

**Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)  
Meeting**

**September 23, 2008**

**3:00-5:00 p.m.**

**Corporation Room, University Hall**

**Minutes**

Present: James Dreier, Chair; Ruth Colwill, Past Chair; Gerald Diebold, Vice-chair; Susan Allen, Cynthia Garcia Coll, Penelope Dennehy, Geoffrey Russom, Gabriel Taubin, Nicolas Wey-Gomez

Guests: Katherine Bergeron, Jack Wright

Professor James Dreier opened the meeting at 3:05 p.m. Minutes of the 9/9/08 FEC meeting were approved as submitted.

Professor Dreier gave a chair's report. The President has concerns about the portion of the grievance procedures pertaining to cases of sexual harassment, and issues have been raised by the General Counsel as well. Until these matters are resolved, the motion to revise grievance procedures in the Faculty Rules is postponed. The Provost is expecting a proposal from Jane Eisen, Associate Dean of Medicine, to divide the Division of Clinical Neurosciences into two departments—Neurology and Neurosurgery. It will be posted to the Provost's web site at which time the FEC will become involved in the review process. The APC will consider the proposal at their meeting on October 21. Another proposal is on the horizon—the Division of Engineering is considering changing its name to School of Engineering. A budget proposal will be needed for the name change. If FEC members have concerns about the proposal when it is submitted, they are to let Prof. Dreier know so he can pass them on to the Provost. The proposal for tenure at the Watson Institute is not being considered at this time and may be revisited once a permanent director of the Institute has been appointed.

The Early Faculty Retirement policy is due to expire in January 2010. Last year, Brenda Allen was working on the possibility of putting more money into it. Professor Dreier plans to follow up with Brenda to see where this ended up. Last year, the Faculty Affairs Committee recommended an increase in the Tuition Aid Benefit which has remained stagnant for some time while tuition increased by 30%. These are issues the new Committee on Faculty Equity and Diversity (CFED) could work on.

Katherine Bergeron, Chair of the College Curriculum Council (CCC) and Professor Jack Wright, CCC vice-chair, were invited to discuss the Council's annual report distributed with the FEC agenda. The CCC accomplished a lot of work last academic year through several subcommittees: the Executive Committee, Joint Subcommittee of the CCC and Graduate Council on Undergraduate and Graduate Instruction, and the Subcommittees on Enrollment Limits, Concentrations and Curricular Development. The Executive Committee reviewed subcommittee assignments and set agendas for the meetings. The Joint Subcommittee of the CCC and Graduate Council evaluated new proposals for the undergraduate and graduate curriculums and designed a new course proposal which is in the final stages of completion. The Subcommittee on Enrollment Limits was formed to address concerns raised last spring about enrollment restrictions imposed by the new Banner registration system. The Subcommittee did excellent work but will need to spend more time this year on developing clearer policies about limited and open enrollments.

New language for the enrollment policies was introduced to the departments last year, but they did not know how to interpret it or what to do with it. We need to get more communication up front about the enrollment needs of the departments. The Dean hopes that by the end of this academic year, faculty will be able to provide their students with a pin number so they can register for courses themselves. This will be built into the Banner system and should provide a more positive approach to student registration. The Subcommittee on Concentrations screened requests for changes in concentration requirements, reviewed Independent Concentrations and forwarded them to the CCC for final approval. The Subcommittee on Curricular Development evaluated faculty requests for Course Development grants and Salomon proposals and developed deadlines for their submission.

This academic year, the CCC will be tackling a full examination of concentration programs at Brown with a group of departments who have recently undergone an external departmental review. The CCC will be in touch with the department chairs about the scope of the work involved. There is a need for a greater sense of the number of concentrations at Brown. The CCC will be talking with departments about their specific needs and will educate students about concentrations. Brown currently does not offer independent study during summer session. International students would like to exercise this option, so the CCC will be discussing how to provide this opportunity to students enrolled in summer session. A questionnaire was sent to department chairs about the role of TA's in their departments which will be studied this year. Other topics to be considered include Honors, Magna Calculation and "S with distinction", and combined and dual degrees.

The Undergraduate Council of Students (UCS) officers recently expressed concern to the FEC executive officers about pre-requisites. Dean Bergeron was surprised since the student members on CCC are very active participants. The UCS hopes they will be kept better informed by their CCC student representatives.

Dean Bergeron would like to report to the FEC again next semester about the CCC's accomplishments in the current academic year. She will be invited back in March. The Dean will be presenting the CCC annual report at either the October 7 or November 4 faculty meeting.

The FEC discussed the Final report from the Task Force on Undergraduate Education recently released to the Brown Community. The UCS shared some interesting thoughts about the Report with the FEC. They commented unfavorably about the calendar change for orientation and how inconvenient it is for them. Should it be changed back to the former orientation schedule? They voiced enthusiasm for advising ideas in the Report. Students feel they are not well-linked with advisors who share their interests. The FEC discussed how concentration open houses used to be well-attended but recently have been poorly attended due to an apparent lack of student interest. Students feel they cannot have a serious discussion at an advising concentration forum and seem to prefer one-on-one advice. Sophomore advising is particularly un-effective. How has this generation of students changed? Does it have to do with their backgrounds such as family expectations? Does the Report indicate that this problem will be addressed? We need the University's support for advising such as more money for supplies to support research. Including students in faculty's research is a good way to get students interested and is an integral part of the undergraduate experience. Perhaps these needs should be brought to the Corporation's attention.

Prof. Dreier continued his chair's report. He wrote to Vice President Clyde Briant about the progress made on the Research Advisory Board's report on the IRB. To date, he has not gotten a response.

Junior faculty luncheon meetings were very successful last year. The FEC will plan more junior faculty events this year. The FEC officers will be meeting with Brenda Allen about the Ombudsperson search. The individual best suited for the part-time position refused to accept the job offer unless it was full-time. The scope of the position needs to be discussed to determine if it can be broadened to include staff and graduate students. Is there enough money to support a full-time position? Perhaps contributions from various constituencies could help support the position. Can one person handle faculty, student and staff issues? There are also reporting issues to consider. Would the Ombudsperson still be reporting to the FEC or to all constituencies who volunteer to help support a full-time Ombudsperson? We may run the risk of losing faculty oversight of the position if it were to be full-time. How do we conceive this office and the position, and get the right person for the job? Perhaps we should try another pilot position for a full-time Ombudsperson who would oversee faculty, graduate students and staff. The FEC officers are meeting with President Simmons tomorrow and will discuss this with her.

The FEC discussed a chemical hygiene policy regarding liability for risk that was brought to their attention by Professor Diebold. The FEC would like to know who wrote it. Risk Management has seen it and thought it made no sense yet nothing has been done to change it. Should the Policy be reviewed by the Research Advisory Board? It was clear the FEC needed more information about the Policy. Professor Diebold will prepare an outline of the Policy's history for discussion at the next FEC meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau  
Secretary