

Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)
Meeting

February 12, 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: Nancy Armstrong, Kim Boekelheide, Martin Maxey

Professor Colwill called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

Professor Martin Maxey, Chair of the Tenure, Promotion and Appointments Committee (TPAC) was invited to discuss TPAC procedures with the FEC. Professors Nancy Armstrong and Kim Boekelheide, TPAC members, accompanied him. The FEC is charged with a review of faculty governance this year. They began with TPAC which they consider to be the most important Committee in the University. The FEC's draft report on its review of TPAC was shared with Professors Maxey, Armstrong, and Boekelheide prior to the meeting. The FEC Officers met with TPAC earlier this year to discuss several concerns regarding its membership and charge.

A major concern is the large number of tenured associate professors at Brown who have remained at the rank of associate professor for more than 10 years. The FEC and TPAC agree this is not a healthy situation for the University. The FEC has also voiced concern about the composition of TPAC, its membership occasionally lacking diversity and stability. There has been substantial concern raised by faculty at all ranks regarding the timing of reappointment and tenure reviews.

Discussion ensued with regard to the FEC's recommendations for changes to TPAC's charge and membership that will address these concerns. Guidelines for promotion from assistant to associate professor are very clear in departmental standards and criteria. After that, there is no timeline for specifying when a promotion to Full review should take place. TPAC drafted a proposal recommending that there be clear, written guidelines for when a promotion from associate to full professor review should be undertaken. The FEC recommends adoption of TPAC's proposal to require a promotion to Full Professor review of an associate professor after 10 years in rank. Mini reviews by departments or extra-departmental committees could be conducted every four years. A provision for opting out is crucial to make the candidate aware they can choose to delay their promotion without revealing why. Discussion occurred about requiring departments to provide a written statement to TPAC and to the candidate stating reasons why the candidate should not advance to Full Professor after six years in the rank of associate professor. Questions were raised about what should be incorporated into FRR and what should go in the Handbook for Academic Administration. Standards and criteria must conform to general rules for promotion or tenure as a minimum. Merit of accomplishments and the time frame set by the University in which accomplishments must be met were discussed. We would

not want to discourage someone from going through a rank quickly, though. For example, Brown could hire someone who has already written a book and started another. It's very possible that after teaching for two years that person could be promoted to full professor. Flexibility is crucial especially for recruitment. It was suggested that TPAC develop a plan to review cases of faculty who have already been in the rank of associate professor for more than 10 years and who have not yet been reviewed for promotion to Full. The best time for TPAC to do this would be in the fall when they are less busy. Interventions for faculty who have become unproductive and requirements for promotion were discussed.

The timing of the Committee on Diversity in Hiring's (CDH) review of tenure denials was discussed. When reviewing these cases, CDH should have access to the minutes of TPAC meetings. They should not have access to individual sheets on the votes by TPAC members. The issue of Associate professors on TPAC was discussed. It was decided not to make any changes in their eligibility. However, they must recuse themselves for the entire academic year when they are up for promotion to full review. A suggestion was made that the Dean of the Faculty contact department chairs about faculty who are approaching their sixth year in rank as associate and ask for the departments' plans for bringing those faculty forward for promotion review. The status of department's communication with candidates about the vote by TPAC was briefly discussed. It is critical to candidates to have the original TPAC charge in place. Ruth will send the original to Professor Maxey. The process was inadvertently changed in a motion approved by the Faculty in 2006.

The FEC and TPAC agreed that recommendations for changes to the Faculty Rules with regard to promotion to Full Professor should be the first item presented to the Faculty in the form of a Motion. It was suggested the FEC get the Faculty's reaction to their recommendations before presenting the Motion at a faculty meeting. Professor Colwill plans to float the TPAC proposal to the faculty at the March 4 faculty meeting. The other TPAC items, changes to TPAC's charge that have to do with initial appointments and extension of the tenure clock and TPAC's membership will be presented to Faculty after consideration of the promotion to Full Professor motion.

Professor Colwill would like to present their recommendations to the Faculty noting that it was reviewed and agreed upon in consultation with TPAC. Professor Maxey will share the report with the entire Committee. TPAC thanked the FEC for taking the review of the Faculty Governance structure so seriously.

The President approved going forward with the search for an Ombudsperson. Draft copies of the President's announcement and job description were distributed with the agenda. There is a clear sense that postdocs should be covered by the Ombuds Office, so postdocs as well as faculty should be included in the job description. President Simmons suggests that this position not be filled by a current tenured member of the Brown faculty because of a potential risk of conflict of interest. She recommends an emeritus faculty or someone completely independent of the University. Should the job description be reworded so that it does not completely exclude current faculty? FEC officers will be discussing the job description and appointment of the search committee with the President tomorrow. Professor Colwill asked the FEC to think about who would be good candidates for the search committee.

Minutes of the 1/29/08 meeting were approved as submitted.

The meeting was called to Executive Session from 3:35-4:40 p.m.

The FEC officers recently discussed the idea of a Provost's Faculty Leadership Award. This was prompted by a suggestion from a senior faculty member for an annual award to recognize an outstanding department chair. There was discussion about broadening the pool for such an award. Department chairs, faculty mentors, and others who have shown exceptional leadership and dedication could be considered as recipients of the award. It was suggested the FEC solicit nominations from which they can create a shortlist for the Provost's consideration. Concern was voiced about the assessment of department chairs. There could be a problem with small vs. large departments. It was noted this will be a broader award for leadership and not confined to department chairs. The FEC Officers will make the suggestion to the Provost when they next meet.

Professor Beth Bauer, Vice-chair of the University Resources Council (URC), was invited to give a report on how the Committee has been functioning in the past year. Professor Bauer could not provide statistics in terms of budget recommendations because the final draft of the URC's report to the President has not yet been approved. Faculty, students and staff have contributed greatly to the discussion this year. In her opinion, URC's operating procedures worked well promoting goals of the Plan for Academic Enrichment (PAE). President Simmons spoke to the URC about the PAE who provided feedback to Vice President Spies and Marisa Quinn as did other faculty bodies throughout the University including the FEC. As individuals, URC members do not have a real impact on budget decisions but voices are heard and some voices have made a difference. The URC completed the final draft of their report to the President which will be posted to the Provost's web site soon. Resources for academic priorities and new programs were discussed. Where should final approval for resources for new concentrations come from? The URC does not make decisions that would impact smaller budgets. It oversees the larger picture of the University-wide budget. If it does not fall under jurisdiction of the URC or the Academic Priorities Committee (APC), whose responsibility is it? Professor Bauer will attend the March 4 faculty meeting to answer questions that might arise regarding the URC's Report to the President.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau
Secretary