

Faculty Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, September 28, 2004

Present: Michel-André Bossy (Chair), James Egan, Anne Fausto-Sterling, Donald Forsyth, Nancy Jacobs, William Rakowski, Michael Rosen, Chung-I Tan, Esther Whitfield, Andrew Brem

Guests: Kurt Raaflaub, Robert Zimmer (Provost)

Professor Bossy called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m. Minutes of the 5/11/04 meeting were approved as submitted. Professor Forsyth noted that the 9/14/04 minutes should read that the Policy Committee for the Banner Polaris Project met to discuss and review issues that would not be addressed by commercial vendors. The FEC approved the minutes as amended.

Professor Bossy gave a Chair's Report. He asked for a volunteer to serve as FEC representative on the Biomedical Faculty Council, and Professor Forsyth volunteered to continue serving for another year.

The FEC officers recently met with President Simmons and discussed how the Ombudsperson function could help with the promotion process. It is important that this person be neutral and independent. The President suggested that professional associations be consulted for suggestions on how to proceed. They talked about the need to develop a new system of communication between faculty and administration in order to adequately address departmental issues and about the proposal for initiating new departments, programs and centers.

At the faculty agenda meeting, the Provost voiced concern that the proposal for a new Ph.D. Program in Computer Music and Multimedia made it to the October faculty meeting agenda without the APC seeing it. Even though there appeared to be no financial implications, he felt the APC should have had the opportunity to review it. The FEC needs to come up with a proposal to clarify the procedure by which new Ph.D. programs are reviewed and approved.

The Rosenberger Medal of Honor plaque is being relocated from the John Hay Library to the first floor of University Hall somewhere near the Vice President for Finance office. Russell Carey asked for the FEC's opinion about the relocation, and they had no objections.

Professor Egan did some research on web sites about ombudspersons and defined an ombudsperson as described by the International Organization of Ombudspersons. The Ombudsperson receives complaints and runs workshops and classes to help people learn how to resolve problems. It is a trend that is gaining strength particularly in private schools and in the Ivies. Professor Egan will continue his research by contacting Princeton and other universities about their models. The FEC feels that it would be useful to have an Ombudsperson at Brown for both faculty and staff.

Provost Zimmer was invited to speak with the FEC about the proposed Faculty Retirement Policy and clinical faculty appointments. He would like the FEC's feedback on the proposal before it goes to the Board of Fellows. The Colwill Committee Report on the Retirement Policy was well done and well received by the faculty when it was made public. Accessibility to group medical insurance and the language in the policy regarding discretionary procedures by the Provost were discussed. Provost Zimmer assured the FEC that the language with regard to his discretion in individual cases was designed to curtail the occurrence of this action, not to eliminate it. The FEC views the proposed policy as an incentive to retire at age 66 and feels it will have a significant impact if the Board of Fellows passes it. The URC still needs to review the policy to

understand the financial implications. Provost Zimmer wants to be able to tell the Board of Fellows that various groups within the University have reviewed and approved the policy and hopes to bring it before the Fellows for final approval in December. The old policy is still in effect until 6/30/05.

An academic departmental review will be conducted to look at the way administrative support is organized for academic departments, and the Provost is forming a committee to do this. The draft charge was recently distributed by e-mail for input from the FEC and department chairs, and Provost Zimmer is open to suggestions. It was suggested the Provost contact the Staff Advisory Committee for suggestions as well.

The FEC just received materials related to the issue of clinical faculty and decided they needed time to review it in order to have a meaningful discussion with the Provost. The Provost plans to distribute the document to faculty via e-mail prior to the 10/5 faculty meeting and will bring the issue up in his report at the faculty meeting for discussion. Provost Zimmer noted that the faculty does not have to vote on the clinical faculty issue. The APC has endorsed it, but he would like faculty input on the issue as well.

Professor Kurt Raaflaub was invited to discuss a proposal for a joint Ph.D. Program in Ancient History, an interdisciplinary program in ancient history established jointly by the departments of Classics and History at Brown. This Ph.D. program will replace the program in ancient history currently existing in the History Department and will offer an alternative to the undifferentiated Ph.D. program in the Classics Department. Professor Raaflaub described the purpose, definition, and supervision of the program as described in the written proposal distributed to the FEC prior to the meeting. Discussion ensued with regard to the application process, criteria for admission, and funding. There is no major expense involved and it will take one more year to complete the course because of its complexity. The FEC recommended it be brought to the faculty at the November 2 faculty meeting.

Professor Bossy asked Professor Rakowski if he would represent the FEC at MFEC meetings, and Professor Rakowski said he would give it a try.

The annual reports from the Graduate Council and Commencement Speakers met with FEC approval and will be included on the 10/5 faculty meeting agenda.

The FEC discussed committee replacements for the Tenure, Promotions and Appointments Committee, College Curriculum Council, and Campus Life Advisory Board. Professor Bossy will send a bulk e-mail asking for volunteers to serve on the Diversity Advisory Board and Campus Police and Security Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau
Secretary