

**Faculty Assembly (FA)**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**10 am -12:30 pm May 20, 2015**  
**Alumni Lounges**  
**Number of Attendees: 115**

**1. FA President Rainforth's report**

- a. FA President, Professor Rainforth, welcomed everyone to the final FA meeting for the academic year and mentioned that we would have a 15 minute time allotment for all discussions.
- b. FA President Professor Rainforth, requested for volunteers/nominations for the position of the Topics in Arts and Humanities representative on GECCO. Faculty who participate in that category were invited to submit nominations directly to Professor Rainforth or the [faec@ramapo.edu](mailto:faec@ramapo.edu) email account.
- c. Faculty were reminded that the Provost's Council draft policy & procedures related to students who are suspended on an interim basis, had been sent out and that it was available on the Provost's website. Faculty were asked to review it to see what options they had for such students.
- d. Professor Rainforth invited Mr. Chris Romano to provide an update regarding the Bergen Record's article related to application acceptance rates, published recently.
  - i. Mr. Romano helped contextualize the article and explained Ramapo College's approach to the issue at hand. He described what Ramapo included in its definition of an application and what it did not. He clarified that students, who had paid the fees (or had had their fees waived) and had completed their application with no documents missing in the file alone were considered as applicants. All other students, who may have begun the application process but had either not clicked submit or had not completed the application, were not considered as applicants. FA members sought clarification of the process by which Ramapo College had responded to the publishers of the article. Suggestions were made that a letter (may be from the Chairman of the Board) be sent to the publishers clarifying our definition and where we stand with respect to the issue.

**2. Provost Barnett's report**

i. She sought nominations for coordinator for living-learning community- \$5000 stipend in Summer. \$2500 stipend- Spring and Fall.

ii. She sought nominations for coordinator of Fellowship and Graduate Scholarship which also has a stipend.

**3. Approval of minutes of April 22, 2015 FA meeting**

a. The minutes were approved.

**4. ARC - Presentation of two decision items:**

a. Decision Item 1-Gen Ed: ARC chair Professor Rakotobe-Joel presented the following motion about the Gen Ed Proposal, “ ARC recommends the Ramapo ARCH program which includes, goals and outcomes, curriculum map, categories, experimental component and general education requirements.” and called for a vote. The floor was opened up to discussions.

Suggestions/Questions/Comments provided included:

i. “In reading the document-no mechanism was seen that showed how distribution categories can be filled”. In response to which, it was explained that students receiving BA vs BS will choose from different columns (this would be the mechanism).

ii. Consideration of sustainability of such a program. Currently no such indication is seen.

iii. The language requirement fails to show that the language vision is a global one (without it being merely a Eurocentric one). In response to which, it was explained that the Dean may plan to hire adjuncts to teach more global languages.

iv. It was further explained to the faculty by Dr. Shannon & Dr. Rainforth that the questions about “implementation issues” will be worked on, by a subsequent implementation group with inputs from faculty. They also explained that ARC is making a recommendation of the tangible structural pieces. ARC is not voting on the Gen-Ed’s implementation. Once this is approved, an Implementation Group with broad representation will work on the GenEd.

v. The Ged Ed task force was thanked for their extensive work but it was stated that while they took a long time to work on it, it was rolled out to the faculty in a very short time, with not enough time to build consensus, to get people to agree and get the details down.

vi. Clarifications were made by the task force about language requirements and that they could be waived and that students could test out.

