

Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)
Meeting

January 29, 2008

3:00-5:00 p.m.

Corporation Room, University Hall

Minutes

Present: Ruth Colwill, Chair; James Dreier, Vice-chair; Ann Dill, Past Chair; James Campbell, Albert Dahlberg, Svetlana Evdokimova, Chad Jenkins, Geoffrey Russom, Gabriel Taubin

Guests: Marisa Quinn, Richard Spies

Professor Colwill called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. Minutes of the 12/11/07 meeting were approved as submitted.

Professor Colwill invited Professor Russom to give a report on the Medical Faculty Executive Committee (MFEC) meetings. The MFEC is comprised solely of hospital-based faculty whose issues are for the most part very different from campus-based faculty issues. Professor Russom's role as FEC representative on the Committee is to keep track of the major issues that affect the Medical School, particularly those that may at some point involve the FEC, and to advise the MFEC as best he can based on the FEC's experiences. There have been complaints from hospital-based faculty about the slow and cumbersome Internal Review Board (IRB) on campus in comparison to the clear and efficient IRB in the hospitals. The MFEC discussed the importance of keeping publication requirements for teaching professorships in the clinical tracks. The budget for teaching costs is a priority. Motivation among hospital-based faculty has been a problem. Academic and private use of the Brown logo was discussed and new logos created for the hospitals. Concerns have been raised about the lack of money being raised for hospital-based faculty needs in the PAE. Clinical faculty would like rights and privileges comparable to those of campus-based faculty such as tenure. The MFEC decided to put this on hold until the arrival of the new Dean of Medicine. Professor Colwill will bring this up with the Provost when the FEC officers meet with him tomorrow. Hospital-based faculty who visit Brown on a regular basis would like to have access to parking spaces when they are here. Professor Colwill asked the administration to see if at least two parking spaces can be reserved near campus where hospital-based faculty will be permitted to park for free. This is a positive step in the right direction and Professor Russom will inform the MFEC of this at their next meeting.

Professor Colwill reviewed some of the major bio-medical issues that were brought to her attention at a recent meeting with bio-med junior faculty and through the FEC's review of the Plan for Academic Enrichment that she will be discussing with Dean Adashi on 2/6. Concerns have been voiced about the 2 vs. 4 year reappointment process, lack of clarity in the criteria and process for tenure, lack of turnover of department chairs in the bio-med departments, and lack of institutional support for graduate students and growth of graduate programs. Faculty have expressed concern that the cost of a graduate student is greater than that of a postdoc who can be more productive and needs less supervision. Concern has also been raised about the high benefit rate for postdocs relative to rates at peer institutions. There is no faculty input into the bio-med budget whereas campus-based faculty have input into its budget through the University Resources

Council (URC). The FEC would be interested to know what the impact of the Medical School is on the E&G budget. The FEC officers will ask the Provost what the cost to benefit ratio is for having a Medical School at Brown. Professor Colwill thanked the Committee for its input and invited additional comments on bio-med issues by email prior to her meeting with Dean Adashi on 2/6.

Professor Stephen Foley, Secretary of the Faculty, wrote to Professor Colwill regarding power point presentations at University faculty meetings. These presentations are not a permanent record in the minutes because the materials are not distributed in hard copy nor are they available to the Secretary once a faculty meeting adjourns. Should we create an archive for this information? Perhaps a file on power point presentations can be housed in the Faculty Governance office and be accessible only to the FEC. The FEC officers plan to discuss this issue with the Provost and the President.

Faculty's response to the FEC's report on the Plan for Academic Enrichment (PAE) was overwhelmingly positive and appreciated by most with just a few negative comments. Among the latter was a complaint about the exclusion of clinical faculty needs from the report and the PAE, and a complaint about recommending delaying major new construction projects. Another faculty raised the suggestion of a survey to gauge faculty opinion on the direction of the University. Professor Colwill has encouraged faculty to bring their concerns to the 2/5 faculty meeting for discussion.

Over 100 faculty were nominated by colleagues for the FEC's pilot initiative on mentoring, 14 of them nominated two or more times. The FEC discussed several ideas for this pilot program. Department chairs will be notified of nominees in their departments. A luncheon will be planned for mentors to brainstorm with the FEC on what they would like to have for initiatives for the pilot program. Perhaps a dinner can be planned to honor the emeritus faculty nominees. A luncheon will be planned for nominees to brainstorm with the FEC on what the mentoring needs are at Brown and how they might be met.

