

2007-2008 University Senate Executive Committee
January 28, 2008
Reed Hoyt, Chair

MINUTES

Present: Richard Collier, John Delano, Diane Dewar, Reed Hoyt,
William Lanford, Zai Liang, Eric Lifshin, Susan Phillips,
Lawrence Raffalovich, Michael Range, Karin Reinhold-Larsson,
Joan Savitt, Lawrence Schell

Guest: Catherine Herman, Interim Vice President, Media & Marketing

Minutes: The Minutes of December 3, 2007 were approved.

Chair's Report by Reed Hoyt: Chair Hoyt reported that the Presidential Search is in a transitional stage, and not quite ready to bring candidates on campus for interviews. He introduced Interim Provost Susan Phillips. She was in attendance for her first SEC meeting. (He also mentioned that CIO Haile will be at the SEC February meeting, to discuss the Data Center.)

SUNY-wide Senate Report by Michael Range: Senator Range announced the upcoming SUNY Plenary meeting and noted that Interim Chancellor Clark will be addressing the Senators at the meeting.

Council and Committee Reports:

CAA (Council on Academic Assessment), William Lanford, Chair. No report.

COR (Council on Research), Lawrence Schell, Chair. The council reviewed and approved committee reports regarding SUNY benevolent awards, along with Frap A and Frap B awards.

CPCA (Council on Promotions & Continuing Appts.), Eric Lifshin, Chair.
No report.

GAC (Graduate Academic Council), Sally Friedman, Chair. At the 12/19/07 GAC meeting, the main item of business was discussion of new initiatives on Preparing Future Faculty, sponsored by Dean Pryse and others at the university. Among other things, these initiatives will lead to enhanced instruction of graduate students as to their responsibilities as future faculty. To bring them into line with other university programs, the Council also considered and passed a mostly administrative proposal to drop doctoral residency requirements from LLC programs. Finally, in line with GAC's responsibility to oversee the ombuds program, a meeting of the ombuds committee is in the works for February. Also, GAC Chair Friedman reported that she has a time conflict with Senate and Senate Executive Committee meetings this semester; the Council will elect a new chair.

GOV (Governance Council), John Delano, Chair. The Governance Council has discussed three agenda items during its two recent meetings. (a) Proposed revision to Senate Bill 0708-04 dealing with the ITLAL Director on LISC and CAA; (b) Proposed revision of Senate Bill 0708-05 that was not approved by the Interim President; and (c) proposal for the creation of a new layer of review for course/program proposals originating from 'not degree-granting units' at UAlbany. The GOV Chair has met with the Director of ITLAL, the Interim President, and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies to ensure that their perspectives are represented for items 'a', 'b', and 'c', respectively, during the GOV discussions. He has e-mailed Sue Faerman to provide her with the GOV idea for composition of the proposed layer of review, and also to confirm whether the ITLAL Director reports directly to her.

LISC (Council on Libraries, Information Systems, and Computing), Lawrence Raffalovich, Chair. LISC met Friday afternoon, January 25th. (1) The Council voted to stick with the 2005 email policy. (2) The Council discussed potential technological solutions to the academic integrity problem discussed at the last Senate meeting (the resolution from CaffCoR). The Council has no information regarding the relative merits of specialized software to catch plagiarism compared to Google. The consensus was that there is no technological fix. (3) Council members voted to approve a proposal to revise the Charter to modify the name and charge of the IT Policy Usage Committee, and to have it chaired by the CIO. This proposal is printed below. (4) LISC discussed the continuing erosion of the Libraries' budget, which has been flat for several years. Costs continue to rise, exacerbated by the weak dollar. Academic resources are threatened and the Libraries' national ranking has fallen. The Library Committee is preparing a report to be submitted to Council.

Proposed Revisions to Information Technology Policy Usage Committee

Proposed Title: The Information Technology Committee

Revised Charge:

The Committee shall consist of at least 6 but not more than 8 members, with at least 3 from the Council. It will be chaired by the Chief Information Officer or designee.

