

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC)
Minutes of the Meeting
September 9, 2015
ASB-007/008
10 am to 12 pm

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

Excused Absences: Jonathan Lipkin and Bonnie Blake

Secretary: Malavika Sundararajan

Guests: Beth Barnett

1. Approval of 09/02/2015 FAEC minutes

- a. The minutes of the meeting was approved

2. Discussion of the Faculty Fora (post-FA meetings) Structure and Format.

- a. It was discussed that the failure of certain task force reports at prior meetings may have been in part due to the fact that many faculty members had not fully read the content of the task force reports. (To help all faculty members become aware of the contents of every report presented to them, members of the FAEC suggested the following possibilities).
- b. Discussion followed as to what faculty fora after Faculty Assembly Meetings would intend to provide, and other initiatives that could foster communication and dialog. Suggestions included: a) Have faculty forums where the content of reports are discussed and feedback is sought; b) FAEC representatives could utilize the 30 minutes time slot during Unit Council meetings to discuss task force progress/reports; c) Encourage task force members to receive feedback with an open-mind without being defensive, so that faculty who have given suggestions feel their ideas were responded to; d) At least once a year, seek inputs from all faculty on strategies and the faculty's ideas about security, the mission, vision, child care, etc.; d) To begin having FAEC representatives report back the outcomes of their Unit Council information and discussion sessions at the subsequent FAEC meetings; e) To consider including meet and greet to help all faculty members become acquainted with one another; f) To resume the policy of having Deans introduce new faculty members at the FA meetings.

3. Unit Council Information and Discussion Reports:

- a. SSHGS: Dr. Root mentioned that the feedback for the establishment of the Community Engagement Task Force was mixed. While a couple of faculty members said it would be good to get the classification as many service related projects are already ongoing, a couple of faculty members also spoke to how this would unnecessarily entail more assessments and more work and were highly skeptical. One of the faculty suggested that the ADP (American Democracy Project) could carry out

the feasibility study instead of creating a new task force. Dr. Root also mentioned that her Dean welcomed the 30 minute time slot for FAEC representatives to share and discuss important details. All faculty were excited about the grants and finally, there were no interests or nominations for the FA secretary position.

- b. TAS: Dr. McMurdy also added that their Dean was receptive to the 30 minute time slot for FAEC representatives. No one from TAS expressed interest in the FA secretary position or GECCo. All faculty expressed interest in Latin America related grants and projects.
- c. SSHS: Dr. Ogen mentioned that their new Dean was also very receptive to the allotment of 30 minutes for FAEC representatives during Unit Council meetings. No one from SSHS expressed any interest in the FA secretary position. Everybody was excited about the grant.
- d. ASB: Prof. Eisner mentioned that since they only had a few minutes at their Unit Council meeting, as it was devoted to AACSB reaccréditation, she sent a detailed email to all ASB Faculty about each FAEC discussed item. Dr. Alex Olbrecht expressed willingness to serve in the FA secretary position if needed, Prof. Eisner also confirmed that the ASB Dean welcomed the idea of the allotment of 30 minutes for FAEC-led discussion during Unit Council meetings.

4. Discussion of Summer Opt-out of Online Courses:

- a. FAEC members stated that this is the second year in a row that we have had scheduling mistakes for Summer I courses and a repeat of the corrective memo sent last year about the same issue weeks after the courses had started. Concern about credibility of information from Registrar's Office was raised. It was mentioned that it would be helpful to know if the Provost could look into this matter and help ensure it does not happen again.

5. Discussion of Community Engagement Task force (Ad hoc item)

- a. From the perspective of shared governance, FAEC members raised the issue that it may have helped to have been consulted about the idea of establishing a new task force before institutional support was given. Members felt that the current decision to establish the community engagement task force may be premature given the existing issues that are a priority for the college that are yet to be resolved and whose outcomes impact recommendations this new task force might make. For instance, FAEC members explained that multiple task forces already exist, which are working on critical areas from experiential learning, Gen-Ed to Faculty service and Scheduling. Hence while establishing another task force to assess the level of community engagement is a good idea, this year may not be the best time to do so. Thus Prof. Eisner made a motion that, FAEC members respond to the request brought to them last week (*about the FA President's support to establish a new task force to assess community engagement activities on campus*), stating that FAEC members were fully committed to the work of ongoing task forces and thus supported the FA President, Dr. Rainforth to participate by jointly charging (along with the institutional

administrators), the new community engagement task force to conduct a feasibility study and bring it to the Faculty Assembly as a report for a vote to see whether the task force should proceed. Dr. Root seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously passed.