The FEC decided they would like to continue Talk Back sessions with faculty this semester cutting back to once a month and holding sessions on Fridays instead of Mondays. Suggested topics for discussion included equity and diversity issues and better ways to organize faculty curriculum committees. Some people may hesitate speaking up at a faculty meeting about the PAE but might come to a Talk Back session and speak openly if invited. Dates will be scheduled soon.

Computing and Information Services is hosting an important strategic planning session to talk about computing needs for a five-year IT plan at Brown. Professor Taubin volunteered to attend and will report back to the FEC.

The Task Force on Undergraduate Education is releasing their report tomorrow. A faculty forum cannot be held without the FEC's review and approval of the report. This decision must be made by 2/12 in order to comply with Faculty Rules which state that faculty must have at least 7 days advance notice.

The meeting was called to Executive Session at 4:04 p.m. and regular business resumed at 4:14 p.m.

The FEC would like to reduce the number of faculty members on the Nominations Committee from 9 to 6 and propose that it no longer be a ballot-elected committee. The FEC would also like

to be more actively involved with helping the Nominations Committee to find suitable candidates for them to consider serving on faculty committees. Two separate motions would be in order—one for the decrease in membership, the other to propose that its members no longer be elected by mail ballot, both requiring changes in the Faculty Rules and Regulations. It was suggested there be a “yes/no ballot” provision in the latter motion which would afford faculty the opportunity to veto the FEC’s nominations without having to speak up at a faculty meeting. Professor Colwill will draft some language for the FEC’s review.

Professor Colwill distributed a draft of the service award certificate for comment and revision. No changes were suggested.

The FEC reviewed an organizational chart on the current status and reporting lines of the faculty curriculum committees, the missing links being the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) and the College Advisory Board (CAB), which have not been operational for about two years. The FEC discussed whether or not to dissolve the UCC and the CAB, and the possibility of creating a faculty curriculum committee. The FEC officers will discuss the status of the UCC with Deans Bergeron and Bonde tomorrow.

Richard Spies and Marisa Quinn were invited to discuss the PAE review and thanked the FEC for their impressive report. The FEC provided them with handouts of PAE feedback from graduate student representatives in the departments for which they were very appreciative. The Staff Advisory Council, Undergraduate Council of Students, and other governing bodies such as the University Resources Council and Academic Priorities Council have given their feedback on the PAE to Marisa and Richard. They will be compiling a draft report to the Corporation for President Simmons to bring to the 2/5 faculty meeting for discussion. A final draft will be prepared for presentation to the Corporation later in February.

The administration received so many good ideas about legitimate concerns and will focus on the issues that will make the best positive impact on the University. They expect to hear a lot more about the importance of the growth of the Graduate School and how it impacts other areas of the University. Marisa and Richard intend to include individual feedback with the report to the Corporation, but will first check with them to make sure they want their comments submitted with the report. A major issue for the PAE is financial aid. What is the right thing to do for the long-term? We need to achieve a good balance of priorities. Faculty seem to be generally happy with the basic priorities of the Plan but less happy about the logistics of how long projects are taking to be completed. The fund-raising campaign has gone well but just in the last couple of months, the economy has become much more uncertain. We must weigh the negative possibilities more so than before and be a bit more cautious, but we will still respond to immediate pressures and needs of the University. The report is designed to present priorities and goals for the next several years. The degree to which we seek excellence is a key component.

The FEC pointed out that there are some fixes that may not necessarily impact the budget such as getting departments back to managing their own programs and raising the morale of graduate students. Individual departmental needs were discussed. We must be careful to carry through with solving individual needs of departments and not go just halfway and stop, which could cause more damage. There is lack of communication between DGSs, graduate students, and the Graduate School. Funding restraints on graduate students have created more obstacles for them to deal with. The general consensus of the faculty is that attention to details should happen sooner rather than later. The administration will direct what resources they can to the Graduate School needs to make it the best Graduate School possible. The FEC thanked Richard and Marisa for discussing the PAE with them.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau
Secretary