

**Faculty Executive Committee (FEC)  
Meeting**

**October 28, 2008  
3:00-5:00 p.m.  
Corporation Room, University Hall**

**Minutes**

Present: James Dreier, Chair; Gerald Diebold, Vice-chair; Ruth Colwill, Past chair; Susan Allen, Cynthia Garcia Coll, Geoffrey Russom, Gabriel Taubin, Nicolas Wey-Gomez

Guests: Lundy Braun, Rod Clifton, Huajian Gao

Professor James Dreier opened the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Professor Lundy Braun joined the FEC for discussion about handicapped parking issues at Brown. It's become a serious issue because of the on-going construction and reduced number of parking spaces. The problem lies mainly with spaces in proximity to the campus green. Handicapped spots have been eliminated as a result of the newly constructed walkway off Waterman Street. New buildings are being constructed with no provisions for handicapped parking. Prof. Braun has brought her concerns to the attention of several people including the Director of Transportation and Facilities Management. She has no reason to believe they are thinking of the problem in a proactive way. Associate Provost Brenda Allen was very helpful with recognizing structural problems on campus and is hiring an outside consultant to evaluate the situation. The FEC suggested Professor Braun contact Beppie Huidekoper and perhaps Beth Gentry. Professor Dreier will inform Stephen Foley, faculty vice-chair of the Campus Planning Advisory Board, about the problem and discuss it with Brenda Allen as well. FEC officers will be meeting with the President and Provost soon and will bring this issue to their attention.

Professors Rodney Clifton and Huajian Gao were invited to discuss a proposal to change the Division of Engineering to a School of Engineering. Engineering has been frustrated for some time with its small size. It came to a head during the external review of physical sciences at Brown. A self-study was done. At that time, the Division of Engineering had 35 full-time faculty members. It was determined that 12 new faculty were needed. There are currently 40. An Executive Engineering Council was formed in 2003 to look into what could be done and worked with Greg Crawford, former Dean of Engineering. The Council determined that to reach goals they would like to achieve, they need to become a School.

In comparison to other Ivies, Brown's Division of Engineering is at the low bar. Princeton has had approximately 20% of its undergraduate students in engineering; Brown about 8%. Harvard created a School of Engineering and Applied Sciences in 2007; Yale did it this year. This makes Brown the only Ivy League university that does not have a "School" of Engineering and/or Applied Sciences. Little has been done to improve Brown's engineering facilities since Barus and Holley was built in 1965. Modern lab space is lacking and Engineering has been advocating for an interdisciplinary research laboratory. It is expected that \$150M will be needed for construction. The operating budget for a school would require additional funding.

Dean Crawford left Brown in April and Rod Clifton took over as Interim Dean of Engineering. Since he's become Interim Dean, he's joined the President's cabinet and participated in a retreat over the summer. The Vice President for Research and the Provost asked that the Executive

Engineering Council put together a plan for a proposal to convert the Division of Engineering into a School of Engineering. Changing to a school will give them real visibility and will afford them the opportunity for major research grants. They currently offer 7 undergraduate degree programs and support 116 RA's. Engineering would like to be able to contribute more to the overall campus by offering courses to help people understand energy and the environment. A School of Engineering would have a favorable impact on the entire University. Prof. Clifton feels there are potential donors who would be willing to support a school of engineering and/or applied sciences. Funding would come from external support. He likes the idea of a large entity to include computer science and applied mathematics, and the Executive Engineering Council has met with various constituencies from those divisions. However, they have done very well as separate entities so may need to remain the same. The two major reasons for the proposal are growth and administrative restructuring. The School of Engineering would be reporting directly to the Provost.

There was some discussion about the logistics for a school of engineering including admissions and fellowships. It is Professor Clifton's hope that Brown's School of Engineering would sit at the same level as the School of Medicine. There have been no major objections to the proposal or its concept at this point and there is a general understanding of Engineering's need for growth. Where the money will come from has been of some concern.

