

**Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)
Meeting**

April 28, 2009

3:00-5:00pm

Corporation Room, University Hall

Minutes

Present: James Dreier, Chair; Gerald Diebold, Vice Chair; Ruth Colwill, Past Chair; William Rakowski, Geoffrey Russom, Nicolas Wey-Gomez, Cynthia Garcia-Coll

Guests: Kim Boekelheide, Gregory Elliott, Christina Furtado, Flora Keshgegian, Vincent Tompkins

The meeting was called to order at 3:09 p.m. Minutes of the 4/14/09 meeting were approved.

Professor Dreier gave the Chair's report. In their exit interview, the NEASC reported that the tenure rate is too high at Brown. General discussion ensued with regard to tenure-track hires whereby two questions were raised by the FEC: (1) What does NEASC think the deficiency is that results in a higher tenure rate; and (2) Is there any way that they can show us how this makes Brown worse?

The junior faculty luncheons this month were very productive and enjoyed by all. General discussion allowed the assistant professors to speak freely to the FEC about their concerns. One individual told Professor Dreier that her main concern is lack of travel funds. Each FEC has something to report and will send their feedback to Professor Dreier for the record. Annual reports of junior faculty luncheon discussions will be kept from year to year from now on.

Professor Gregory Elliott and Dean Christina Furtado presented the annual report from the Standing Committee on the Academic Code. The written report submitted with the FEC agenda is already outdated. Six new cases have arisen since then with more expected before year's end. The nature of the cases was discussed, strong ethnic motivation being the cause of many of them. The students involved often act out of desperation and confess almost immediately to their wrong-doing. The stress level of students is high and the poor economy could be partly to blame. The Committee maintains a standard of compassion, being fair yet firm. They try to understand the reasons for students' actions and must determine if they are pre-meditated or spontaneous. Once the Committee makes a final decision on a case, it's up to the faculty member how he/she wishes to grade the student in their class. The Committee does not interfere with a faculty member's ruling about a student's course. Professor Colwill noted it would be helpful to know the gender breakdown for the cases. Dean Furtado will provide the FEC with that information. The Committee has endorsed several initiatives to raise awareness among students and faculty about Brown's Academic Code. An on-line tutorial for incoming first-year students has been made an integral part of the Orientation program for incoming classes. In an effort to educate faculty on best practices to foster academic integrity, the Committee chairs have conducted workshops organized by the Dean of the College in conjunction with the Sheridan Center. An outreach program for faculty is currently being pursued by vice-chair, Professor Tom Doeppner. The FEC would like to help in this endeavor. Perhaps something can be done through the departments. The annual report of the Committee will be presented at the May 5 faculty meeting.

Professor Kim Boekeheide was invited to present an interim report from the Tenure, Promotion and Appointment Committee (TPAC) submitted with the FEC agenda. TPAC is still meeting and will submit a final written report to the FEC later in the semester. The full report will be presented by Professor Joan Richards, the incoming chair, at the October faculty meeting. TPAC was decisive in its opinions and extremely hard-working this year. They've taken a different approach with looking at assistant professor promotions to associate with tenure by changing the process of reviewing the tenure dossiers. The dossiers are divided between subgroups of TPAC, missing information identified and corrected, and then discussed by the entire Committee before submitting to Associate Dean Beth Doherty. This process is done over a period of two months, a more thorough process and a more satisfying experience for TPAC because information is complete for final review by the Committee. TPAC's consensus is that this new process is a very positive change and will continue. There was only one negative recommendation for reappointment from a department as indicated on the written interim report. Whatever TPAC heard from NEASC's assessment of Brown's tenure rate will be noted in their final report. The Provost's decisions are still pending on the assistant to associate promotions, TPAC to hear from him in person soon.

Professor Dreier reported that the Nominations Committee is having difficulty finding someone to replace Professor Stephen Foley as Secretary of the Faculty. They also need help finding two faculty in social sciences for the FEC vice-chair slate to complete the FEC ballot. The FEC suggested some names for Secretary of the Faculty that will be submitted to Professor Simmons, Nominations Committee Chair. Perhaps Dean Vohra can help with the FEC vice-chair candidates.