- vii. Faculty said they were unsure if the pillars and core mission were expressed in the framework.-In response- it was explained once again that ARC had not voted on implementation issues contained on pages 17 and 18. The task force further presented and described the proposed curriculum map and showed how the pillars were embedded in the program.
- viii. Faculty requested that they would like to understand the process of voting, as to what would happen if we voted yes-and what would happen if we vote no and who would decide what happens. In response it was explained that if it was voted, “No” it would go back to the Gen Ed task force, which includes representatives from all committees. Further, in response-the Provost explained that the Vice Provost had proposed how we will move forward with this, if it is approved. The draft of that proposal had been shared with the FA President, Professor Rainforth, who will share it with FAEC. The plan is, that a steering committee, which will have representatives, from task forces and GECCO and people who represent the courses/categories, to implement the Gen Ed model. Also, that GECCO is the default working group for any assessment-but they will first have to wait for ARC to approve but GECCO will interact with ARC-then go back and forth. ARC will consult with GECCO to approve the courses. GECCO will not be the one who gives final approval on the courses.
- ix. Another question posed was, “when we cannot even sustain languages that are doing well, how would be sustain a larger proposal?” to which, the Provost explained that a decision on that would be taken once the committee is formed, but for resources to support changes/needs, when the Deans meet in June they would review and discuss that.
- x. A final suggestion was that we should be passionate and be able to focus on Gen Ed like a laser beam to reach a consensus, maybe in the form of a two-day retreat with everyone.
- xi. Questions were also raised about whether or not the curriculum map was flexible and whether GECCO would be able to change any items. Further, if people felt their voice was not represented, was there a place-for people to be heard and could the curriculum map be changed or could people be

involved? In response to which, it was explained that the categories, were not yet populated so people would have a say in that and currently, only the model/framework was being put forth for a vote.

- xii. Faculty inquired if a resource analysis of the model had been carried out, whether it will increase adjunct rates and whether what is listed as critical thinking even meant that.
  - xiii. At this point, FA President Professor Rainforth called the question for a motion to approve Ramapo ARCH program. It was voted upon. Total number of responses: 115- 51% -No, 41%- Yes, 8%-Abstention<sup>1</sup>. The motion did not pass-and the program was not approved. The Gen Ed Chairperson mentioned that they will be in touch in September.
- b. Decision item 2-Online and Hybrid courses: Professor Rakotobe-Joel, proposed a motion from ARC, “to approve updates to the Online Course Manual regarding definitions of hybrid and online courses”. He presented the revised definitions and opened the floor for questions. The faculty thanked ARC for the clarity and said it was long overdue and much needed.
- i. At this point, FA President Professor Rainforth called the question for a motion to approve the updated definition of Online and Hybrid courses. It was voted upon. Total number of responses: 114- 83% Yes, 6% -No, 10%-Abstention. The motion passed and the updated definition was approved.

##### **5. Schedule Task Force - assessment plan- update**

- a. Professor Kwak explained that Task Force had been asked to provide an assessment plan by June and a permanent schedule by September 10. The Task Force was asking for an extension of the deadline, in order to genuinely assess the schedules and to come up with a pedagogically sound schedule.
- b. A motion to approve the recommendation of the TFCS to extend the deadline in its charge, until a permanent credit structure is determined, was called. This was strongly supported by other faculty members. Floor was opened up to questions.
- c. Faculty wanted to know, by what date the Task Force would know about the credit model, to which it was explained that it would be as soon as the College informed them.

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<sup>1</sup> (Legend: Vote- “1” yes to approve, No- “2”, abstention- “3”).

- d. At this point, FA Vice-President Professor Root called the question for a motion to approve the recommendation of the TFCS to extend the deadlines in its charge until a permanent credit structure is decided upon. It was voted upon. Total number of responses: 110. 98%- Yes, 1%- No, 1% -abstention. The motion was passed and the extension for the deadlines was approved.