Professor Diebold was invited to discuss concerns of faculty in the Chemistry department about the University's past and present safety policies regarding the use of chemicals while conducting research at Brown. He noted specific mandates in the past safety policy that were impossible for faculty to execute which would clearly hold faculty liable and/or negligent in the event of an accident. The Policy was instituted even though there was strong faculty opposition from the Chemistry department to some of its requirements during extensive negotiations with the Dean of the Graduate School, Risk Management and other administrators. Deans of the Graduate School and Safety Officers agreed that it was not a good policy but nothing was changed. Many chemists have become frustrated and given up the fight.

The current policy states that laboratory supervisors (faculty) have "overall responsibility for Chemical Hygiene and Environmental Health and Safety Compliance in his or her laboratory." This latest policy minimizes the University's responsibility as the employer and assigns primary responsibility to the faculty should there be an accident. Faculty risk losing their assets to lawsuits because some requirements of the current policy are impossible for chemists to comply with, which makes them appear to be negligent. Professor Diebold has inquired about insurance protection for liability risk, but none exists.

Discussion ensued about what the FEC can do to ensure that a faculty screening process is initiated before policies that affect faculty are implemented. Draft policies that affect faculty should come before the FEC for vetting before administration makes it a Policy. Prof. Dreier reminded the FEC that there is going to be a change in the Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy because the federal government is becoming interested in pharmaceutical testing. The Research Advisory Board (RAB) will be heavily involved in the COI revisions in consultation with the Provost, Vice President for Research and Dean of the Faculty. The RAB will be consulting the FEC for faculty input. This could be an opportunity to revisit other sections of the COI policy that need revision.

With regard to the policy that is of concern to the Chemistry department, we must first find out if the requirements are federally mandated. The University will be very hesitant to allow faculty veto power against policy because of this. Perhaps we need an appeal process when someone

objects to signing a University document such as a disclosure form. A suggestion was made to rewrite the RAB's charge to include a provision for getting faculty input prior to implementation of a policy that affects faculty. Prof. Diebold will bring this issue to the President's attention when the FEC officers meet with her in November.

Minutes of the 10/14/08 FEC meeting were approved as submitted.

Prof. Dreier gave a chair's report. The FEC officers met with the Board of Fellows during Corporation weekend and talked about strategic indicators and Faculty's list of priorities for the Plan for Academic Enrichment (PAE), one being the increase in support for faculty research. Although more faculty have been hired, research support has not risen to keep pace. The Fellows will take a close look at this. They seemed to agree with Faculty's list of priorities for the PAE and will continue to seriously consider their input.

The RAB has met recently, and its subcommittee for the IRB is finalizing their report to the FEC. Prof. Dreier will speak with Susan Alcock, RAB vice-chair, about visiting the FEC to talk about the RAB becoming more active. The Committee on Faculty Equity and Diversity (CFED) will be having an orientation meeting soon.

Bob Pelcovits, chair of the Faculty Committee for the Campaign, would like an FEC ruling on whether or not changing the name of the ex-officio member from the Advancement office in their committee charge would need a vote of faculty approval. After brief discussion, the FEC determined that would not be necessary.

Vice President Michael Pickett asked for the FEC's vote of approval for Catherine Zabriskie, Associate Director of Teaching and Learning Services in CIS, to attend University faculty meetings. The vote was unanimous.

The Office for International Affairs (OIA) is launching a new faculty initiative for a travel stipend for international conferences. Dean Vohra suggested they run the proposal by the FEC to ensure that the rules for their grant are compatible with a faculty member receiving a Faculty Travel Fund grant. Prof. Dreier will forward the email from OIA to the FEC for comment.

The Rosenberger Medal of Honor memo was approved for distribution to the Faculty.

Susan Allen asked if progress has been made with benefits for (research) faculty, which was supposed to have been taken up again this fall. Prof. Dreier will remind President Simmons of this when FEC officers meet with her next month.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Moreau  
Secretary