Minutes of the Meeting of the Faculty Delegate Assembly of Hunter College

February 20, 2008
Room 1203, Hunter East
1:10-3:00 PM

1. FDA President, Professor Jason Young, called the meeting to order at 1:20

2. Approval of the Minutes of November 28, 2007

The minutes were approved pending one change.

3. Executive Committee Report, for the meeting of February 6, 2008

    * Prof. Tony Doyle summarized the Report.

    * Prof. Young elaborated on the summary.

        -- The FDA website has been slow in coming along because we're still testing the template.

        -- Event on the corporatization of the academy: Postponed for this semester. We will get back to it. It was originally planned for a Friday, but Fridays are a difficult time to get a large room at Hunter.

        -- University Faculty Senate. There has been recent talk about the capital budget. Hunter was mentioned with regard to only one item, the School of Social Work. There are proposals for the next phase of funding but nothing about the science building.

            -- Prof. Manfred Kuechler pointed out that we have a long term lease on the 79th Street location of the Social Work School. However, the owners would like to see us leave before the lease expires. If we do, we might be able to get a payment for doing so. If not, it's likely that Hunter will invest heavily in a building that it doesn't own.

        -- Another item at the most recent University Faculty Senate meeting was that Governor Spitzer is promoting an endowment fund for CUNY and SUNY.

4. Open Forum Discussion by the Faculty Workgroup of the Middle States Re-accreditation Process: Discussion of the committee's preliminary findings. Profs. Helena Rosenblatt and Bea Krauss of the committee were present.

a. Prof. Rosenblatt spoke first.

The Middle States team will be here in a year. Hunter's re-accreditation is not in doubt.

We have to show that we're in compliance with Middle States standards. Then there are the self-study questions. The self-study is supposed to show us how we might improve in certain ways.

Regarding assessment, we're recognizing that Hunter isn't doing much. There are gaps in what the college is doing in assessment. In the light of these gaps the committee has to make recommendations for what to do in the future.

In the next few weeks Profs Young and Rosenblatt will be writing a report on the basis of the material covered. The report will go up the steering committee, where it will be edited.

All claims have to be supported by documents.

> * Prof. Young added that this is the big difference between this self-study and 1997's. The latter contained numerous vague and unsupported responses to the self-study questions. This year's is an empirical report. All assessment needs to have some kind of empirical verification.

b. Prof. Krauss spoke next.

Although the report has a page limit, there are no page limits on appendixes.

She has been looking at how other schools support and conduct their research. She discussed the evidence that she has gathered and supported her discussion with graphics on the overhead projector. She is concerned about the support for artistic and creative production. Recently PSC-CUNY awards haven't been given for that. She then read from a brief recommendation that her committee has made for how research decisions ought to be made.

We need mock review of grant and Institutional Review Board applications. Harvard and Michigan have all of this, and they have strong editorial support for the writing of grants.

> * Prof. Haft pointed out that Hunter used to have a dean of research but that we no longer seem to have anyone in that role. We need a good editor to write grants. There's currently no one at Hunter to do this. She expressed special concern about her colleagues whose first language isn't English. These people in particular could probably use editorial help with their grant writing.

c. Prof Young then invited discussion.

* Prof. Kuechler agreed that we need much more support for research. He then asked if the workgroup had come up with ideas for faculty development.

* Prof. Young responded that the committee is still focused on collecting data rather than generating ideas.

* Prof. Krauss reported that Health Professions has done a grant support Blackboard site. We don't invest in grant support to the extent that we ought to. For instance, program officers at NIH say that a sound grant proposal takes roughly a year to write.

* Prof. Young raised the issues of travel support and faculty recognition. Travel support tends to be considerably more centralized here than at other schools. It would probably be more efficiently given out by deans rather than by the president's office. Also, Hunter needs to pay more attention to faculty recognition.

* Prof. Eckhard Kuhn-Osius drew a contrast between money in the arts and humanities on the one hand and money in the sciences on the other. Research in the former, unlike the latter, is generally a money loser.

* Prof. Kuechler asked what we are doing to ensure that our adjuncts are high quality, since they do so much of Hunter's teaching. Also, Hunter gets roughly $10 million a year from The Research Foundation, but there's no rational process for giving the money out. It basically goes to the president and she decides. This money could fund travel, and there could be clear criteria for deciding who gets the money.

* Prof. Janet Robinson, who sits on the sub-committee for Standards and Procedures of The Faculty Workgroup, spoke about student evaluations. She suggested that they be electronic, since what comes to the dean's office is just a batch of paper. The current system makes it impossible to get certain types of useful information, for instance, the teacher scores in The School of Arts and Sciences for classes of more than 80 students. Or take a course where enrollments are declining. We might want to know if this is correlated with the quality of teaching.

* Prof. Kuechler observed that we might want to know if small courses get better evaluations than large courses.

* Prof. Richard Stapleford raised the possibility of having the students

take the evaluations online.

* Prof. Young pointed out that as of now evaluations are the dominant way that we measure teacher impact on students. Unless we can demonstrate the incremental knowledge that students are gaining, we're not able to show how much of an impact that students are having?

5. Old Business. There was no old business.

6. New Business. There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:07.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Doyle
FDA Secretary