

Minutes of the College of Arts and Sciences Senate
March 28, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 3:25 pm by President Fred Walter in the Javits Conference Room.

I. Approval of Agenda and Minutes of the February 21, 2005

The agenda was unanimously approved.

The minutes of the February 21, 2005 meeting were unanimously approved and seconded.

II. President's Report (Fred Walter)

Fred Walter reported on the state of the CAS Senate. Georges Fouron has agreed to run for vice-president. There is no candidate for president and no current vice-president, so Walter has proposed the following arrangement: he will stay on as president for another three months, after which time Fouron will take over as president and remain in office for 18 months. Walter will serve on the executive committee as past-president for 18 months as well. Joan Kuchner will extend her service as past-president for another three months during this transition.

Walter reported on the upcoming elections for Standing Committees and Senators. There are vacancies for the following sectors of CAS for the following committees:

--1 Humanities and Fine Arts position for Academic Judiciary Committee (AJC)

--1 Social and Behavioral Sciences position for Committee on Academic Standing and Appeals (CASA)

--6 openings in the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee (FRRPC)

--1 non-tenured 1 year position in Promotion and Tenure Committee (PTC)

--6 at-large senator positions from HFA

--1 at-large senator position from SBS and 1 from Natural Sciences

Walter requested volunteers to help with a proposed seminar to introduce first and second year faculty to the university community.

III. New Business (Fred Walter)

Fred Walter suggested that a discussion be opened on the lack of spousal hiring policies in CAS, an issue that was mentioned in the self-study of the Ecology and Evolution departmental external review (brought up by Charles Jansen). This was introduced as a new business item. Joan Kuchner suggested that it be brought before FRRP.

Walter announced that a meet-the-senate social event would take place at the University Café some Thursday in April after 5 PM. Likely dates are the 14th and the 21st.

IV. Report of the Dean of CAS (James Staros)

Dean James Staros reported on the state of faculty searches in CAS during the last fiscal year. 25 searches were initiated for 25 FTE positions. Of those, 22 have culminated and offers have been made. 1 search was cancelled, and 2 are outstanding. 11 of the offers have been accepted. Dean Staros lauded the quality of the new faculty as outstanding. He expects acceptances to reach the mid-teens.

The Dean stated that the college is looking at another flat budget. Income raising efforts have increased, and the faculty has raised support for CAS by 20%, and the college is bringing in greater tuition, but fund raising efforts have yet to bear fruit in revenue, and the college has not yet seen an increase in direct funds. The university is bearing a 10-12 million dollar deficit because of high utility costs this winter. New master's degree programs and out-of-state tuition increases offer hope of increased revenue. Several combined BA/MA and BA/MAT programs are ready for state approval for the next incoming class to begin. Dean Staros cited SUNY Buffalo's success with these types of programs for increasing fiscal success.

Joan Kuchner mentioned that although the President's website had reported an increase of 8% in faculty, this was at odds with reports given to the Senate. The Dean stated that this was not an overall increase in tenure-track positions, but included adjunct faculty, which has seen a 50% increase in budget during President Kenny's administration. There has been a substantial increase also in non-tenure track full-time faculty.

Joan Kuchner took this opportunity to ask the Dean about the progress of career tracks for non-tenure track lecturers (senior lecturer positions). He replied that it was "stuck" due to the fact that the personnel working on the issue were currently employed with budgetary matters.

V. Update from the Curriculum Committee (Tony Philips for Judith Lochhead)

Tony Philips reported that last year, 172 courses had been sent to SUNY Central in Albany for approval as required courses for undergraduates, and none of these have yet been approved. The majority of these are History courses. Joan Kuchner asked what will happen to graduating students if the History requirement is not resolved. Dean Staros answered that the courses once approved will be accepted de facto for the students who took them, and that although no official word has been put forth, the acceptances are forthcoming.

Philips reported that the curriculum committee was in charge of approval USB 102 courses for undergraduate seminars. These are 1-credit courses currently on an A-C & U grading scale. The curriculum committee desires that guidelines be set for these courses regarding such matters as attendance, graded participation, graded work characterization and parameters, amount of outside work required, etc. The committee has suggested that an oversight committee be formed to create guidelines for the courses. The situation is a new one because this is an interdepartmental effort for credited courses and there is no governing department to set guidelines. The Undergraduate Colleges are not academic units per se.

