

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC) Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2015
ASB: 007-008
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Attendees: Emma Rainforth, Rebecca Root, Ken McMurdy, Eva Ogens, Roark Atkinson, Susan Eisner, Bonnie Blake, Jonathan Lipkin

Excused Absences: Susan Kurzmann

Secretary: Mark Skowronski

Guests: ARC Chair – Thierry Rakotobe-Joel

- 1) Approval of FAEC minutes from December 16, 2015
 - a. Approved.

- 2) FA President Emma Rainforth's Report
 - a. Provost Barnett has asked if the FAEC can attend a meeting of Dean's Council (Thursday mornings from 9-12) - this would be a meeting of the GEIT Governance Committee. February 18 has been identified as a potential date. Some members indicated their ability to attend, although others indicated scheduling conflicts.
 - b. The FAEC has decided to begin Wednesday meetings at 9:30am (rather than 10am) for the remainder of the Spring 2016 semester.
 - c. President's Cabinet had decreed that professional staff may no longer teach as adjuncts during normal business hours (9:30am-4:30pm). Exceptions are made for staff with contractual teaching duties. There are questions about impact of this policy on convening groups (from a scheduling perspective). For example, what will be the effect on FYS and other courses that rely extensively on adjunct faculty? FAEC reps will ask convenors to provide input.
 - d. Full-time faculty are currently required to teach four undergraduate classes per academic year; their remaining two classes being undergrad, graduate, or reassigned time. This minimum teaching requirement in the undergrad curriculum was endorsed by the FA in 2009. Provost's Council has proposed modifying this policy to state that full-time faculty "have responsibility for teaching in the undergraduate programs" with "the dean ensur[ing] that all full-time faculty in the school teach in the undergraduate curriculum each year" (Policy/Procedure 300-XX, in review, on Provost's website). The FAEC is concerned with such a general statement, as teaching only a single one-credit undergraduate course per year could be interpreted as being consistent with the proposed policy. Such faculty members would have only minimal involvement with undergraduate education (possibly impacting advisement, etc.). The FAEC is concerned about the long-term effects of these consequences on the college's mission as a public liberal arts college, including the role of "graduate

faculty” in the governance of the undergraduate curriculum. Although some proposed graduate programs (MSN, MSW) may need “graduate faculty” for accreditation purposes, a narrower revision to existing policy may be more appropriate. For example, there could be a limited exception for faculty in programs when necessary for accreditation. Accrediting bodies typically make exceptions in order to allow programs to stay consistent with their institution’s mission; have the proposed programs that require a change in college policy fully explored such exceptions?

- 3) Academic Review Committee (ARC) Chair - Thierry Rakotobe-Joel
 - a. ARC has currently reviewed about 80% of course submissions (27 courses remain outstanding). ARC will be recommending to the FA approval of 2 new minors, and 2 new concentrations in the MSN program. Although ARC supports the proposed expansion of the MSN from a curricular perspective, the committee is hesitant to recommend approval due to the proposed revision’s inconsistency with current college policy (re: faculty undergraduate teaching responsibilities). ARC would like the college to retain its existing policy.
 - FAEC discussed with ARC Chair Rakotobe-Joel the next steps. FAEC recommended that ARC should either approve or not approve this program, in full. The FA should not vote on this program unless and until FA votes on revising the college’s policy on undergraduate teaching responsibilities. The FAEC determines the agenda for FA meetings and can decide not to include on the FA’s agenda a vote on the proposed program revision.
 - ARC may want to inquire whether the accrediting body for the proposed program can make exceptions to its requirements to keep the program consistent with Ramapo’s mission.
 - Perhaps ARC can state that “it would be comfortable recommending this program when and if the contradiction with existing college policy is resolved”. ARC should discuss this before the next Provost’s Council (Jan. 28).
 - b. President Rainforth requested that ARC discuss Provost’s Council’s proposed policy change on modifications to degree requirements for students with documented disabilities (Policy/Procedure 300-WW).

- 4) Modification To Degree Requirements for Students with Documented Disabilities (Policy/Procedure 300-WW).
 - a. Provost’s Council has proposed a policy change to enable students with documented disabilities to modify degree course requirements when a disability prevents him/her from fulfilling those requirements. The FAEC is concerned about the broad wording of this policy statement and has concerns that it might create a right to accommodations that are not “reasonable” (e.g., waiving students

from courses that are essential to a discipline). The proposed procedure appears to provide greater specificity and appropriate checks and balances. The procedure describes the role of the convening group and the college's ADA/Section 504 Compliance Officer. The FAEC would like to ensure that "past practice" is considered when making modifications.

- FAEC reps should discuss this proposed policy change at today's Unit Council.

5) Other Announcements

- a. There are questions about the search process for hiring deans. Should a faculty member chair the search committee? Or may the Provost chair search committees? The latter is not consistent with past practice.
- b. President Rainforth met with the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs – Christopher Romano.
 - He indicated that the college is meeting its targets for Spring 2016 enrollments and Fall 2016 applications.
 - The new Director of Athletics is trying to increase faculty engagement.
 - The college has a new faculty rep for the NCAA (Ben Fine, TAS).
 - There was a higher than expected response to the Degree Evaluation/Advising survey.
 - President Rainforth has spoken with the Women's Center and requested that it offer Safe Zone training again, for faculty/staff.
- c. FAEC will begin at 9:30am next week and for the rest of the semester.