6. Discussion and Q&A with Provost Barnett

- a. President Rainforth inquired about the current status of the search for VP for Administration and Finance. Provost Barnett stated that over 40 applications were received. After having narrowed it down to 11 and since one candidate withdrew, they carried out 10 phone interviews and are in the process of inviting 3-4 candidates for campus interviews. The Provost confirmed that the faculty representative on the search committee was Dr. Ed Petkus. She mentioned that another administrative position that of the Associate Provost (for graduate programs, adult learners, CIPL) is being searched. Dr. Aaron Lorenz was named as the Chair of that search committee along with Dr. Julie Good as the faculty representative, in addition to four other members including the registrar. The Provost stated that over 30 applications had been received for the Associate Provost's position and since the committee has just started its work, they anticipate the post to be filled either in January or, if the selected candidate is not able to leave their current position, in May.
- b. Prof. Eisner requested any information the Provost could provide about new faculty searches. Provost Barnett confirmed that they anticipated 6 new full-time faculty searches (2 in ASB, 2 in Social work, one in Nursing and another in Creative Writing) and 11 new temporary position searches. Prof. Eisner requested if, going forward, the Deans could announce at the start of the academic year, all new searches for that academic year, to their respective Units. The Provost agreed that it was a good idea and that she can ask the Deans to do so. Dr. Kurzmann also mentioned that they have an ongoing search for a new Librarian.
- c. FAEC members asked if any Deans were up for reappointment. The Provost confirmed that the Deans from ASB, TAS and SSHGS were all up for reappointment and mentioned that the reappointment would not be confirmed until Spring. FAEC members discussed the need to send the survey for feedback about the Deans as soon as possible. Any unit wanting the Provost to meet with the faculty as part of the process is to invite the Provost to Unit Council.
- d. President Rainforth inquired if the Registrar's office was indeed now under the Provost's office. The Provost answered in the affirmative and requested that FAEC members voice any concerns that they may have. FAEC members mentioned that this was the second year in a row that there had been incorrect scheduling of times for summer classes and they cannot keep repeating the mistake. Provost Barnett assured the FAEC members that she anticipates getting the Summer Schedule out very shortly and that she will look at it in detail before it is sent out to ensure that the mistake is not repeated.

- e. With respect to Writing intensive courses being reflected in the degree evaluation sheets, FAEC members wanted to know if it will only show up for new students. The Provost said that it would indeed be the case but also that since they are in the process of transition all degree audits are going to eventually be programmed in the registrar's office and they are still exploring the option of purchasing software applications to streamline it, however, due to the high costs associated with it as well as the additional work of customizing it, they are working with ITS to decide on the best options. Provost Barnett also mentioned that some majors are structured in such a way that they do not require students to take courses which may have Writing Intensive (WI) designation, and that students would need to be carefully advised. The Provost stated that the Deans will have to look into it.
- f. FAEC members also requested updates about each of the task forces. Provost Barnett confirmed the following about each Task Force:
 - i. i) Experiential task force is coordinating with Gen Ed task force and until we see Gen-Ed, we will not know where they are with their thinking about experiential learning. Since Middle States is expecting to see results soon, they hope to receive the two reports soon.
 - ii. The service task force is sending a survey out to see where to go next.
 - iii. The class scheduling task force is working with Dr. Beth Foster to understand what is not working. So far, they have seen the Spring 2016 MR/MWR afternoon flex slot was oversubscribed and was not working. They realized the need to concretize the three day a week time slots. They plan to keep the schedule the same next year as well. Some programs did request for scheduling outside the given time slots, however, we are unable to accommodate that due to class availability issues. Another past issue was that of having the number of 1 day a week class being way over the allowed limit. One School had over 40%. While only one School had under the allowed limit, all others were in the mid-to-high percentages. The numbers for this Fall have not yet been determined.
 - iv. FAEC members requested updates about the Gen-Ed implementation task force. The Provost mentioned that the task force was not in place right now. FAEC members asked if it would be helpful to have the Provost make a statement to the faculty about the plan for implementation so as to alleviate any fears that Faculty may have about the viability and feasibility of the Gen-Ed plan. The Provost stated that she had no bias towards the old or new Gen-Ed plan, but was only emphasizing that we need a Gen-Ed plan that is assessable. We know through ARC and GECCo that our current Gen-Ed is not in alignment with national standards hence we need to work towards that alignment. Therefore the Provost mentioned that she could mention that they would reallocate resources to help with the implementation of the Gen-Ed plan but also due to budget cuts, would check different decision points alone, for resource allocation, within the faculty approved Gen-Ed framework but

not change the framework once it is approved. For instance, if we have someone overseeing courses, we will have to take back some of the reassigned times elsewhere.

