

Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)
Meeting

October 24, 2006

3:00-5:00 p.m.

Corporation Room, University Hall

Minutes

Present: Ann Dill, Chair; Ruth Colwill, Vice-chair; Bob Pelcovits, Past Chair; Lundy Braun, Svetlana Evdokimova, Nancy Jacobs, Chad Jenkins, Jody Rich, William Rakowski, and Geoffrey Russom.

Guests: William Beeman, Sheila Bonde, Mary Ann Doane, Beth Doherty, Daniel Egan, Gerald Guralnik, William Heindel, David Sheinberg, Rajiv Vohra, Peter Weber

The meeting began at 3:05 p.m. The 10/10/06 minutes were approved as submitted.

Professor Dill gave a chair's report. A faculty member on the Brown University Community Council (BUCC) recently resigned, so the FEC must find a replacement. It was determined that the BUCC is in need of more female faculty members. The FEC will think about some names and send their suggestions to Professor Dill. Terms of office for current BUCC faculty members were not determined at the time they were appointed to serve, so they were recently polled by Cheryl Moreau for when they would like to roll off—2007 or 2008. The terms will then be arranged in a staggered fashion to ensure continuity among faculty members.

The Grievance Committee motion was removed from the November 7 faculty meeting agenda because the FEC's proposal for allowing runners up to serve as alternates is contrary to Roberts Rules of Order. Professor Dill will speak with Joan Lusk, Nominations Committee Chair, about how to draft some new language for the motion that will satisfy the Nominations Committee's needs and conform to Roberts Rules.

The survey of faculty committees and advisory boards has been distributed to all committee chairs, Professor Dill keeping notes. There are currently 160 faculty members serving on faculty committees, a very high number. The FEC will consider whether or not some committees can function successfully with fewer faculty members.

A draft of the Rosenberger Medal of Honor solicitation memo was discussed and revised to include a sentence stating that under normal circumstances, the Medal will be awarded to the recipient in person during Commencement. A question was raised as to whether or not the Medal can be awarded posthumously. Ms. Moreau will research the files as this may have been discussed in previous years.

Members of the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) and Dean Vohra were invited to discuss the FEC's concerns about the enhanced sabbatical leave policy. Most of the discussion was relative to Items 1 (b) and 1 (c) of the proposal distributed with the FEC agenda, flexibility being a major concern. It is important to be as flexible as possible in order to provide incentives for faculty in all divisions to apply for external funding. Dean Vohra heard from many department chairs about

problems they feel may arise. Flexibility in their decision-making when discussing leaves with faculty in their department was a common concern, so there must be flexibility on all sides. The FAC spent a fair amount of time surveying chairs about length of time between sabbaticals and what can be tolerated. It is important that teaching not suffer. Department chairs should be able to determine teaching needs for their own department with some freedom to tweak it while being careful not grant too many leaves. Banking courses for relief in teaching could be one way to resolve some problems. The FEC does not suggest banking as the sole solution. Dean Vohra will be discussing this option more with department chairs and others. It may be helpful to work out some scenarios to help faculty understand what reduction in salary would mean to them. Perhaps impact on benefits could be specified in the Policy.

There was concern voiced about the proposed policy applying to tenured faculty only and not addressing how the lecturers and senior lecturers will be affected. Some senior lecturers have been at Brown for 30 years. Beth Doherty, Director of Faculty Affairs, noted that lecturers and senior lecturers are entitled to take sabbatical for scholarly leaves as written in the Handbook for Academic Administration. It must be approved that this is for scholarly work.

Professor Dill asked the FAC why the first option for a fully funded semester's sabbatical after nine semesters of teaching was rejected, as it would seem that such a proposal would benefit faculty across the disciplines. Peter Weber, past FAC chair, responded that based on research data from the Dean of the Faculty's office, offering a sabbatical more frequently, even if not fully funded, would do more for the majority of faculty. The FEC asked if they could see the data from institutions using the second option (a partially funded sabbatical) especially with regard to the percentage of faculty in the humanities that would be affected. Beth Doherty will work on preparing this data.

