

**Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)
Meeting**

**October 26, 2010
3:00-5:00 p.m.
Corporation Room, University Hall**

Minutes

Present: Susan Allen, Cynthia Garcia Coll (Chair), Reid Cooper, Evelyn Hu-Dehart, Ben Raphael, Harold Roth, Philip Rosen, Peter Shank (Vice Chair)

Guests: Maitrayee Bhattacharyya, Nancy Jacobs, Mike Kosterlitz, Stephen Lassonde, Melinda Rabb, Kathy Takayama, Corey Walker,

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. Approval of the October 12 FEC minutes was deferred until the 10/26 FEC meeting.

Prof. Nancy Jacobs and Kathy Takayama, Director of the Sheridan Center, joined the FEC to discuss on-line teaching evaluations. Prof. Jacobs began by noting that the History Department spent a lot of time revising their teaching evaluation form last year which is working very well. If they have to go to the standard on-line teaching evaluation proposed by the DoC, much of the data they seek will be lost. She feels that responsibility for teaching evaluations lies with the departments noting that to implement the DoC's on-line teaching evaluation will require a change to the Faculty Rules and Regulations. Prof. Garcia Coll pointed out that the Dean reported to the FEC that departments can customize the on-line evaluation form to suit their own needs. Prof. Jacob's concern is with qualitative questions. Could they add them at the top of the form or is one limited to a particular section of the form? She is not against the on-line form but wants to know how it will help her department and feels there are structural questions that need to be addressed.

Director Takayama, speaking on behalf of the Sheridan Center, gave a brief history of how they became involved in the process and the extent to which they were involved in providing guidance to the Science Faculty Group and the DoC. Prof. Jan Tullis has worked closely with Ms. Takayama to facilitate the Science Faculty Group, specifically with regard to the measurement of learning gains, and the DoC continues to work with them on learning gains questions for the sciences. Dean Bergeron just recently met with them and took several of their suggestions into consideration. A teaching evaluation should be measuring effectiveness of teaching as well as teaching performance. Prof. Roth noted that some departments are more qualitative while others quantitative in their challenges about the form. He wonders if on-line teaching evaluation would help TPAC. It may be beneficial for the Committee to know if a teacher is well-evaluated as this could be tied to tenure reviews and possibly pay raises. Prof. Rosen suggested the Sheridan Center visit with departments and talk with them about designing forms to meet their specific needs. Ms. Takayama responded that various departments are currently

going through this to a certain extent. We need to think about what we value about teaching in our institutions. Evaluation forms should enable faculty to learn how they can improve on their teaching. In summary, there are two main areas of concern: (1) the nature of the questionnaire, and (2) the need to change the Faculty Rules in order to enable implementation of the uniform on-line evaluation form. The FEC will decide what to do and get back to them.

Prof. Corey Walker was invited to discuss the annual report from the Advisory Committee on Honorary Degrees. He described the committee's charge noting that 6-8 nominations are submitted to the Board of Fellows each year, the Fellows making the final decision on who is awarded an honorary degree. This fall, the committee engaged in intelligent discussion on the merits of each candidate, some related to special events at Brown. The committee operated this year without graduate student representation, but the two undergraduate members were a great asset to the committee. 40-50% of the Honorary Degree Committee's nominees are chosen for a degree each year which is admirable. Prof. Walker will present the annual report at the December 7 faculty meeting.

Profs. Mike Kosterlitz and Melinda Rabb, Committee on Faculty Equity and Diversity (CFED) chair and vice-chair respectively, were invited to discuss a proposal to change the CFED's charge. Three years ago, the President asked CFED to look into procedural fairness. The committee would like to bring the Faculty Rules into line with the CFED's current practice. Right now, CFED is limited to procedural fairness as mandated in the Corporation's Statement for Nondiscrimination. They are meeting with the President and Provost on November 5 to discuss one of their proposed changes dealing with CFED's consideration of the Provost's procedures when he overturns a decision on a case. Should the Provost's procedures be subject to CFED's review? It seems the Provost should be held accountable for his actions. The President has overruled a Provost's decision in the past for not granting tenure. Is it necessary for the CFED to have the ability to review the Provost's procedures in order for them to their job? Prof. Kosterlitz feels there should be written procedures for the Provost to follow, that he should keep written record of what he does. Prof. Rabb agrees that the Provost's actions should be documented and, although confidential, they should be transparent. Pressure of tenure processes has concentrated on earlier processes of TPAC. It puts a lot of pressure on the President to make a ruling. There must be a better way to share that responsibility at a later stage in review of tenure denials. The reason we have a CFED at Brown is because of a documented discrimination in Brown's history. Prof. Roth who chaired TPAC in the past noted there was a case several years ago when the Grievance Committee reversed a decision of tenure denial by TPAC, the Provost and the President. He suggested Prof. Kosterlitz follow up with Prof. Keach who chaired the Grievance Committee at the time. The FEC officers are invited to meet with the CFED, President and Provost on Nov. 5th.

Dean Stephen Lassonde joined the FEC for discussion about the annual report from the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS). The CAS is doing a much better job of following up with students on warning which has resulted in the decline in numbers of students on warning/serious warning over the past year. There is better intervention now with students who are having psychological problems, and they are tracking students who

have returned from medical leave and other leaves to make sure they have reconnected. There is still a higher percentage of underrepresented minorities including first generation students who go on warning. The FEC asked if there is a coincidence of low income that could be contributing to the overall rates, or perhaps the distance away from home. The rates are higher with specific groups and the CAS is looking into intersections of these attributes. Students are reacting favorably to programs that are designed to help them. The CAS is currently piloting a Team Enhanced Advising and Mentoring Program looking at advising and academic interests and trying to make matches based on these lines. They have received a grant to start a program where faculty advisors can teach other faculty about advising. Faculty advisors who have been participating in the program have been very effective. There are many faculty interested in advising. It's too early to tell what kind of impact this program will have. Prof. Roth noted that committed advisors are often not recognized and asked if the Dean of the College sends a list of faculty advisors to the Dean of the Faculty. Dean Lassonde said he would check into this. Discussion ensued with regard to the statistical data attached to the CAS's report. Dean Lassonde noted a couple of new categories for students on warning. Dean Lassonde will report at the November 2 faculty meeting.

The FEC then discussed what their next steps should be for the on-line teaching evaluations. We need to make sure Dean Bergeron is aware of the need for a change to the Faculty Rules, that there are technological and standardization issues to consider.

The meeting was called to Executive Session at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau
Secretary of the FEC