

**Minutes of the Meeting  
of the Faculty Delegate Assembly  
Wednesday, March 15, 2006**

President Jason Young called the meeting to order at 1:25.

1. The agenda was approved; the minutes of the February meeting were approved.
2. Professor Young announced that the president and the provost wouldn't be appearing until 2:00.
3. Professor Young then moved on to the third item of the agenda, inviting discussion of the FDA's response to a recent letter from the president and acting provost.

Professor Sweeney: I have never seen an atmosphere like the current one in all my time at Hunter, and I've been here since 1975. I'm concerned about the climate of fear and intimidation.

Professor Mueller agreed, pointing out that he has been at Hunter since 1972.

Professor Sweeney: Those who haven't felt intimidation aren't taking the complaints of others seriously.

Professor Young: The FDA takes a different approach than the Senate. Nearly everyone agrees that academic freedom is a serious issue. The question is, How do we proceed?

Professor Sweeney: The president's letter suggests that she's prepared to address questions of academic freedom. Nevertheless she has a responsibility to correct the atmosphere of intimidation; a first step would be to acknowledge it. Also the recommendations are mild. Why didn't she support them?

Professor Young: What's the first step towards resolving the conflict between faculty and president?

Professor Mueller: The president hasn't acknowledged that there is a problem with academic freedom on campus. In the Sociology Department, for instance, there's a sense that there's a significant problem.

Professor Guzzetta: Authority has become increasingly centralized, with the president acting like a CEO. The current atmosphere is probably frightening for junior faculty. The intimidation concerns the top down government.

Professor Bargonetti: Can we presume to be the voice of everyone until we've spoken to everyone? Still, there's no denying that there's a problem between the president and the faculty.

Professor Young: If only 5% of the faculty feels intimidated, action is needed. We don't know that there's a pervasive culture of fear in the college even though clearly some faculty are feeling this.

Professor Sweeney: What's missing is the spirit of free discourse. People won't speak out about the way the college should be run. The fear is about loss of voice, resources, and community. And it's not just the faculty. The staff will make the same point even more vehemently.

Professor Mueller: Right. The faculty doesn't feel free to speak out. The president is trying to split the faculty. She tries to deal either with the Senate or the FDA but not both.

Professor Sweeney: It's critical that we maintain free discourse and that we respect others' viewpoints.

Professor Young: We have a more open line to the president at this time than the Senate seems to. Although we have no policy power, we have access to information; we're a conduit for information between the president and the faculty. The FDA Executive Committee brings faculty concerns to the president but doesn't pass resolutions, since we don't have that authority.

Professor Wimberly: If the climate of fear explodes, there will be serious problems.

Professor Young suggested that the FDA submit questions to the president beforehand. These questions wouldn't replace live questions; they would just be a supplement.

Professor Sweeney: The president seems to think that there are just a few rabble rousers. She doesn't understand how deep the discontent runs.

Professor Mueller: What happens when the president blocks a promotion? Who stands up? Faculty should feel free to criticize the dean in question or the president.

French professor: I haven't experienced a climate of fear, but it's not clear that it's just rabble rousers who do.

Professor Young announced that the next FDA survey will be online, with the hope of boosting numbers.

School of Education faculty member: Maybe the main problem isn't lack of respect but just lack of resources. Nevertheless lack of resources does make it harder for me to do my job and pursue my research.

Faculty member: The rules are different for different faculty or different departments.

Professor Young: Agreed.

Professor Young: The most important thing is to get a broad range of faculty input. Without this the president or anyone can always respond that the critics are only a minority.

4. Professor Young announced that there would be no meeting in April. For the May 17 meeting our guest speaker will be CUNY Vice Chancellor Selma Botman. We can send her questions by April 5. However, there will still be an opportunity to ask live questions.

5. President Jennifer Raab and Acting Provost Vita Rabinowitz arrived to discuss the proposed grant clearance policy.

The president informed the group that the college has brought in an extra \$7.2 million. She then moved on to discuss grant clearance. Clearance will make the raising of money from foundations more

efficient. The provost's office will take the lead, not the development office, since grants are really an academic matter. Hunter will have information about money sources that faculty members lack.

The provost thanked the committee that she worked with, characterizing the clearance policy as a work in progress. The goal is to ensure a good match between donor and recipient. Competing money seekers can be a problem. For instance there are times when only one solicitation from Hunter can be considered by an organization. So who decides? The clearance committee will consist of the provost, a vice president, the deans or their representatives, ad hoc members as needed (for instance another vice president), a college lawyer, etc.

The president observed that direct mail to alumni from faculty is not a good idea. When asking for money, Hunter needs to project the right image, give the right message. The administration has a better idea of how to do this than individual faculty members. Also, donors are alienated when they're hit by several different requests from Hunter in a brief time; this should be coordinated by the provost's office.

The provost discussed the timeline. Requests should be submitted to the committee a month before the grant's application deadline. In special circumstances the review will be expedited. Having all grant requests go through the provost's office will help solve the problem of competing requests from Hunter faculty.

The president added that we need coordination. Grants are a college commitment, not an individual one. No proposal will be considered without chair and dean approval. She expressed hope that people who want to raise money will approach the provost's office to see how that office might help them.

The president and provost then entertained questions.

Professor Sweeney: What about last minute opportunities? Also, sometimes, for instance in the summer, deans and chairs are away. When then?

President Raab: There will be a process to expedite requests. We can adjudicate between competing requests.

Provost Rabinowitz: We can advise you to apply for more money. Or we might recommend that you go for grant *x* and not *y*.

Professor Young: Will the decisions be based on resources and not content?

Provost Rabinowitz: Yes; we won't be judging the quality of the proposal; we're only asking for a brief description. The committee lacks the expertise. We will reject a proposal when it's inconsistent with the mission of the college or if it isn't well suited to the donor.

Faculty member: Will there be appeals?

Provost Rabinowitz: Yes

Professor Sweeney: The appeals committee should have strong faculty representation.

Professor Young: The faculty should be able to appeal the chair's or the dean's decision if they turn down the proposal.

Provost Rabinowitz: That's worth considering.

Faculty member: Will there be a database kept of requests and donors?

Provost Rabinowitz: That's a good idea.

Professor Young: We should let the senate vet this.

President Raab: This is a faculty matter; it doesn't need to go to the senate; it's not necessary to include a committee with students.

Provost Rabinowitz: Our proposal can help faculty who don't think about going to corporate donors. Many faculty aren't schooled in this. The provost's committee will offer templates of good proposals.

Professor Mueller: Corporations often have different requirements than academic foundations.

Provost Rabinowitz: Consider nominating faculty for presidential awards for teaching, as well as the TIAA-CREF speaker.

6. Professor Young announced that there will be a social next Wednesday in the faculty lounge from 1-3. There will be no agenda.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 3:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Doyle, Acting Secretary