

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the Faculty Delegate Assembly
Wednesday, March 21, 2007**

- 1. FDA President Prof. Jason Young called the meeting to order at 1:25.**
- 2. The minutes from the meeting of February 28, 2007 were approved.**
- 3. Prof. Tony Doyle, FDA Secretary, read from the Executive Committee report of March 7, 2007.**
- 4. Prof. Young introduced Acting Provost Vita Rabinowitz, who provided the academic update. She discussed the following issues.**

* The Mellon Report

* Assessment

* Middle States Review: Hunter's ten year review is coming up.

* Roosevelt House

* Doctoral programs in the sciences

* CUNY Compact

Mellon Report: The activities will be largely financed by a \$600,000 grant that Hunter won two years ago. It involves looking at our undergraduate curriculum, teaching, etc.

Hunter at its heart is an undergraduate institution, but the Mellon Report will also affect the professional schools: what do professional schools look for in undergraduates (that is, prospective students) and undergraduate curriculum?

We've never formally evaluated our undergraduate curriculum. For instance, we don't know how well our General Education Requirement is working. We need to know.

Our graduation and retention rates were poor before Gen. Ed. and remain poor—though retention is slightly improved.

All colleges regularly evaluate their Gen. Ed. requirements. Harvard is currently engaged in such an evaluation. Looking at Gen Ed is in no way an indictment of the faculty; it has to be ongoing.

Some of the questions that we need to consider as we evaluate Gen Ed are: What qualities of mind do we want Hunter graduates to have? How do we want Hunter students to write and communicate? What level of information literacy should our students have?

We'll be looking carefully at the following: first year experience; advising; interdisciplinary curriculum; pedagogy; the experiences of transfers; honors program; majors and minors; the role of liberal arts programs in the professions; capstone courses (that is, the courses that separate the majors from the non-majors). The failure rates in some capstone course range up to 50%. Some faculty are proud of these high failure rates. Should we take a closer look at the courses that have such high rates? We want to foster a culture of support for our students.

* Assessment. Prof. Clarkson's committee is now reporting on their work.

*Middle States project. It's a mandate. It comes with no money. Middle States is in danger of being pre-

empted by the federal government, which is pushing for greater "accountability" and wants to get directly into the business of assessing learning. Hunter hasn't regularly done outcome assessments of learning.

Middle States has 14 criteria on which Hunter will be judged. Hunter shouldn't take accreditation for granted. We have to use accreditation to improve what we do.

We need Hunter faculty to volunteer for Middle States committees.

* Roosevelt House. It's a double brownstone. The facility will be completely renovated. The remodeling will be financed by money that President Raab has raised, along with money from CUNY central. The rooms will be wired for hi tech. There will be classrooms. The prospective starting date is fall 2008.

Three major initiatives for Roosevelt House:

1. Faculty Development: The House will offer faculty seminars. Each semester 12 faculty from across the campus will participate. Faculty will be called Roosevelt Fellows. The hope is that Roosevelt House will support the work of Hunter faculty.

2. The administration also hopes that it will provide internships for our students.

3. The administration expects it to be a place for important lectures and meetings.

Roosevelt House is to be an important center for the social sciences but open to all disciplines.

The administration invites suggestions from faculty for programs at Roosevelt House.

* Doctoral programs in the sciences. CUNY is acknowledging how much Hunter has contributed to the preparation of Ph.D. candidates in the sciences. As a result, Hunter and City College will be permitted to confer Ph.D.s in the sciences. Biology will be the first department to do so.

Hunter will promise five years of full support to doctoral students, including \$24,000, health insurance, and full tuition. Legally the president has to pledge \$96,000 for each Ph.D. student admitted. The new Ph.D. programs mean that there will be new pressure on faculty to get research grants. This is an opportunity and a challenge.

* The CUNY Compact. The Compact money from last year is now part of Hunter's regular budget.

Faculty need to talk to chairs and deans about the programs they would like to have funded.

The Compact isn't the only source of new money. Every year we get \$700,000 for graduate studies.

Also, we're expanding our professional programs. Our goal is to have 25% graduate students.

The provost entertained questions.

Q: Are there any schools that we can look to as models for Middle States?

A: Yes. Portland State and Duke are two examples.

Q: Many students who leave Hunter might do so for personal reasons, not in virtue of anything in the curriculum.

A: Yes. For instance Ivy League schools retain well over 90% of their students. But their demographics are different. Their students tend to come from wealthier backgrounds. Hence they don't have to worry about

paying tuition. Nor do they generally have to worry about supporting a family.

It's not just curriculum that's relevant to retention. It's also financial aid and advising.

We're significantly below Brooklyn and Baruch in retention. Most students don't leave Hunter to attend a better school.

Q: Where do we stand now in graduate student support?

A: We're just about to pull even with what we're offering science students. Financial aid differs from department to department. For example Biology students tend to get more money than others. The new policy would mean that *all* doctoral students would get \$24,000 a year for five years.

The provost asked for volunteers to be on Middle States sub-committees.

Prof. Young made the following points.

* The chancellor wants to increase productivity. He also wants to turn Hunter increasingly into a research institution.

* The governor's new conflict of interest policy applies to all state employees. So faculty can no longer accept gifts from students. For instance, if faculty members assign their own textbooks, this could be seen as a conflict of interest. But Vice Chancellor Schaeffer doesn't think this will be a problem where there are sound pedagogical reasons for doing so.

5. Roundtable Discussion on Diversity at Hunter College

Marcia Cantarella, Associate Dean for Student Opportunities, Arts and Sciences, spoke first.

* Retention rates and graduate rates are worse for minorities than for the student body as a whole.

Those who are first generation college students have higher dropout rates.

The question is, how can we serve our minority students better? We have various programs to help us do this, for instance, The McNair Scholars program for poor, minority, and first generation students.

* CUNY's Black Male Initiative. Hunter has only 419 undergraduate men who are black. The number of black men at Hunter has gone down recently. CUNY wants to be in the vanguard in attracting young African American men to its schools. To this end CUNY has gotten money from the city and from the Ford Foundation.

Hunter is currently looking at the 175 black men whose GPA is 3 or better. We want to let them know that they're succeeding at Hunter.

Associate Dean Cantarella appealed to faculty to let her office know which students (specifically, juniors) would benefit from the Black Male Initiative. She and those in her office will talk to them about Rhodes and Fulbright Scholarships. She asks that the students who are recommended to her office not be from the Honors College.

She took questions.

Q: Is there any breakdown about the background of black men at Hunter, for instance what percentage are African-American as opposed to, say, Caribbean-American?

A: We're working on that. A lot of students don't self-identify. The good news is that many more people are multi-ethnic. Unfortunately the forms don't serve this.

John Rose, Acting Dean for Diversity and Compliance, added that we could get that information to some extent for students who weren't born in this country. But self-identification is important.

Prof. Kuhn-Osius broached the issue of the not-so-strong students, suggesting that some might be better off focusing on skills that will help them earn good money when they get out of school.

A: There are many other places besides the academy where a Ph.D. is useful. We're promoting academic achievement because this has other benefits, including a good salary.

Dean Rose then spoke.

* The 2006 Diversity Summit attempted to identify the most important issues affecting diversity on campus. Common issues included: (1) how faculty manage classroom issues related to diversity; (2) how student organizations can communicate more respectfully to address diversity issues.

6. Old business: There was no old business

7. New business: There was no new business.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Doyle
FDA Secretary