

Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) Meeting

November 27, 2007
3:00-5:00 p.m.
Corporation Room, University Hall

Minutes

Present: Ruth Colwill, Chair; James Dreier, Vice-chair; James Campbell, Albert Dahlberg, Svetlana Evdokimova, Geoffrey Russom, Robert Smith, Gabriel Taubin

Guests: Susan Miller, Steve Clemens, Tim Leshan

Professor Colwill called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. Approval of the 11/13/07 minutes was postponed until the next FEC meeting.

Professors Susan Miller and Steven Clemens were invited to report on the work of the ad hoc Committee on Leave Policy for (Research) Faculty. This ad hoc committee was charged by the FEC to assess equity concerns of Brown (Research) faculty who currently do not have access to scholarly leaves. (Research) faculty members contribute the same proportion of gross salary dollars to fringe benefits as faculty who hold tenurable rank, the fringe rate being 30% in 2007. The Committee feels that since approximately 20% of the fringe benefits are used to support scholarly leave, this represents an inequity in benefits for (Research) faculty that should be addressed.

They began their study by reviewing the description of (Research) faculty as defined in the Handbook for Academic Administration and then collected data on (Research) faculty from Brown's Benefits Office, HR Records, and Office for Sponsored Projects. There are approximately 105 campus-based (Research) faculty at Brown. To date, the Committee has compiled data on 59 of the 105. There are no data yet for 139 Medical School Faculty. They studied the type of benefit for the various categories of (Research) faculty in relation to dollars contributed and provided the FEC with some statistics, some of which had to be estimated until additional data could be obtained. There are various categories of (Research) faculty such as Research Staff and Senior Fellows. The differences between the qualifications for (Research) faculty and Fellows were discussed. A web search on some other universities revealed that they do offer leave policies for non-tenure track faculty.

Discussion ensued with regard to equity issues and possible ways to increase scholarly leaves for (Research) faculty. Reporting lines for (Research) faculty and salary supplements from grants were also discussed. The Administration will want to know what our peers do for paid scholarly leave for (Research) faculty and what we can do to be competitive with our peers. The FEC suggested the ad hoc Committee seek clearer descriptions of (Research) faculty by studying peer institutions in the Ivies such as Yale, Duke and Penn, comparing equivalent contributions to the benefit programs and finding out how (Research) faculty are funded. It would be helpful to know more about the Senior Fellow category. When the ad hoc Committee's work is done and a report of recommendations is prepared, the FEC would like to present it to the Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) as a mandate for further consideration. Professor Miller will prepare a cover

letter addressed to the FAC and a report to include data currently missing as well as additional information gathered from Ivy League institutions as suggested by the FEC. The ad hoc Committee will be meeting again this Friday.

Professor Colwill continued with her chair's report. A request by a Brown faculty member to allow a post doc to have access to Faculty Travel Funds was discussed. Since the FTF rules clearly state that only voting members of Brown's faculty qualify, the FEC decided that no exceptions should be made regardless of the circumstances.

Professor Colwill asked the FEC to consider a request to invite two students, the President and Vice-President of the Undergraduate Council of Students (UCS), to the December 4 faculty meeting to hear the President's report on the Plan for Academic Enrichment. It was decided to invite those officers (Michael Glassman and Lauren Kolodny) to attend. Professor Colwill will ask the Secretary of the Faculty to issue an invitation and inform President Simmons at the docket meeting.

Professor Colwill prepared two drafts of confidential reports for the FEC's review, one on the results of the Faculty Survey of the Office of Faculty Ombudsperson and the other a summary of FEC's recommendations to the President. Both reports were reviewed and the summary of recommendations edited by the FEC. Professor Colwill will make the suggested changes to the summary and will re-circulate it to the FEC along with Flora Keshgegian's report. She will report to the Faculty on the status of the survey at the December faculty meeting.

Professor Colwill has asked the FAC to undertake a review of the Faculty Travel Fund.

Professor Colwill closed her report by noting that this is our last FEC meeting to talk about how the CDH should review tenure denials before the 12/11 FEC meeting with the CDH and President Simmons. Confidential documents on faculty equity and diversity were discussed.

Mr. Timothy Leshan, Brown's liaison with Washington DC, spoke to the FEC about issues on the federal government level that may impact faculty in the future. Main topics for discussion included research funding for NIH, DoD and NSF; greater accountability, increased reporting requirements, accreditation issues and cost issues of the HEA bill; and various policy issues including animal rights, conflict of interest, patent reform, and climate change. Mr. Leshan also talked about how we work in Washington through the RI Congressional Delegation, AAU, Science Coalition, AAMC, NAICU, and ACE. He spoke about ways in which he could communicate with faculty on issues of concern, helping them to think through federal activities and to educate them on how to play a larger role on the federal level. Mr. Leshan spoke about the rising costs of higher education and how to address these issues collectively with other universities. He would like to work with the faculty to facilitate their interaction with national debates helping them to think beyond the campus. How to encourage affiliating Brown faculty with small businesses was discussed. The FEC thanked Mr. Leshan for an informative presentation and will determine if he should make a presentation to the Faculty at a University Faculty Meeting in the Spring.

The FEC continued their discussion about review of tenure denials and other matters related to equity and diversity. Brenda Allen will be invited to the next FEC meeting to talk about diversity issues.

The FEC reviewed a summary report from the UCS on the UCS/FEC Roundtable Summit. Professor Colwill described an advising program that has emerged from follow-up discussions

with the UCS Officers. The students would like to make a strong recommendation to the President for this Program as part of the Plan for Academic Enrichment (PAE). The President is under a lot of pressure to address the advising system. Student and Faculty input are very important to the PAE which the FEC will discuss again at the next FEC meeting.

Discussion ensued with regard to the Faculty's morale and the fact that voluntary efforts of faculty in teaching, advising and service are still not fully appreciated by the Administration.

Professor Colwill noted that the Provost will be talking about Graduate School issues at the December 4 faculty meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau
Secretary