Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)
Meeting

September 27, 2011
3:00-5:00 p.m.
Corporation Room, University Hall

Minutes

Present: Andrew Artenstein, Reid Cooper, Peter Monti, Seth Rockman, Philip Rosen, Harold Roth, Peter Shank (Chair)

Guests: Elizabeth Doherty, Julie Haworth, Deborah Lister, Kevin McLaughlin, Daniel O'Mahony, Robert Pelcovits, Wendy Schiller

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. Minutes of the September 13th FEC meeting were approved with one correction.

Prof. Shank gave a chair's report. He and Prof. Cooper had an interesting meeting with Provost Schlissel. They discussed his interdisciplinary plans for hiring faculty, especially for the humanities initiative. The Provost is considering proposals on how to utilize University resources to strengthen scholarship on campus and to make things that are strong even stronger with emphasis on academic programs. An advisory committee has been established to study and discuss the I-95 highway reconfiguration and how it affects Brown. Provost Schlissel would like to bring their issues to a faculty meeting for discussion. Plans for the presidential search are underway. The Provost advised the FEC to be careful and conscious when taking the temperature of the Faculty during the search process. The FEC will be meeting with the Provost soon.

Chancellor Tisch is forming a campus advisory committee for the presidential search and would like the FEC's assistance with identifying faculty who would be willing to serve if nominated. President Simmons suggested that not all faculty members be full professors. The FEC will be thinking about names and will contact individuals to confirm their interest in serving and send their names to Prof. Shank.

Two of the three vacant slots on the Nominations Committee are filled. One vacancy for a 3-year slot in physical science remains. Prof. Cooper will continue to work on this.

President Simmons will speak about the ROTC and Athletics reports at the 10/4 faculty meeting. It is mandated that changes to ROTC at Brown must come to the Faculty in the form of a resolution for a vote at a regular faculty meeting.

Prof. Shank spoke with Karen Davis about adding some items to the Ombudsperson job description such as the term of office being three years. The selection committee for the Ombudsperson position will be kept as small as possible so that it will be functional and hopefully find someone soon to fill the position.

Prof. Pelcovits (LAB vice-chair) and Daniel O'Mahony (Dir., Library Planning & Assessment) were invited to discuss the Library Advisory Board (LAB) annual report distributed with the FEC agenda. Library space planning, utilization of technology to improve library services, and evolving options for acquiring library resources were the key issues addressed by the LAB last year with emphasis on space planning, a key priority to better meet the need of faculty and students. The Library has made great strides in upgrading and expanding study spaces, partly due to the Library Collections Annex where little-used materials are stored off campus. This frees up on-campus space for key priorities. Storage at the Annex is currently at 60% capacity but is expandable. Since Brown owns the building, a module could be added. The Annex is the most efficient way to handle mass storage. Resource needs of the Faculty vary according to discipline so there is much to consider in the planning processes. There was some discussion about disciplinary and generational distribution of e-books. These will be purchased only when needed. Prof. Pelcovits noted that graduate student members serving on the Board have been very helpful. The LAB report will be presented to the Faculty at the November 1 faculty meeting.

Prof. Wendy Schiller, vice-chair of the Information-Technology Advisory Board (ITAB), joined the FEC for discussion about their annual report also distributed with the agenda. The ITAB met five times in 2010-11 discussing issues relating to the use of computing, software overhauls for staff and faculty, information security, and on-line continuing education at Brown. Of great concern to Prof. Schiller is the lack of faculty knowledge about what is available to them at CIS in support of their core faculty needs. There is limited communication between faculty and CIS staff which is a problem for both research and teaching. Faculty do not take advantage of all that Brown has to offer. The FEC could help in this regard by encouraging faculty to take the time it requires to update their use of technology in teaching. Discussion ensued about Google security. Prof. Rockman asked what the conversations have been about outsourcing. Has the ITAB looked at security consequences? Prof. Schiller replied that VP Pickett remains very concerned about security with Google. All emails are stored even when deleted and can be accessed for legal reasons at any time. The Faculty need to communicate what programs they use in teaching and research so they remain protected by Brown and are encouraged to back up their work on a flash drive in case something gets lost in Google. The Faculty would like to know if Brown is maintaining its independence from Google, and not a hostage to it. Prof. Schiller will let VP Pickett know about this. The ITAB report will go before the Faculty at the November 1 faculty meeting.

Deans Kevin McLaughlin and Elizabeth Doherty were invited to talk with the FEC about the Dean of the Faculty's new initiatives and the timing of them and would appreciate the FEC's input in preparation for his presentation to the Corporation in mid October. The Dean has been working on guidelines for implementation of the new tenure procedures and would like some time at the October faculty meeting for broader discussion with the Faculty. He would like to report back to the FEC with a power point presentation on this and other initiatives before his October meeting with the Corporation. Dean McLaughlin is also working on best practices for mentoring and faculty development, a request from

the Corporation. He is also working on best practices for annual reviews, looking at the processes from the beginning when the department asks for the new position. Quality control early on in the process will be key making sure to keep detailed records of each annual review. Discussion ensued regarding changes in a field influencing whether or not a qualified faculty member is granted or denied tenure. Tenure-track does not mean that one will get tenure. However, it is not always the candidate who has changed or deviated from the field. Disciplines are constantly moving. Prof. Roth asked if there will be increased expectations of the junior faculty with the increase of one extra year. Dean Doherty replied that TPAC looks at productivity over time. No increment of expectation can be determined. Judging by the level of detail of this discussion mandates the need for a faculty forum, which will be crucial. There will be a series of meetings coming up with the junior faculty. Prof. Shank suggested a faculty forum be considered after the Dean reports back to the FEC prior to his meeting with the Corporation. Dean McLaughlin then turned to the probationary period that was established last year. We need to figure out how we are going to live in it. Departments will need to look at their standards and criteria to ensure that they meet with current practices. Prof. Shank noted that this is a unique opportunity to ask departments to review their standards and criteria. TPAC has expressed interest in doing some reviews this year. Deans McLaughlin and Doherty will be invited back for a power point presentation on October 11th.

Julie Haworth (Dir., Event & Conference Center) and Deborah Lister (Asst. Dir, Facilities Mgt.) made a brief presentation about services available to the Faculty for event support. The Event & Conference Center in conjunction with Facilities Management is the resource for managing large scope events and is a revenue generating entity. Charges are dependent upon the nature of events and who sponsors them. There are no rental charges for a Brown-based event for Brown faculty and students. If a Brown department hosts another institution for an event at Brown, then charges are incurred. The FEC was delighted to learn that this service is available to Faculty. Ms. Haworth will provide them with a link to their website for more detailed information about their services.

The meeting was called to executive session to discuss candidates for the Campus Advisory Committee for the Presidential Search after which the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau
Secretary