- v. FAEC members asked how the hiring of faculty will be prioritized especially now when the languages might need almost five new hires. The Provost said that it has been a problem as many tenured faculty do not want to teach introductory courses and staffing decisions would also take into consideration the needs of the incoming students, whether it would be a hire for a particular language or different competency levels. So it is not known yet if or how many lines might be needed. Resources are likely to be tight. Provost was asked if staffing the proposed language requirement in the new Gen Ed proposed would come from lines that would otherwise be allocated to other ongoing programs' needs.
- vi. The Provost added that in addition to the four task forces, we also have a standing International Committee with an international plan. They have defined what a "meaningful international experience" means, and once we get the Deans' and Faculty's approval we will begin implementing it. The committee has also recommended areas of experience for international study with this year focusing on Latin America.
- vii. Prof. Eisner requested, from a shared governance perspective, for an estimate of the timeline of the decision points for each of the key areas that the College was working on this year. Provost Barnett stated the following:
 - 1. The International Committee Report is ready
 - 2. The Experiential Learning task force is on hold until they hear from Gen-Ed
 - 3. The Gen-Ed task force is continuing, with a vote later this semester
 - 4. The Service task force is going back to the drawing board and will take inputs from the survey.
 - 5. The Faculty handbook was waiting for some material about Personnel action and is not ready.
 - 6. We have a new employee relations person who has knowledge of the state master contract and implementation of it at our sister schools.
 - 7. The Provost is waiting to hear back from TAS regarding lab credit before she can move on the report from the Task Force on Academic Excellence. Provost expects to hear from the latter's Dean by the end of the semester.
 - 8. The Scheduling task force is waiting to hear from Beth Foster about difficulties. There is also overcrowding in the midday slots but we will be getting to scheduling very shortly.
 - 9. The Provost stated that in all, in about three semesters we should have a good idea about all these issues and will probably be waiting to implement all of the above items in Fall 2017.

- viii. FAEC members explained that they were hopeful of getting the above items locked in and then begin thinking, as a faculty, about the future of the College and where we would like to go. The Provost agreed that it is imperative we talk about the future and where we want to be, especially because she has seen a lot of disconnects, wherein faculty, administrators, staff and students, all had different views about the College.
- ix. Prof. Eisner requested if we had any benchmarks of different Schools that we had studied, which would give us an idea about how higher education could/should be and whether it might be helpful to have some outside voices speak to the faculty and administrators to help us all think about the future. Provost Barnett agreed that it was a very good idea and that she would look into it. She stated that we are still primarily an undergraduate College with a few professional graduate programs. She also stated that we want to focus on being a residential College that attracts high quality students as well as a diverse group of students and manage the complexity of providing a mix of liberal arts and science programs with a 4 credit model. The Provost and FAEC members agreed that seeing how we could weave all the above areas together to meet the needs of the students and fulfill the mission of the College would be a good conversation to continue. Provost Barnett mentioned that it is important to note that student engagement will soon include co-curricular activities and that we will want to develop co-curricular transcripts. The FAEC members thanked the Provost for her time and answers.

7. Discussion of FAEC members' "to do list" items:

- a. It was mentioned that updates from the Full Professor forums had to be discussed at the next meeting
- b. President Rainforth requested and Dr. Root volunteered to check the last five years minutes to see what the past opinions were about online evaluations of Summer courses.
- c. Prof. Eisner mentioned it would be good to be sure that agenda items include those that are more proactive
- d. The committee agreed that if FAEC members had problems due to conflicting class timings, they could elect an alternative representative for the current semester to take their place.
- e. All FAEC members agreed to have next week's FAEC meeting start at 9.45 am and end at 12.30 pm instead of meeting on September 23rd (as it was a religious holiday for many).