

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC) Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2015
ASB: 007-008
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Attendees: Emma Rainforth, Rebecca Root, Renata Gangemi, Bonnie Blake, Ken McMurdy, Susan Kurzmann, Eva Ogens, Roark Atkinson, Susan Eisner

Secretary: Mark Skowronski

Guests: None

- 1) Approval of FAEC minutes from October 7, 2015
 - a. Approved.

- 2) FA President Emma Rainforth's Report
 - a. Prof. Rainforth met with the Provost last week and followed up the prior week's FAEC discussion (re: consultation to clarify the Provost's statement about a mutual lack of trust with faculty that needs to be repaired). The Provost cited several events and communications as the basis of her comments at last week's FAEC.
 1. The Provost also expressed concern about the shared governance subcommittee's document (in progress) and what it may imply about her prior decision making. The FAEC suggests that the Provost review the language with and provide clarifications to the subcommittee before the document is released. A member of the shared governance subcommittee will attend Prof. Rainforth's meeting with the Provost next week to address this issue.
 - a. There was a question about the extent to which the Provost may weigh in on FAEC documents before they are released to Faculty Assembly. Several members believe that the Provost should receive a draft before release and perhaps an explanation for any revisions she proposes that are rejected by FAEC, but that ultimately these documents reflect the authors' positions, not that of the Provost.
 2. The FAEC discussed several methods that might improve communication between the Provost and faculty. These include the use of multiple messengers, "coffee hours" with discussion items, and publishing a periodic newsletter.
 3. One member expressed concern that the lack of an AFT contract might be affecting faculty-administration relations.

- 3) Grant Thornton Consultants

- a. Next week, Prof. Rainforth will be meeting with the external consultants who are investigating the college's purported structural deficit. It appears that Prof. Rainforth is the only representative of the faculty to meet with this group.
- b. Several FAEC members expressed concern that the faculty is only being represented once at these meetings. Without faculty input, the consulting team may be unaware of several issues affecting the college. It is also important that the team understand the number of internal groups (e.g., FA Budget Committee) that have previously investigated the college's financial difficulties and benefit from the information those groups have collected and analyzed. Faculty acceptance of the final report will be enhanced with faculty input (particularly by those who have served on prior relevant committees).
- c. The FAEC is concerned that any recommended changes to address the structural deficit may create academic issues (hence the need for greater faculty input).
- d. The names of several faculty members who may be able to provide the consultants with substantive input about budgetary matters were put forth. These included two individuals from ASB (a faculty member and a Dean) and a faculty member from TAS. The committee believes that faculty input should not come exclusively from one Unit (e.g. ASB).
- e. The FAEC believes that any data or reports that the administration is sharing with the consultants should be shared with FAEC.
- f. The FAEC is still unclear what the impetus is for this consulting project. Are similar NJ institutions engaging in such investigations? Is this being motivated by legislative pressures? The Board of Trustees? Can we ask President Mercer?
- g. There was also a question about the number of managers (per student) at Ramapo when compared with similar NJ institutions. At Ramapo, it appears that many individuals are classified as managers who would be considered as professional staff elsewhere.

4) Provost's Council

- a. Last week, Bonnie Blake indicated her willingness to serve as an at-large member on the Provost's Council. There were no volunteers from either SSHS or SSHGS. The committee may want to outreach to an individual that is up for promotion to fill this position.

5) FA Parliamentarian

- a. As there were no volunteers at last week's FAEC meeting, the current FA VP (Rebecca Root) has agreed to serve as an interim FA Parliamentarian.
- b. There were some concerns that a FA Parliamentarian may be not able to preempt all uncivil behavior during FA meetings. There were also discussions

about the need for the FA Parliamentarian to be versed in the FA's bylaws. One member suggested posting a slide during all FA meetings outlining the ground rules for discussions/presentations.

c. The FAEC also discussed amending the bylaws to allow a non-FAEC member to serve as the FA Parliamentarian.

6) Updates from Unit Councils

a. SSHGS: Faculty expressed support for collapsing interdisciplinary convening group meeting times. The Unit is excited about moving forward on the items identified by FAEC (e.g., library renovations, conveners' release time). A point was raised about the number of majors in a convening group not being the only factor that shapes the workload of a convener.

b. CA: Faculty discussed the lack of databases at the library. There were also discussions about improving student life (e.g., public transportation, lockdown procedures). The Title IX (sexual assault) committee should have more faculty members.

c. ASB: Alex Olbrecht expressed a willingness to serve on a library renovations working group. In response to a presentation on proposed Gen Ed changes, faculty expressed several concerns which its Gen Ed representative will bring to the Gen Ed Committee.

i. This report spurred an FAEC discussion on the need for clearly defined Gen Ed learning objectives. There is also confusion about the Gen Ed committee's jurisdiction (as the current Gen Ed committee was not charged with implementation).

7) Connect/Starfish/Banner

a. Joe Connell from the Center for Student Success has been making presentations in Unit Council meetings. Faculty report some improvements in the system's functionality (e.g., being able to email all students in a major). Why is functionality being rolled out in a piecemeal fashion? In addition, the faculty would like Banner to provide confirmation that holds (for a specific R number) have been lifted. There are also concerns about degree evaluations not accurately reporting earned credits.

8) Other Items

a. Prof. Rainforth received an email about the need to professionalize the Center for Reading and Writing. The FAEC is unsure about the specific need (or complaint) that the emailer was identifying; clarification is to be sought. A member discussed the various online tools and tutorials that are available on the Center for Reading and Writing's website. The FAEC would like the hyperlink.

- b. The FAEC needs to hear from the Rigor Task Force. Prof. Rainforth will reach out to the chair.
- c. Feedback on the International Committee's proposal, shared with FAEC members last week, should be sent directly to Ben Levy.
- d. An FAEC member noticed the Krame Center's use of two offices and a classroom on the fourth floor of the ASB building. A dedicated classroom was not included in the original proposal reviewed by ARC. Several members asked the following:
 - i. Is the Krame Center truly externally funded if the college is providing classroom and office space?
 - ii. Why isn't the Krame Center using the Spiritual Center (in lieu of a classroom)?
- e. Members of the FAEC are eager to initiate a working group on the need for renovations of the George T. Potter library. Fundraising needs to be a faculty priority. The working group may want to consider using TAS's success with G wing renovations as a model for change (e.g., the use of pictures, Board of Trustees presentations).
 - i. Roark Atkinson was nominated to initiate this working group.
- f. A FAEC member inquired about the status of the Service Task Force. Is it possible to make some updates to the Faculty Handbook while waiting for whatever sections appear to have been holding that up for the past several years?

9) Closing

- a. Next week's FAEC meeting will begin at 9:45am.