## **6. Service Task Force's Report**

- a. Service Task Force Chairperson Meredith Davis, introduced the committee members, applauded them on how everyone worked equally hard and invited member Professor Amruth Kumar to present the committee's recommendations. It was explained that the rationale behind the task force's mission was to ensure fairness in both evaluation and recognition of the service labor rendered by faculty on campus. This work was also in response to the Provost's request to include objective assessments of service. In describing the process, the task force members explained that they solicited feedback from faculty by sharing the proposal at various Unit Councils and modified their recommendations based on the feedback.
- b. Professor Kumar presented the 6 recommendations by the committee as follows (in brief):
  - i. Recommendation 1: Service, comprises activities in support of the mission and strategic goals of the college including but not limited to governance, student engagement, academics, campus life and institutional support.
  - ii. Recommendation 2: To create and update a document that captures the above items.
  - iii. Recommendation 3: On a voluntary basis, to record time spent and evaluation of service.
  - iv. Recommendation 4: Develop log sheet and survey each semester about time spent.
  - v. Recommendation 5: Start a formal mentorship program.
  - vi. Recommendation 6: Include qualitative assessment, new service opportunities.-new committees should be assessed for the time it takes to complete the work and budget accordingly.
  - vii. The presentation included a timeline-from May 2015 onwards, as to what items needed to be worked upon. At this point, the floor was opened up to faculty for questions.

- c. Faculty thanked the committee for their effort but felt it would be extra work to count and log service hours and that had to be reconsidered. So, while the last piece was okay there were clear problems with the recommendations. A response was, “maybe it may not be a lot of work to log the hours as in describing one’s work, one does refer to the amount of time that went into it, which validates its needs”.
- d. Issues were also raised related to the inability of this method to capture the quality and effort of the work. A suggestion was made about allowing people to make their case and keep it qualitative. It was also stated that while, it was described as being voluntary, that itself may be a problem for junior faculty. A need to double-check policy to see if it includes compensated service as well, was raised. It was felt that logging numbers could be inflated by people and lead to laziness. Also, “how can anything be confidential if it is in personnel files”. To all of the above issues, the task force explained that any system can be abused and that this recommendation of logging hours is in addition to what faculty are already doing, not a replacement. A suggestion was made, to try surveying anonymously and then having a recommendation based on preliminary results. A final suggestion was to not get caught up in qualitative and quantitative methodologies but assume that the people who read our reports were intelligent enough to decipher the effort and quality of the work we have put in. It was said that “such logging of hours may only result in a reductive objectivity so, let us try to put it in words how strenuous a committee is instead of focusing on only being objective”.
- e. At this point, FA President Professor Rainforth called the question for a motion to approve the Service Task Force’s recommendations for evaluating Service. It was voted upon. Total number of responses: 111. 63% -No, 26% -Yes, 11% - Abstention. The motion was not passed. The report was not approved.

**7. Report from the Shared Governance Assessment Process (FAEC subcommittee: Ken McMurdy, Rebecca Root, Susan Kurzman, Dean Chen)**

- a. Professor McMurdy presented the progress towards the shared governance assessment process using case studies. He explained that their pilot study last year assessed ongoing decision events and it showed that shared governance can indeed be assessed.
- b. Professor McMurdy said that the presentation and a written document will be made available on the FA website within 7 days.

- c. The first case study was the TFAEE; the presentation reviewed the following: positives, criticisms and challenges and concluded that it was a great model so, if we move forward on the recommendations of TFAEE, it would be on a sound foundation.
  - d. Professor McMurdy discussed the interim schedule and the timelines of meetings-wherein events were outlined. He showed how students had been left out-and how they were also included from Feb 2015 onwards. Mentioned that FA had subsequently approved Spring 2016 schedule (interim) and the Provost had accepted that recommendation. He further explained that in certain instances, how it did not align well with the principles of shared governance. For instance, it was not communicated to all and the time frame was too compressed. The “Before and during” communication with faculty was not good due to the uncertainty of the Union and whether it was even possible. He also discussed multiple points related to the need for respect for expertise and decision making, and respect and collegiality in general.
  - e. Professor McMurdy’s recommendations were to identify challenges in advance to avoid emergency modes, have a clear procedure and to comply with those procedures, that FAEC representatives should use Unit Councils to more actively share information and solicit feedback, and finally, that our governance model depends on strong lateral communication, so that is very critical.
8. **FAEC-Felicitatiion of Professor Eric Karlin:** Professor Eric Karlin was profusely thanked for his service and support and awarded a small token of appreciation for his work.

Minutes respectfully submitted by M. Sundararajan