

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC) Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2017
SSHGS Conference Room
10:00am to 11:45am

Attendees: Tae Kwak, Christina Connor, Cristina Perez, Roark Atkinson, Kim Lorber, Renata Gangemi, Christina Connor, Gladys Torres-Baumgarten, Kathryn Zeno, Eva Ogens

Secretary: Mark Skowronski

Guests: VP (Administration and Finance) Kirsten DeSilva

- 1) Approval of FAEC minutes from March 29, 2017.
 - a) Approved.

- 2) Visit by Kirsten DeSilva (re: Library Renovations).
 - a) Funding.
 - i) Ramapo asked the State for approximately \$50 million for the project. The College was awarded approximately \$15 million. This amount is not sufficient to fund the library renovations. An additional \$10 million will come from debt financing. Fifteen million will come from cash reserves and foundation donations (Total budget of approximately \$40 million).
 - ii) There are contingencies baked into the budget to avoid overages.
 - (1) There is a general feeling that we are doing enough forensic work now that we are not likely to find surprises.
 - (2) Some members of the FAEC are concerned about operating costs.
 - iii) The RCNJ Foundation has raised approximately \$6 million of the targeted \$15 million thus far.
 - b) Architects.
 - i) Ramapo interviewed eight architectural firms. We selected Bohlin, Cywinski, and Jackson. This firm has met with many constituents. They also hired a librarian consultant.
 - ii) We want the renovations to seamlessly integrate with the existing structure (i.e., we don't want a building that looks half new, half old).
 - c) President's Library and Learning Commons Task Force.
 - i) Kirsten DeSilva attends meetings but is not a voting member.
 - ii) The task force is looking at what exists in the current library and what we want to see in new library.
 - iii) There are concerns about the transition period.
 - (1) Two options.
 - (a) Keep library open during the renovations (very problematic).
 - (b) Use of on campus swing space (off campus space is not being seriously considered – per Kirsten DeSilva).
 - iv) The task force is exploring ways of maximizing library space (e.g., use of compact storage).
 - v) Renovation versus a new library.

- (1) There is not enough money to build a new library (per Kirsten DeSilva).
 - (a) Even if a new building were constructed, we would still need to remediate the old library.
 - (b) TCNJ's library project is not really comparable to ours (i.e., it was over ten years ago).
 - (2) The FAEC would like specific numbers comparing the costs of renovations with the costs of building a new library.
 - vi) Timeline.
 - (1) The College expects to have construction documents by May, 2018.
 - (2) The administration will try to maneuver construction around class times to reduce noise.
- 3) Visit by Peter Mercer
- a) Prof. Kwak expressed the faculty's concerns about the Provost's School Restructuring Task Force.
 - i) The proposed deadline is too tight (e.g., issues with implementing a new Gen Ed, Middle States visit, new Dean searches). Where is the urgency coming from? Why not wait until fall of 2019?
 - ii) There is also the representation issue. The document says that faculty are not representing their areas/units. However, it was stated that if faculty do not represent constituents, then faculty essentially do not have a voice.
 - (1) Prof. Kwak reminded President Mercer that similar concerns were expressed about the way the College changed the class schedule. When a more inclusive group was formed, a better schedule was designed. The whole process would have been taken one less year and not caused anxiety if the process had started with the task force than creating the TFCS only in response to general dissatisfaction at the Provost's initial Interim Schedule.
 - (2) There are also concerns that faculty have not received a clear rationale for restructuring. What are the parameters of a new structure? What criteria should the task force use?
 - (a) The need for restructuring has not been communicated in the Provost's draft.
 - (3) The faculty are not necessarily opposed to restructuring. They want it done the right way: through an initial assessment of the School structure followed by recommendations that reinforce what works best and addresses what doesn't work as well as we'd like.
 - b) President Mercer's response:
 - i) It is natural that people would have concerns and would think about potential problems.
 - ii) He believes it makes sense to have people from different Schools who are acting in the best interest of the College (although their perspectives will be influenced by the School that they are in).
 - iii) Even if there were agreement on the composition of the task force, this does not mean that people would be happy with the results.
 - iv) The Provost ultimately has the responsibility to generate a draft.

c) President Mercer was asked by several members of the FAEC if the dates could be delayed. President Mercer indicated that this is just a draft, and if it's a fundamental concern these dates might be modified.

4) Other Items.

a) The FAEC received a nomination for FA Secretary.