The Committee shall review and make recommendations on IT services in support of the University's academic programs and goals. The Committee's work addresses a wide

spectrum of information technology matters including planning, infrastructure, service delivery and quality, access and security, and new technologies. They shall examine current trends in information technologies which may influence IT services and changing University priorities, emerging academic programs, and new information needs. The Office of the CIO shall consult with the Committee on matters of IT policy. The Committee shall submit all recommendations for approval to the Council. Policy changes are then brought to the Senate if approved by the Council.

Rationale for Change:

The Chair of LISC and the Office of the CIO propose revisions to the LISC subcommittee known as the Information Technology Usage Policy Committee. The goal of this revision is to broaden the scope of the Committee's charge and create a group with responsibilities for campus-wide IT.

Revising the charge allows the Committee to assume an expanded role in shaping new directions for IT on behalf of the University community. Confining the scope to IT policy issues limits the ability of the group to examine a wider range of academic and programmatic IT matters. Broader responsibilities will enable this group to provide valuable input for strategic planning, examining trends and exploring new directions for campus technology needs. The revised charge makes the responsibilities of the subcommittee similar to those of the LISC Library Committee. This balance better reflects LISC's broader charge to examine campus-wide matters of the Libraries and information technologies.

The Information Technology Usage Policy Committee is part of an historical legacy predating the appointment of a CIO. For the past several years, the Committee has had little business, so they have met sporadically. It has also been difficult to staff. A broader charge would give the Committee new opportunities to explore the technology needs of the campus. Assigning the CIO or designee as permanent chair—parallel to the Library Committee—lends continuity to the group, which is important for long-term planning, history and information sharing.

It was agreed to bring this proposals to the next Senate meeting.

UAC (Undergraduate Academic Council), Karin Reinhold-Larsson, Chair.

UAC unanimously approved changes to the honors program in Psychology and in Africana Studies as follows.

- a. *Psychology Departmental Honors Program changes.* To be admitted a student must have an overall GPA of 3.25 and maintain a GPA of 3.50 in the major. In addition the student would need to complete APSY210 and APSY211 with a grade of C or better. The requirements for the departmental honors program will be the same as the Psychology Department major. The Psychology major has changed their restricted electives into 4 sub disciplines: 1) cognitive approaches to behavior 2) clinical and developmental approaches to behavior 3) social basis of behavior and 4) biological basis of behavior.
- b. *Africana Studies Honors Program changes:* Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 in University courses of and 3.50 GPA in the major to be able to enter the program and to remain in it. Also students enrolled in the Honor Program will have to write a thesis which will be worth 6 credits. The changes will appear in the 2008-2009 Bulletin.

Women's Studies proposed LGBTQ Minor: UAC approved the proposed minor but its name was cause of concern. The title is an acronym for Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender-Queer. Several members felt that the term Queer was derogative and therefore it was not a good idea to have it in the name. We requested an explanation from the Women Studies Department. Christine E. Bose, Women's Studies and Sociology explained that the minor name is the above acronym and not all the terms spelled out. She also explained that *“Queer Studies is now the most progressive term in this field. The term incorporates a broad spectrum of sexual identities, including gays, lesbians, and bisexuals, but also transgender and other identities as well. In essence, scholars have reclaimed the word, once used disparagingly, to represent a new progressive approach. ... Currently "Queer" is the accepted terminology in academia that acts as an umbrella term to encompass all sexual and gender identities that are marginalized, not just lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender ones. While in the past, queer was used as a derogatory term, over the past few decades, it has been reclaimed as a source of pride and resistance.”*

A member still strongly opposed the use of Queer and not having the terms spelled out. UAC voted to have the minor be named LGBTQ as the Department of Women Studies proposed, without the terms spelled out and it passed by majority vote. Then UAC proceeded then to vote on accepting the minor as proposed by the Department of Women Studies, with the word Queer still in it.

