

Faculty Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, November 9, 2004

Present: Michel-André Bossy (Chair), Andrew Brem, James Egan, Anne Fausto-Sterling, Donald Forsyth, Nancy Jacobs, William Rakowski, Michael Rosen, Chung-I Tan, Esther Whitfield.

Guests: Walter Hunter, Lewis Lipsitt, Karen Newman, Rajiv Vohra

The Chair opened the meeting at 3:05 p.m. Minutes of the 10/26/04 meeting were approved as submitted.

The FEC officers met recently with President Simmons and discussed the issue of better lines of communication between faculty and administration. The Officers are invited to the President's Cabinet meeting on Monday to voice faculty's concerns. Professor Bossy asked committee members that if they can think of any specific examples of miscommunication between faculty and administration that should be addressed, to let him know before Monday. Retiree issues and the operation of the administrative boards were also discussed.

The FEC officers met with the Provost and discussed an ambiguity in the TPA charge. It is not clear in its operation whether SDH's review of a negative TPA decision should come before or after the Provost's decision. The FEC will consider amending the language in the Faculty Rules and Regulations to better clarify the procedure that the SDH should follow. The Provost and FEC officers also talked about the search for the Director of Faculty Affairs and the proposed Intellectual Property Policy.

Professor Egan gave a brief update on his research at other institutions about Ombudspersons and spoke of several models. He learned that virtually all offices share a uniform set of principles and practices established by the organization for professional ombuds offices. These principles stress the need for ombuds offices to be confidential, neutral places that can assist students, faculty, and staff to resolve problems that arise in the University through informal mediation and/or negotiation. Ombuds offices at peer institutions tend to provide services to faculty, staff, and students. Only about 5-10 percent of the cases handled by these offices at peer institutions involve faculty, and they typically involve untenured faculty. These offices tend to be staffed by professional Ombudspersons with one person serving as the university ombuds and one or two associate ombuds. Discussion ensued whereby it was decided to continue deliberations on this issue at a future FEC meeting. The FEC officers plan to bring the Ombudsperson issue up again with the President in early December.

The FEC spoke with Dean Karen Newman about what faculty would like to hear about in her report from the Graduate School at the December 7 faculty meeting. Dean Newman will speak about some of the achievements of the Graduate School using the annual report as a vehicle for mentioning specific issues, and she plans to come up with at least three meaty issues for discussion with the Faculty on December 7. The FEC complimented Dean Newman on her good work as Dean of the Graduate School, which they feel has contributed to the graduate students' good morale and upbeat attitude.

Dean Rajiv Vohra gave a status report on the search process for Director of Faculty Affairs. The search took longer than anticipated, the search committee considering both internal candidates and external candidates. It is much more difficult to gather information on external candidates, and there is always the question as to when they will be available to start work at Brown. The Director of Faculty Affairs will be someone who junior and senior faculty can turn to for advice

in their promotion or tenure. Dean Vohra mentioned need for additional staff support in the Dean of the Faculty's office and hopes the new Director of Faculty Affairs will be able to supply staff support for the Faculty Affairs Committee.

Professor Emeritus Lewis Lipsitt, Chair of the Elderbears, was invited to discuss some of their issues. The group had a very successful meeting on November 3rd and they have already been celebrated in the *APA Magazine*. The Elderbears seek a formal connection with Brown University, and the FEC suggested the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) as a possible connection. Professor Lipsitt thought that was a fine suggestion. There is great interest in the Elderbears and health issues are a very real problem for retirees. Emeritus faculty would also like to have some space in their own departments with access to a phone, fax machine, and some staff support so they can continue their research. Professor Lipsitt noted that some department chairs refuse to accept retirees back into their departments and they feel rejected. A Center for Retirees and an Emeriti Directory was also discussed. It was suggested a questionnaire go out to all retirees asking if they want their name to be listed in such a directory at Brown. The Dean of the Faculty is willing to help with creating such a Directory.

VP Walter Hunter and Professor Lipsitt were invited to talk about the Human Resources Advisory Board (HRAB) annual report and the issues they could introduce to the faculty on 12/7 that would spark interesting discussion and debate. Walter Hunter noted that the HRAB is a strong group with formidable tasks. Suggested topics for discussion include disparity in benefits between faculty and staff, post-retirement health benefits, and the Tuition Aid Program. Faculty is interested in knowing that the HRAB is concerned and talking about faculty issues. Mr. Hunter and Professor Lipsitt plan on highlighting the key issues in the written report. Mr. Hunter then gave a brief report on the recent assaults on campus ensuring the FEC that plans will be implemented quickly to beef up security in and around campus, efforts being coordinated with the Providence Police Department.

The discussion about the definition of the Subcommittee on Diversity in Hiring (SDH) was postponed until the next FEC meeting. Edits for the committee preference sheet will be solicited by e-mail.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau
Secretary