Frank Myers raised doubts about the institutional viability of an academic program that is founded on volunteer instruction. Fred Walter raised the point that this does not need to be an academic course, that it was originally conceived as an informal learning opportunity for students and a chance for faculty to explore topics they were passionate about. He suggested that the courses S/U grading. Frank Myers said that he is teaching a course this semester, and suggested that S/U is more appropriate. Walter said that he would like to see these courses not be limited to freshmen. Grady Gerbacht suggested that these courses could serve faculty as laboratory courses that could be developed into departmental courses.

Joan Kuchner suggested that S/U grading be set forth as a proposal from the Senate. It was suggested that the oversight committee be comprised of the 6 undergraduate college directors and 3 faculty members outside the colleges. He suggested also that each college should have its own oversight committee. Frank Myers reported that he has recently been asked to serve on one such committee. Frank Gardaphe asked where we can send the guidelines so the directors get them; Tony Philips reported that the current guidelines suggestions (see attached report) were informally given to Mark Aronoff, the deputy provost.

Philips asked if the Senate could endorse the guidelines provided and recommend S/U grading for the USB 102 courses.

Phillip Allen said that he is currently teaching a section and prefers A-C grading. He suggested that S/U grading be mandated for one semester only and then reviewed.

Fred Walter suggested that the curriculum committee should take this issue back to the committee and revise the guidelines to recommended either ABC or S/U grading, then bring them back to the Senate for a judgment.

Tony Philips asked if it was possible to offer faculty course releases for teaching 3 of them. Walter stated that this would have to be decided by the University Senate.

Fred Walter proposed that the Senate approve items A-H of the curriculum committee's proposed guidelines for USB 102 and add item I, a recommendation for S/U grading. The vote was 16 for and 2 against. The proposal was approved.

A proposal was made to approve the recommended USB 102 guidelines. This proposal was unanimously approved.

VI. Second Reading of the Proposed Constitutional Amendment on the Makeup of the Executive Committee (Fred Walter)

Fred Walter gave the second reading of the proposed constitutional amendment, item E1-3, which would add 1 at-large faculty member to the executive board (with full voting privileges), reduce undergraduate representation from 2 to 1, and no longer require chairs of standing committees to attend executive board meetings.

VII. Old Business (Fred Walter)

Seminar for New Faculty: Fred Walter put out a "plea" for volunteers to help organize a seminar for new faculty. It was confirmed that this is the "Sunwood event" mentioned earlier in the meeting, as Walter had suggested it would be

a good idea to obtain the Sunwood manor for the event.

Faculty hired during the last 2-3 years would meet to discuss their research and meet faculty from other departments.

Fred Gardaphe said such an event took place every year at his previous university, in which new faculty and those who had been on sabbatical the previous semester presented their research, and it had been well-received.

Grady Gerbacht reported that the Provost was organizing an event this April for recent hires in Humanities to meet each other and share research. Walter asked if this could be broadened to include more faculty members and if Grady could send him more information about the event. Dean Staros reported that Joe Auner, the new associate provost, had initiated the event. Frank Myers and Grady Gerbacht volunteered to help organize the event.

PTC business: Dean Staros raised a question about the position of junior faculty on the Promotion and Tenure Committee (PTC). He asked the Senate to consider if this were a good use of junior faculty's time and talents, as they could be doing research instead. Fred Gardaphe replied that when he was on the committee, in every instance, the junior faculty members were a great asset to the committee. He suggested that junior faculty were in a precarious position on the committee as they were non-tenured. Gardaphe suggested that the last 4-5 junior faculty on the committee be surveyed to get their opinions on the issue. Charles Jansen suggested that these faculty members represent a valuable point of view that should be preserved. Fred Walter asked if junior members could serve shorter terms since the work load is intensive. Joan Kuchner asked if this split term could adversely affect the culture of the group.

VIII. New Business (Fred Walter)

Fred Walter opened discussion on the issue of policies for spousal hiring in the CAS. The issue had been raised during the recent external review of the Ecology and Evolution Department. Charles Jansen suggested that the university fund a pool of short-term lectureships for spouses of desirable candidates for tenure-track positions in the college. Robert Kerber suggested that this was a university issue, not a CAS issue. Jansen agreed to compile a report on how other universities are handling this issue.

Tony Philips asked for a rewording of the curriculum committee's guidelines for USB 102 to read: Arts & Sciences Senate recommends S/U grading for the USB 102 seminar. It was agreed upon, and he will type it up and send a copy to Fred Walter, who will forward it to deputy provost Mark Aronoff.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Minutes submitted by Cynthia Davidson, CAS Senate Secretary