

June 16, 2004 Ad hoc University-wide Governance Committee

June 16, 2004

Minutes

Present: J. Acker, R. Bangert-Drowns, J. Bartow, M. Carpenter (substituting for R. Geer), B. Carlson, P. Eppard, T. Hoff, J. Pipkin, L. Schell, G. Singh, D. Smith (substituting for M. Fogelman), J. Wyckoff, B. Via

Guests: Interim Vice President for Research Lynn Videka

Minutes: The minutes of June 7, 2004 were approved.

Discussion with Lynn Videka, outgoing Chair, Council on Research, Interim Vice President for Research:

Vice President Videka handed out a packet of material pertaining to the Council on Research and research activities at the University. The material included a list of Council members for 2004-05, a copy of Senate Charter provisions pertaining to the Council, a summary of Council actions for the 2003-04 year, various research policies, and information about the committees associated with the Council. Vice President Videka noted the importance of the work performed by the Council on Research and she called attention to how current governance policies define the role of faculty as it pertains to research activities. Among other areas of importance to faculty governance in the area of research, she highlighted:

- a. Review, approval, and evaluation of research centers, institutes, and specialized research laboratories.
- b. Priority setting for research activities, including recommendations for the allocation of resources.
- c. Research oversight, in areas including formulating and implementing policies governing human and animal research.
- d. Ensuring interdisciplinary perspectives and helping to promote interdisciplinary research activities.
- e. Efficient administration of activities important to research, including

grant management.

The Council on Research reviews research activities and the allocation of research funds within the University. It makes policy recommendations to the Senate and is advisory to the Vice President for Research. Current UAlbany governance policies call for a strong faculty role in conducting ongoing review and evaluation of research centers and institutes, which will be important for initiatives anticipated in the upcoming year. The Senate Charter includes a new step regarding major research initiatives and commitments that might significantly affect University organization and resource allocation. Specifically, Council on Research recommendations must go to the University Planning and Policy Council (UPC) before going to the full Senate. Although some have questioned whether this new step will be cumbersome, others are of the opinion that it is necessary because of the connection between resources and research in some areas. If every school/college became autonomous, and developed their own bylaws, this opportunity for centralized review would be more difficult and the University Senate Charter would have to be rewritten.

The Research Council's committees include:

§ The Committee on Centers, Institutes and Specialized Research Laboratories, which considers matters related to the establishment and continuance of research centers, institutes and laboratories. The Committee is responsible for guiding Council on Research actions related to organized research units.

§ The Researchers' Liaison Committee, which includes staff people from Sponsored Funds and investigators from across the campus. Its purpose is to streamline operating procedures for grants and research projects.

In addition, an ad hoc committee focused on faculty oversight on human and animal research.

Vice President Videka reported that interdisciplinary presence on the Research Council is a benefit and thinks it would be undesirable to have less communication across units about research initiatives. She noted that interdisciplinary research is of major importance in building knowledge for the

future. Vice President Videka has reservations that increased autonomy could result in too much separateness within the research enterprise.

Resources: Vice President Videka noted that many issues concerning resources would have to be confronted with greater research autonomy within individual units, even though most of the resources already have been distributed to the units.

Faculty Oversight: Faculty governance input on research was minimal or nonexistent until last year. Vice President Videka would like to see more faculty governance involvement in IRB and related issues.

Following further discussion, the committee members thanked Vice President Videka for her comments.

Feedback from respective units regarding Tenure and Promotion governance issues:

§ Professor Schell, College of Arts and Sciences (CAS):  
Professor Schell reported that he spoke to Assistant Deans Gregory Stevens and Dona Parker. Assistant Dean Parker handles all tenure and promotion cases for CAS. According to the Administrative Procedures for the Preparation of Recommendations for Promotions and Continuing Appointment (dated 2002-03), it appears that CAS and other units already have the authority to be autonomous in promotion and tenure matters under existing guidelines, but do not take advantage of it. The current procedure is that the Dean's recommendation goes to the Provost and the Provost reviews the case with CPCA. According to existing guidelines, the CAS tenure and promotion committee could serve as the exclusive second level of review. The CAS Deans do not presently anticipate any change on their end if additional autonomy is granted for tenure and promotion decisions.