Dean Vohra plans to send a concise list of faculty who are eligible for sabbatical to the department chairs well enough in advance so the chair can think about it ahead of time. Teaching needs in the department is really what drives the need for flexibility in awarding sabbaticals. There has to be some trust placed in the chair to make the right decision for their department's needs.

A venue for wider discussion among faculty has been established on the Faculty Governance web site by posting the enhanced policy under password protection and encouraging faculty to use the Sounding Board for discussion. Faculty may also contact Professor Dill directly with their comments and concerns.

Dean Vohra would like to have a final draft of the leave policy ready in time for presentation to the Corporation in February. This means that all parties involved in drafting this policy need to come to some sort of mutual agreement about the final draft by the end of the first semester. The Provost will need to think about the financial implications. The FEC will need to decide by the 11/14 FEC meeting if they want to include it on the December faculty meeting agenda as a recommendation to the Corporation. The FEC feels that in order for the faculty to accept the idea of the enhanced leave policy, language about flexibility must be built into the policy for presentation to them at the December faculty meeting. The FAC will work on drafting a revised policy.

The meeting was called to Executive Session from 4:10-4:30 p.m. to discuss the COACHE data, a survey of junior faculty at other institutions.

Professor Pelcovits gave a brief update on electronic balloting, which is expected to be ready in time for the spring committee elections.

Professor Sheinberg and the FEC discussed the annual report from the Diversity Advisory Board (DAB). The DAB focused on 4 major issues during the past year: (1) proposed changes to the Minority Peer Counseling Program, (2) proposed reconfiguration of the Office of Disability Support Services, (3) a draft diversity action plan developed by Brenda Allen, and (4) two specific areas of diversity—socio-economic class and religious life. As DAB vice-chair, Professor Sheinberg is involved with setting the meeting agendas, with the Board interested in discussing whatever is on Brenda Allen's plate, and she interested in issues that faculty committee members wish to bring to the table. The hiring and retention of Latino faculty and the fact that Brown's Latino students far out number Latino faculty have not been discussed by the DAB. Professor Sheinberg questioned whether or not it is under the purview of the Board as he views the charge to be somewhat broader, covering issues that affect the entire Brown Community. Wouldn't it be the primary responsibility of the Committee on Diversity in Hiring (CDH)? This seems to be a universal issue, so a coordinated discussion between the CDH and DAB might be useful. Professor Sheinberg will bring this to Brenda Allen's attention. He also plans to speak with her about the frequency of Board meetings and whether it really serves the DAB's purpose. Professor Sheinberg will present the annual report at the November 7 faculty meeting.

Deans Sheila Bonde and William Heindel joined the FEC for discussion about the Graduate Council's annual report. Highlights of the report included approval of a new 5th-Year Master's Program in Biostatistics, Program in Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship Engineering, and a Ph.D. program in Slavic Studies. Graduate student grading policy with regard to whether or not to add pluses and minuses to A, B and C grades was a hot topic for debate on campus last year. There is a grading policy for undergraduates in the Faculty Rules; there is none for graduates. In the absence of their own policy, graduate students adopted the policy in effect for undergraduates. After considerable discussion, the Graduate Council recommended the use of pluses and minuses in the grading of graduate students. The Council discussed other policy issues and approved several new courses last year. The Graduate School has completed an inventory of all its degrees programs and instituted regular meetings of all master's DGSs and chairs of departments with master's programs. The Council is interested in the FEC's feedback on issues about master's education.

Dean Bonde and the Dean of the College are discussing the possibility of somehow combining the work of the Graduate Council and the College Curriculum Council. The Graduate School will be taking a fresh look at how it uses funds for masters and doctoral support. Dean Bonde plans to have a joint discussion about lack of evaluations of new programs with the Academic Priorities Committee (APC) and to solicit feedback from department chairs, conduct University-wide discussion, and do an evaluation of its impact on the curriculum. The Graduate Council, APC, and academic deans will work on this collectively. Dean Heindel will present the annual report to the Faculty on November 7.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau

Secretary