

Minutes of the Faculty Council Meeting March 19, 2015

Members: R. Ben-Nun, T. Brennan, S. Davis, R. Gouraige, A. McInerney, I. Mirsky, H.P Kavalis, M. Pita, N. Reynoso, J. Sanabria, R. Shane, H. Skinner, S. Utakis, F. Moore, S. Khan, A. Durante, D. Matsoukas, J. Athanasourelis, E. Hardman (alternate seated for W. J. Lambert), D. Genova, L. Lawton, I. Petrovic, A. Lamazares, A. Ortiz, A. Lal, P. Kolozi, L. Brenner

Alternates: K. Lee, K. Ojakian, M. Jones.

Guests: S. Persinger, M. Miller, L. Rosario, R. Lupo.

1. Meeting was Called to Order
2. Alternate were seated
3. Agenda approved
4. Approval of Minutes of
 - a. February 19, 2015
 - b. Correction of minutes of January 15, 2015
5. Old Business
 - a. UFS Charter revision (proposed). Change approved by this body unanimously by voice vote
6. New Business
 - a. Election to fill vacancy on Senate Executive Committee – unexpired term ending Summer of 2015; (one member of the faculty by and from the Faculty Council)
 - b. Discussion of Governance Plan Language regarding Divisions started with A. McInerney reported that G &E committee has come up with proposal to abolish the Divisions. Proposal was brought up for discussion, and FC members were asked to take this back to their perspective departments and bring feedback. He stated that the discussions on G&E committee were around the fact that Divisions’ roles have not been defined in our G.P. There seem to be two roles one is regarding Governance structure and the other is related to Personnel and Budget issues. The body is an unnecessary layer of scrutiny for reappointments, tenures and leaves, etc. These decisions should be done by department P &B and forwarded straight to College P&B. He added that the Division’s decisions are often time biased by the departmental chairs opinions about the candidates. Since this is a smaller group its can be easily influenced by one persons opinion either positively or negatively. Additionally each Division Coordinator has an ex-officio seta on senate, curriculum and Senate executive committees; these are the most nondemocratic votes since these coordinators are elected by a group of 5-6 people.

Based on his experience as PSC CUNY Grievance officer S. Davis stated that the divisions decisions can be biased based on how the chair presents the candidate. Although Divisions have played important role in curriculum development but the disadvantages overweigh the consultative roles.

Other comments were as following

- ARC is more democratic than Division. Since Division chair is always a department chair, based on the size of the division some departments never get representation at division.
- Instead of abolishing the division may be the role should be revised. A. McInerney responded that it can be done.
- Before we abolish the divisions we need to clarify exactly what are the roles of this body.
- There are more advantages to the divisions since it acts as a forum for discussions that help candidates. Other faculty members described the positive experiences regarding Divisions' role in helping strengthen their case during reappointments and tenures. Perhaps we can find another structure composed of people from outside the department to replace the advisory role of Divisions.
- Divisions act as buffers for candidates and can reverse unfavorable decisions of department P&B.
- CLTs and HEOs should be given representation at Department and Division P&Bs
- Division P&B role should be only advisory and not voting.
- M. Pita stated that she has witnessed many cases (20-30) where Division P&B reversed the positive decision of Department P&B, so eliminating Divisions will reduce the grievance cases. T. Brennan stated that ARC can offset that effect.
- After discussions and feedback from the departments this proposal will be voted on in F.C., then brought to Senate for a vote and finally will be sent to Board of Trustees. In response to that M. Miller commented that the faculty will not have enough understanding, since most of them don't know what goes on at Division P&Bs. So if possible a forum consisting of current and former Division P&B members should be offered where they can reflect on the roles of this body. F. Moore added that this is just the beginning of discussion on this proposal. It will be back during May meeting since April F.C meeting will be an open house for at large nominees for senate.

7. Other

- OSSESS will go away in a year or two although it serves the departments better than CUNY FIRST, so we should think of issuing a statement to communicate our wishes for it to stay. I. Mirsky added that this decision is due to lack of coherence of OSSESS with CUNY FIRST regarding Degree Works, and CUNY wants to increase the use of Degree Work. Although there is not much hope for Degree Works to function properly anyway, due to poor programming. A. McInerney stated that OSSESS is more than just for advisement; it is useful in registering students for workshops etc.
- There is a possibility that a representative from Provost's office will sit on departmental searches. M. Pita said that we should say no to this since it will compromise the Faculty's role in this process. A. McInerney suggested that Council of Chair should make a resolution on this issue which then can be voted on in F.C.
- H. Skinner asked for support for the Green team.

8. **Adjournment:** Meeting Adjourned at 1:55

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Shazia Khan