§ Professor Hoff, School of Public Health (SPH): Professor Hoff met with Dean Levin and Associate Dean Persily and reported that the SPH encountered problems with the review process at the University level with some of its faculty this past year, particularly with the NYS Department of Health (DOH)

faculty. The SPH tenure and promotion council members were concerned that some CPCA members may not fully understand the role of NYSDOH faculty, including their normal teaching obligations. Because of the uniqueness of the SPH faculty, the tenure and promotion cases go through two levels of reviews before they go to the University level review. SPH representatives raised questions about whether CPCA members might rotate too quickly, thus losing accumulated experience about SPH's somewhat unique issues with DOH faculty. Possibly, the CPCA membership should be stabilized, or have clusters for University review that deal with similar schools, to achieve a fuller understanding of non-traditional faculty, etc.

Professor Acker wondered whether other units in addition to the School of Public Health, perhaps including the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering and the Library, might present special challenges within the context of promotion and tenure decisions because of the specialized nature of faculty activities, nontraditional criteria for evaluation, or other unique factors. He inquired whether other units might have similar claims to uniqueness that raise questions about having tenure and promotion recommendations made about a centralized review council.

§ Professor Bangert-Drowns responded for the School of Education, reporting that their internal two-tier process is rigorous. There is a feeling that their cases thereafter are sent to a group of people at the University level who are relatively uninformed about their work. When they get negative feedback or when questions are raised, the issues tend to concern matters that are considered secondary or somewhat trivial to the School of Education internal review board. The School of Education representatives in certain respects feel that the School could do without the University level review, although, on the other hand, they feel there is a need because faculty are promoted and granted tenure at the University level. Tenure and promotion decisions clearly affect

the entire University and promoting cross-university awareness is desirable, because it gives other departments the chance to learn about each other as well as about prevailing University norms. School of Education personnel discuss what the University level committee might think about their tenure and promotion cases and supporting materials; it forces the school level committee to think more critically when assessing and preparing cases.

§ Professor Smith, School of Business, reported that Professor Fogelman discussed tenure and promotion with Interim Dean Leonard and there really are no major issues with CPCA. Dean Leonard reported that various issues existed in the 1980's, but the school took great effort to try to educate each successive level of review and work toward educating people in the standards in their own field.

§ Professor Wyckoff, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy reported that Dean Thompson noted that the old Rockefeller College, consisting of the Schools at the Downtown Campus, used to have a second level review, but it has been done away with. From the Rockefeller College perspective, either a Downtown Campus second-level review or a similar mechanism, or keeping a University Council for a second level of review in tenure and promotion cases could be acceptable. Professor Wyckoff agreed that tenure and promotion cases might be more thoroughly scrutinized and better prepared because of the prospect that the cases will be progressing to CPCA for additional review.

§ Professor Carlson, School of Social Welfare (SSW), reported that although she has yet to have engaged in discussion of these issues, it is her impression that SSW does not have any issues with the University level review. SSW faculty cases go directly to CPCA and the process appears to work well.

General discussion of promotion and continuing appointment included:

a. The challenge of finding a good measure of the effectiveness of

centralized review, or the "value added" of a centralized second-level review process

b. The prospect that the existence of a centralized review body encouraged more rigorous scrutiny and preparation of cases at lower levels because of the anticipated later review

c. That special challenges would be presented for evaluating truly interdisciplinary faculty research and teaching without a broadly representative reviewing body

d. That a centralized review body may help serve an important educational function and in establishing a uniform normative framework at the university

e. That the composition and turnover rate among members of a centralized review board should be carefully considered

f. That consideration should be given to cases arising from units that may be somewhat idiosyncratic in terms of faculty duties or evaluation standards (e.g., the School of Public Health, the Library)

Feedback from respective units regarding Graduate Academic Curriculum governance issues:

§ Professor Carlson, SSW, reported that SSW is quite autonomous because accreditation programs largely help determine its graduate curriculum.

