAEC meeting.
- d. Rep. Goldberg solicited opinions for his unit on this issue. Most did not email him a response, suggesting it is not the highest concern for them. Those who did respond expressed a variety of positions.
- e. In ASB, Rep. Olbrecht reports much stronger faculty opposition to the new policy. Beginning Jan 1, all ASB and other faculty who park in Mackin and Bischoff (like most TA faculty) without paid spots will receive summonses. Hence most ASB and TA faculty will be forced to park in A lots.
- d. In CA, Rep. Sen reports mixed response. Newer faculty in particular are unhappy with this change to parking policy. Many cite concerns that if there is increased competition for spots in A lot, CA faculty forced to then park in C and D lots will have to walk a great distance with equipment related to their courses and research.
- e. **Action:** FAEC members are to re-read Rep. Olbrecht's letter in preparation for next FAEC meeting at which it will be discussed.

5. Cathy Davey's visit

- a. Two FAEC contacted Cathy Davey after her visit to request the information on alumni that she said her office would provide. Neither has received a response.
- b. **Action:** Pres. Morley will follow-up with Cathy Davey about providing this information to units and convening groups.

6. Suspension of sabbaticals

- a. Discussion of distinct roles of FAEC and AFT. This is largely a matter that falls under the jurisdiction of the union.
- b. Discussion of whether it is possible for the normal review process for sabbaticals to move forward despite the announcement that sabbaticals are suspended for next year. Rep. Goldberg notes that those who submitted applications had them returned to them. It seems faculty cannot move forward with the normal review process for sabbaticals (like votes at unit councils), but we don't know. Rep. Olbrecht also notes that there is a degree of unfairness in asking faculty to apply for sabbaticals without knowing what conditions for sabbatical will be included in the new contract.
- c. Discussion of whether promotions will also be affected. We don't know. Discussion of whether President Mercer could designate college funds for sabbaticals and move ahead with them despite the state's suspension. Again, we

don't know. Judith Jeney will be in attendance at today's FA, where she may be asked some of these questions.

7. New business

- a. Rep. Olbrecht notes that Ramapo is now using the Common Application for admissions, and that this seems to be increasing number of applicants.
- b. Rep. Weiss reports that in the SSHS conveners' council today, they learned that G wing renovations will mean some faculty offices will be moved to trailers and that some faculty will be required to share office space. Also, instead of the traditional 5 year review process, convening groups in SSHS will submit annual reports.