Ms. Flora Keshgegian was invited to present a draft Ombudsperson report, the statistics in the addendum to be revised for presentation at the May 5 faculty meeting. The report covered general activities of the Office during its third year from May 2008-April 2009 including the number of people who used the Ombudsperson services, the reasons for contact and concerns presented, and other activities such as negotiation workshops for faculty and postdocs offered by Ms. Keshgegian. Many concerns involved faculty vs. department chairs which indicated to her that department chairs need more training. She sees fewer assistant professors than faculty in other ranks which has remained consistent over the years. When asked by the FEC how she would rate the success of her help, Ms. Keshgegian replied that half the time people come to her too late; the problem has gone beyond conflict resolution and they want strategies. She hopes that the University will consider where the Ombudsperson's position belongs—who owns it? The position needs roots. There needs to be more clarity about what advocacy means in the Ombuds Office. The availability of the Ombudsperson should be communicated to faculty in a broader sense rather than just at faculty meetings. Flora suggested notifying faculty via bulk email. The FEC suggested it be listed on Brown's homepage under "O" in the A-Z listings noting the office is temporarily closed effective July 1, 2009 and will reopen in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, Valerie Wilson (new Director of Institutional Diversity effective July 1), Dean Vohra or the FEC can hear faculty's concerns depending on the situations.

Deputy Provost Vincent Tompkins presented a power point presentation on the FY11 Budget Plan. Financial planning had to be re-calibrated much further into the future because of the economic crisis. Endowments and fund-raising have been adversely affected. Despite the challenges, Brown will remain focused on the Plan for Academic Enrichment. He spoke about the impact the economic downturn will have on the E & G budget. The annual growth rate is projected to decrease from 5% to 2% so we anticipate spending \$95M less than originally planned. The impact on Bio-Med's budget is less because they are more heavily dependent on sponsored funding which is good. They expect a 3% annual increase and only a \$10M decrease.

In lieu of constructing a new medical education building, Bio-Med is considering a renovation project which will substantially lower the cost. Mr. Tompkins went on to describe the preliminary E & G estimates and reduction targets.

The Organizational Review Committee (ORC) has been expanded to include more faculty, staff and students, a more representative and inclusive body. The ORC will be concentrating on how to effectively reduce operating expenditures and has already developed a preliminary list of where to look and will gather data over the summer. In September, the ORC will establish teams to evaluate data, develop options, solicit input and will present FY11 budget recommendations to the Cabinet. The hiring freeze on filling positions will be maintained to minimize impact on existing positions. Any future cuts in staff positions will be focused largely on staff areas that are the largest. Energy savers will be considered and policies reviewed on how much money is being spent. Recommendations to reduce energy expenses as well as other operating expenses will be made to the URC in the fall. The FY11 proposed budget will be presented to the President before winter break, and the Corporation will determine the final FY11 budget in February. There was some discussion regarding anticipated growth in sponsored research and seed funding. Deputy Provost Tompkins will visit again with the FEC in the fall to discuss the progress made toward budget recommendations for FY11.

Associate Provost Brenda Allen presented the annual report from the Diversity Advisory Board (DAB) submitted with the agenda. A Diversity Action Plan for Brown University, Strategic Indicators and Measurements, was attached. The Board operated with no vice-chair last year after several attempts were made to elect one. This is a problem the FEC should address with Valerie Wilson next year. She reviewed the statistics of a senior student survey on their perception of diversity in the campus experience in a general way. The survey showed how the incoming student enrollment and six-year graduate rate changed over time. African Americans are more likely to be dismissed than whites. Resources affect this. A better advising structure for students is being studied which has already resulted in some positive changes in the Dean of the College office. Next year, the DAB will look at more markers of success. The FEC would like to see perceptions of diversity of Faculty added to the survey. Discussion ensued with regard to debates about underrepresented vs. minority status and how origins fit into the picture. The DAB Report will be presented at the May 5 faculty meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau
Secretary