A member was very much in opposition and requested a roll call vote. The result of the voting was as follow:

8 Yes: Maria Brown, Sue Faerman, Sue Phillips, Bill Rainbolt, Karin Reinhold, Jane Kessler, Nikki Kotary and Greg Stevens.

2 No's: Chris Faugere and Dan Truman III with rights (see attached email).

2 abstain: Ann Withington and Maria Moon.

Daniel Truchan III Rights from the voting according to Roberts Rules of Order: “I am quite disappointed in this committee for not doing its job and rushing this minor with out all the committees questions answered. This committee is here to make sure that all of the different areas of academics are looked after. Being a Research Center we must look at how all programs will have an impact on the institution. Being that this minor is not being spelled out shows that this Institution has something to hide and since the motion to spell it out the words that form LGBTQ failed, I am very appalled to see this bill pushed through with out the final question of whether or not the Women's Study department wanted to see it spelled out. This committee failed to do its job and those who pushed it through should be ashamed of themselves and reexamine why they are here.”

ULC (University Life Council), Joan Savitt, Chair. No report, although the ULC subcommittees have been meeting and discussing student housing.

UPC (Univ. Planning & Policy Council), Diane Dewar, Chair. No report.

CAFFECOR (Committee on Academic Freedom, Freedom of Expression, and Community Responsibility), Sanjay Goel, Chair. No report.

CERS (Committee on Ethics in Research and Scholarship), Zai Liang, Chair.
No report.

Discussion on: Women’s Studies proposed LGBTQ Minor: There was a very lengthy discussion on this proposal. A question was directed to Interim Vice President Herman on how the topic normally appears in the media. The discussion centered on naming the minor and the media reaction. Interim Provost Phillips suggested researching other institutions that have similar program offerings, and if they use the word “queer,” what the results were with the press.

New Business:

UAC Chair Reinhold-Larsson reported that UAC approved the name change of the Minor in International Perspectives to the Minor in International Studies.

There was discussion and it was agreed that there is no bill needed for this word change in the name.

Report from Interim Vice President Catherine Herman: Vice President Herman gave an overview and status report on the University Marketing and Branding initiative.

Letter to Susan Phillips, Interim Provost:

The letter below was sent to Interim Provost Phillips from the Senate Executive Committee. Dr. Phillips asked for suggestions from the group. It was suggested that she and Interim President Philip go out to the residence halls, see classrooms, and possibly have breakfast or lunch with students to find out what their views are.

The subjects of VSA, freshman year experience and Project Renaissance were mentioned and Dr. Phillips said she will look in to them before commenting. The Middle States Evaluation topic came up and Dr. Phillips noted that Dean Faerman will guide that review.

LETTER:

TO: Susan D. Phillips, Interim Provost
FROM: Senate Executive Committee
DATE: 22 January 2008

Congratulations on your appointment to Interim Provost at UAlbany. The Senate Executive Committee is eager to work with you to improve the educational experience for our students. The next SEC meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 28, 2008, at 3:30 pm, in UNH 306, and we hope very much that you will be able to attend.

In order to better prepare for this meeting, we would like to identify a few items that we believe require prompt attention.

1. Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA).

Background: *At the fall 2007 plenary meeting of the SUNY-wide University Faculty Senate (UFS) held in Cortland, NY, it was learned that UAlbany, along with a few other SUNY schools, has joined VSA. Except for one campus, none of the local governance bodies had been consulted on this matter. SUNY Senators were dismayed about this apparent breakdown in administration-governance communications. The UFS passed a resolution to the effect that no SUNY school should participate in VSA without full consultation with local faculty governance. Despite the “voluntary” designation of the VSA, UAlbany governance, in particular, has not been consulted at all on this matter by the Provost/Officer in Charge. Our UFS Senator reported about VSA and the UFS resolution at the Dec. 17, 2007 Senate meeting, noting we were the only university center that agreed to participate. Concerns were expressed about the vagueness and uncertainties about the measuring of “learning outcomes” required by VSA, this being a very complex and potentially controversial item. Bruce Szelest, who had been left in charge of VSA by the departing Provost/Officer in Charge, stated at the same Senate meeting that UAlbany would simply not participate in the measuring and reporting of learning outcomes required by VSA. On the other hand, UAlbany’s participation in VSA is clearly documented through a link that appears prominently on the UAlbany homepage (under College Portrait). The last page of that link refers to learning outcomes, and it also provides access to examples of learning outcomes at UAlbany. By all appearances, UAlbany is thus participating fully in VSA.*

