

**Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)
Meeting**

January 27, 2009

3:00-5:00 p.m.

Corporation Room, University Hall

Minutes

Present: James Dreier, Chair; Gerald Diebold, Vice-chair; Ruth Colwill, Past Chair; Suzanne DeLaMonte, Cynthia Garcia Coll, Lina Fruzzetti, William Rakowski, Geoffrey Russom, Gabriel Taubin, Nicolas Wey-Gomez

Guests: Onesimo Almeida, David Lindstrom, Brian Becker, Sheila Bonde, Michael MacCombie, Tyler Rosenblum, Clay Wertheimer

Professor James Dreier called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Minutes of the December 9, 2008 meeting were approved.

Professor Dreier gave a chair's report. The FEC officers met with President Simmons who updated them on the current state of the Brown budget. The hiring freeze will continue and there will be no salary increases for faculty and staff. There will be a reduction in the number of positions in most departments as well as reductions in operating expenses. Capital projects will be deferred until there is funding available. The President will present a detailed report at the February 3 faculty meeting.

Brenda Allen will be leaving Brown for another position on June 30th. It has not been determined if she will be replaced.

Professor Russom reported briefly on the last MFEC meeting. Priorities based on their survey of Brown's medical faculty were discussed. A top priority will be to address the barriers that exist for hospital-based faculty not being able to access Brown's computer software. They have already discussed the issue with Vice President Michael Pickett. The MFEC will also be investigating the issue of IRB collaboration across Brown's research sites.

Professor Colwill reported that the Committee on Faculty Equity and Diversity (CFED) is studying Brown's retirement policy that expires July 2010 to help decide if it should be renewed. Consultants will be here on February 5 to meet with CFED and other faculty constituencies. They heard from Brenda Allen about on-going searches which led to discussion about diversity at Brown.

There will be three recipients of the President's Award for Excellence in Faculty Governance this year. Their names will be announced at the February 3 faculty meeting. Professor Dreier questioned whether or not the award could be presented in absentia if a

recipient is not present. The FEC thought that would be appropriate. Professor Colwill voiced concern that all three recipients, although very deserving of the award, have served as FEC chair. This could send the wrong message to the faculty. There are other ways in which faculty governance is served other than committee service. Perhaps the FEC could suggest ways in which the Nominations subcommittee could expand on their selection process.

The University Resources Council (URC) staff members would like to increase their terms of office from two to three years. Staff representation on the URC was increased last year from one to two staff members. The FEC could see no compelling reason for the change and identified some potential problems if terms were increased to three years. The FEC's consensus was to leave the terms for staff members at two years. Professor Dreier will inform the Provost of their decision and leave it up to the URC if they wish to come to an FEC meeting to explain their rationale for the change.

Brian Becker, President of the Undergraduate Council of Students (UCS), and UCS members Tyler Rosenblum, Michael MacCombie and Clay Wertheimer presented a resolution to end enforcement of pre-requisites on Banner. A copy of the resolution was distributed with the FEC agenda. 47% of undergraduates responding to a recent University-wide poll indicated that the enforcement of pre-requisites had a negative impact on their academic experience at Brown. The UCS feels that the enforcement of pre-requisites on Banner infringes upon students' responsibility of conceiving and forming their own academic experience. However, they do feel that the existence of pre-requisites without enforcement serves as a useful guide for students.

The FEC shared some of their own positive experiences with the enforcement of pre-requisites and stressed how important it is for students to feel they can talk to a faculty member. Evidence suggests that a large number of students do not realize they have the option of getting an override in a course. Educating incoming students about courses would help. It was suggested the UCS ask Faculty about their experiences with pre-requisites and perhaps discuss it with departments. It seems that the College Curriculum Council (CCC) should examine this issue. The FEC will resume discussion of the proposed resolution in executive session later in the meeting and will provide a formal written response to the UCS as soon as possible.

Deans Sheila Bonde, David Lindstrom and Professor Onesimo Almeida were invited to discuss the annual report from the Graduate Council distributed to the FEC with the agenda. The Graduate Council and CCC joined forces to establish a new sub-committee on course review which replaced the University Curriculum Committee. The sub-committee is composed of faculty and student representatives from each committee. They meet twice monthly to review all undergraduate and graduate course proposals and their new structure helps to address needs across the University. The process of reviewing new courses has been streamlined. The FEC asked if there is any interaction between the Graduate Student Council and Graduate Council. There is some informal interaction as students on the Graduate Council sometimes bring issues to them. Graduate Council meetings are open meetings. There is a lot of interaction but no formal

meetings of both groups. Discussion ensued about course enrollments and the affect of the economic downturn on graduate student admissions. They are doing all right at the moment although stretching it a bit for now. They are funding as many graduate TA's as they have in the past and are working on some flexible strategies for retention of TA's. There are clearly some local pressures affecting TA's that are a challenge but there are no shortages of them. The Graduate Council's report will be presented at the February 3 faculty meeting.

The FEC then turned to an item not on the agenda, a proposal from Beth Doherty (Assoc. Dean of the Faculty) to amend the Faculty Rules regarding tenure procedures and recommendations in divisions, departments, programs and centers. The Handbook for Academic Administration was recently revised and sections of it that appear in the Faculty Rules must be updated to coincide with the Handbook. The FEC reviewed the suggested changes and noted that while some deadline dates were removed, others remained. Professor Dreier will check with Beth about why some dates remain.

The meeting was called to Executive Session to discuss the UCS resolution. The FEC's consensus was not to support removing Banner's enforcement of pre-requisites. Professor Dreier will inform the UCS of their decision in writing and suggest that they work with the Dean of the College, Registrar and the departments to find ways for alternative solutions.

The Research Advisory Board will be meeting to finalize the draft report on the IRB that was distributed with the agenda. The FEC was disappointed that the report did not address some of the larger issues. It appears that the definition of research is getting broader so that the IRB has their hand in every aspect of research. The FEC would like the Faculty to view the draft report for comments and suggested that it be posted to the Vice President for Research's web site for input. Then they would like to meet with Professor Ken Wong, RAB's subcommittee chair who worked on the IRB report, at a future FEC meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau
Secretary