§ Professor Hoff, SPH, reported that the SPH feels autonomous, but wonders why certain minor changes have to go through the University level review of GAC, such as course name changes. The concern is that it could move faster and would benefit from not having to put minor things through GAC, but larger things, like curriculum change would benefit from a GAC overview.

§ Professor Schell, CAS, reported that Assistant Dean Stevens' main point was when other units delete courses or change a course number, such actions could have an impact on other programs that include those courses. GAC is necessary in identifying what changes might impact other units or departments.

§ Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies Bartow noted that there is some

standard for curricular changes that informs others and that the State Education Department and SUNY System Administration need to be advised of changes too.

There will be thorough discussion on the Graduate Academic Council at the next meeting. General questions raised focused on:

- a. Identifying the "value added" from the work performed by a body like GAC
- b. In particular, discriminating between issues related to graduate curriculum that are likely to benefit from a centralized governance body, and relatively minor or individualized issues that are not.

New Business:

1. Professor Acker handed out copies of correspondence that he had received from UAlbany colleagues Professors R. Michael Range, Sung-Bok Kim, and Eric Block discussing their perspectives about the committee's charge.
2. Peer institutions: Professor Acker distributed a list supplied by Bruce Szelest of UAlbany peer institutions and aspirational peer institutions that has been used in other contexts. He proposed that each person on the committee take responsibility for contacting one or two institutions and collecting information about how those institutions conduct business on matters relevant to the committee's charge. It was suggested that contacting other institutions would be premature pending further consideration of what institutions should be consulted, what questions should be posed, and to whom those questions should be directed. Committee members considered it preferable to engage in further discussion of issues before attempting to identify or contact peer institutions.
3. Interim Provost Mumpower contacted Professor Acker to offer assistance by having himself or a representative of the Provost's Office either regularly participate in committee meetings or else appear as requested for specific questions and discussion. The premise of the offer is that there are many

regulatory matters and practical operational issues that revolve around the issues being discussed and that the Provost's Office might be able to offer insights about such matters. The committee members were appreciative of the Provost's offer, and agreed that having a representative of the Provost's Office available on an "as needed" basis would be preferable.

4. Additional guest speakers: Professor Acker asked for suggestions about inviting additional guests to future meetings. Various names were discussed, including:

§ Professor Wulfert, in her capacity as outgoing Chair of EPC, who might offer information about EPC's role with respect to graduate curriculum and related matters.

§ A representative of the Senate Governance Council (consistent with the committee's charge).

§ Interim President Ryan, to elaborate on matters presented in his April 28, 2004 memorandum to Edelgard Wulfert, Chair of EPC, and to discuss his general views about autonomy in faculty governance.

§ Representatives from the University at Stony Brook and/or other schools that make use of different governance models.

§ Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer Kaloyeros, College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering and/or the deans or academic leaders from other units at UAlbany.

The consensus of the committee was that Interim President Ryan should be invited to appear at his earliest convenience. Decisions about additional guests were deferred pending further discussion.

Attachment: Report from Professor Barbara Via.

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



Respectfully Submitted,  
Jayne VanDenburgh

Attachment to the June 16, 2004 minutes of the Ad hoc University-wide  
Governance  
Committee from Barbara Via:

I would like to clarify my comments at yesterday's meeting, regarding CPCA. It occurred to me as I left the meeting that I should have made it very clear in discussing CPCA, that I was speaking for myself, as a former member of CPCA for two years, and not for my Dean's view of CPCA. As the discussion around the table ensued regarding functioning of CPCA, I failed to get to the point of reporting my own Dean's views on CPCA.

For the record, I did meet with Dean Butler prior to the meeting and her view is that CPCA review has functioned very well for library cases. The Univ Libraries faculty have no second level of review other than CPCA. Many years ago CPCA expressed some concerns raised specific to Librarians as faculty and the dossiers that are typically presented for library faculty. Meredith met with CPCA at that time, and was able to satisfy their concerns and explain the unique contributions of librarians as academic faculty. Since that time, Meredith says CPCA has reviewed nearly every case from the library very positively.

As was stated by others at yesterday's meeting, one important positive result of CPCA review is the opportunity to demonstrate to faculty from various disciplines the contributions: teaching, research, and service- that are made by faculty from varying academic areas.

Barbara Via