

## **FEC 9 Minutes, Wednesday, 11 April 2007**

Present: Lisa Aronson, Tim Burns, Dan Curley (Chair), Jennifer Delton, Mark Huibregtse, Susan Kress (VPAA, guest), Bill Lewis, Mehmet Odekon, Paty Rubio.

1. Approval of the minutes of March 28, 2007 (see attached).

The minutes were approved with one amendment: under item 5), “two summer study group reports” should read “summer study group report and HCC report.”

2. Discussion of the IPPC report (see Mark's email of April 9, 2007).

Mehmet noted that changes in the post-retirement health benefit are in the works; additionally, the next phase of cost-sharing increases for current employees' health insurance may be implemented after this coming year. These changes should be discussed on the faculty floor, not merely announced. Mehmet stated that he had raised the issue of administrative growth on two occasions, the first in the Budget & Finance Subcommittee, where he had proposed (in vain) that the size of the administration be included among the “dashboard” statistics, and the second in the full IPPC, where the committee “moved on” without dealing with the issue. Comparative data won't help, since all colleges are experiencing administrative growth.

Noting that faculty had been repeatedly told that their low salaries would be mitigated by high benefits, he asked if the Board had been told about the faculty's opinion. [I believe someone pointed out that Phil Glotzbach and Mike West had defended the faculty's interest regarding health benefits at the most recent Board meeting, so the Board would be so aware.] We agreed that FEC would request a formal discussion of these issues at a faculty meeting (not merely a “committee of the whole” discussion). In addition, the IPPC members were asked to ascertain when this issue would come up for discussion at IPPC.

3. Elections Round 3.

Lisa agreed to make a last call via email to try to fill out the slates.

4. Visit with Susan Kress (9:15 onward).

Susan mentioned three issues she wished to discuss: Faculty Handbook revisions; faculty status (discussed at FEC 6 last week); and recent vote on the writing proposal.

- Faculty status: This issue arose from John Anzalone's request to be considered a faculty member (on fec-eligible-list, able to attend Faculty Caucus meetings, etc.) with administrative responsibilities, rather than an administrator (with faculty status), a request that FEC understands. On the other hand, Tim pointed out that administrators receive information that faculty may not have access to, which can put them in an awkward position vis-à-vis their faculty colleagues. Dan suggested that FEC should perhaps be involved in the negotiations (regarding

faculty status) with a faculty member preparing to take on administrative duties. Susan countered that these decisions shouldn't be subject to negotiations, but should be based on clear principles. [This listener heard a parallel with the issue of course releases.] She proposed (at least) two principles: (1) If a person sits on an administrative staff and has influence on policies affecting faculty, then that person should be considered an administrator; and (2) If the individual will not be sitting on a major faculty committee as a faculty member (CAPT, CAFR, etc.), then that person should not be on fec-eligible-list. Susan also stated that the faculty member with administrative responsibilities had been a good model for Skidmore, one that she would want to preserve; rigid distinctions between these roles could lead to "oppositional structures." In the course of this discussion, she suggested that FEC might want to reconsider the need for Faculty Caucus meetings.

- Writing proposal: This issue was discussed briefly without any particular resolution; it was noted that one can make a motion to require a super-majority to pass another motion, so it would not be necessary to change the Faculty Meeting by-laws to require super-majorities in various cases.
- Faculty Handbook revisions: Dan Curley mentioned that he would be serving on a group to work on Part Six revisions, and he asked about the role of this group [given that Part Six is primarily the work of Human Resources(?)]. Susan replied that Part Six deals in part with issues of aggravated harassment and hate crimes, and one wants to do this as well as it can be done (in general, no one has done particularly well, and lots of folks are struggling, with these issues). Faculty discipline is another concern of Part Six: what should due process look like? Finally, students want the list of protected categories in the anti-discrimination statement to include "gender identity and expression"; NYS law doesn't cover this, and we have to proceed with caution (what policies would have to change if we adopted this change? Dorms? Rest rooms? Health issues?). Faculty can be helpful in thinking through all of this. There are other Handbook issues requiring attention as well; for example, the tenure process with respect to the President's role was recently changed, but not the promotion policy, and junior faculty desire a clearer statement of criteria for promotion and tenure. Susan did discuss with FEC the idea of reviewing the Handbook with an eye toward overall uniformity.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Huibregtse