Concerns: *Since measuring and reporting learning outcomes are key components of VSA, there may be negative repercussions when – following Bruce’s statement – UAlbany will not post required test results and will thus be found in violation of critical aspects of the VSA protocol. On the other hand, if no action is taken, it appears that UAlbany will simply continue on track to engage in measuring and reporting learning outcomes without any consultation with and approval by governance, as is evidenced by the current UAlbany VSA webpages. Furthermore, as it stands, UAlbany is in violation of the UFS resolution. One option would be for UAlbany simply to withdraw from VSA pending full consultation with governance, consistent with the UFS resolution. The matter will very likely come up at the Jan. 31–Feb. 2, 2008, UFS plenary meeting here at UAlbany, and it is important that our UFS senators can appropriately represent UAlbany’s position.*

2. Freshmen Year Experience (FYE):

In fall 2006 Undergraduate Studies offered 30 sections of a version of UNI 150 involving about 600 freshmen as “pilot” for a FYE program. The particular course topic, and more generally, the whole concept of a FYE program, had not been discussed and approved by governance. Based on largely inconclusive results of this pilot, the office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies submitted a proposal for a new course UFSP 101 Freshmen Seminar to the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee (IDS) of UAC late in the 2007 spring semester. The 2006-07 IDS was improperly constituted because it had only one teaching faculty member instead of

the required three. Upon the recommendation of this - largely administrative - committee, UAC approved the course on May 8, 2007. In fall 2007, 43 sections of UFSP 101 were offered, involving about 800 freshmen. Naturally we are concerned that such a large program - involving about a third of this year's freshmen class - is being implemented without proper discussion and approval by the Senate. Furthermore, in order to properly assess the merits of the program and the expansion of the fall 2006 pilot, we would need relevant data on syllabi, exams, enrollments, retention, and grades. One possible course of action could be to impose a moratorium on further offerings of UFSP 101 (note that UFSP 101 is not yet listed in the [online] bulletin) until such assessment has been completed, and until the concept of a large-scale Freshmen Year Experience program has been properly approved by the Senate and the (Interim) President.

3. Project Renaissance.

In spring 2007 a team of outside evaluators reviewed Project Renaissance, and their report became available in early summer. We would appreciate an update on specific actions that have been taken since then to address the concerns identified in the report.

4. Middle States Evaluation

To date, the consultation with faculty governance expected by Middle States' guidelines and described in our Faculty Bylaws (cf. Article I, section 2.5) regarding this matter has not occurred. Our understanding is that the process should begin very soon.

We look forward to discuss these items and other matters with you on January 28, 2008.

2.5 Faculty Participation in Advisory Groups Outside of Governance Bodies.

Administrators may choose to advance their leadership vision for the University by constituting special committees and task forces, selecting individual faculty members because of their experience or expertise. Ideally, such advisory groups shall be constituted in consultation with the Governance Council of the University Senate and lines of communication with relevant governance bodies shall be enunciated. In any case, such groups do not represent the Faculty as a whole and advice from such groups does not replace approval by or formal consultation with the Faculty. Such groups may freely provide advice; however, for such groups to be considered part of the formal consultative process, a majority of the faculty members must either be appointed by, or their recommended appointment approved by, the Senate Governance Council, as specified in Article 2, Section 5.5, and specific faculty members must be designated to regularly report to the Senate. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Senate shall be consulted in the composition of all major University level search committees and committees to select honorary degree recipients.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:55p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jayne VanDenburgh, Recorder