

Executive Committee
Faculty of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering
Annual Report 2005-2006
(September 7, 2006)

The major work of the Committee in 2005-06 involved revision of the AS&E Bylaws, which required detailed consultation with various committee chairs to ascertain current problems and issues they confronted. A summary of the changes, approved at the AS&E Faculty meeting of April 19 are summarized below.

Much of the work of the Committee involved setting AS&E agendas as stipulated by its charge, consulting with the Deans about updating the mentoring program for untenured faculty, revisiting the Master Plan for the Medford campus, and raising the issue of faculty governance forcefully in conjunction with the forum sponsored by Dean Sternberg on April 12. In addition there was an Open Executive Committee meeting on November 2 to examine and compare the strategic plans of Engineering and Arts & Sciences (a summary of the discussion is provided on the AS&E website). One topic which seems important to revisit is the Kaleidoscope report (submitted in May 2004) and its implications for equal hiring. On a certain occasions the Executive Committee intervened with the help of the Deans Sternberg and Abriola when the Budget and University Priorities Committee received data rather late in its decision cycle, effectively minimizing its effect on the current budget. Other similar items will be discussed below under the heading of "Agenda Items."

ANALYSIS OF COMMITTEES AND PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGES

In early fall the Committee undertook an analysis of factors related to the general functioning of committees and their membership:

- 1) A survey of full-time leaves revealed there are more committee slots (406) than available faculty in a single year (about 300). Roughly 10% of the faculty is on leave in any single year.
- 2) A disproportionate number of associate professors are doing the bulk of the committee work. Untenured faculty are expected to do some service to the university although it may not necessarily be committee work.
- 3) There is a consensus that it has become harder to recruit faculty members to serve on committees.

The goals for committee restructuring were discussed in early October:

- 1) To reduce the overall faculty time required to maintain effective faculty governance. This might be achieved by eliminating committees, reviewing their size, providing staff and technical support.
- 2) Since the Executive Committee is "responsible for overseeing the committee structure in general and recommending changes as needed" there should be a consistent procedure for ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of committees. This should be periodic review of each committee.
- 3) There should be an electronic voting system for elected committees and a data base that would determine eligibility for various committees and would be responsive to reasonable expectations of service.

The procedure for restructuring followed these guidelines:

- 1) Karen Panetta, Chair of Committee on Committees, would be invited to survey the existing situation. Emily Bushnell, former Chair of the Executive Committee, would inform us about the reduction in the LA&J committees undertaken in 2000-2002. At that time committees on College Writing, Distribution, Foreign Language/Culture, and World Civilization were combined as well as the committees on Curricula and Plans of Study.
- 2) Priorities would be as follows: a) focus on those committees which are experiencing difficulties or need immediate attention; b) begin with AS&E bylaws committees and focus on those which require scrutiny; c) review the status of the LA&J committees that were formed by combining several functions (i.e., Academic Review Board and Curricula Committee).
- 3) The current or previous chairs should evaluate the committees they managed.

The following Committees underwent bylaws changes:

Committee on Committees

Panetta estimated that 60% of the faculty do not serve on committees. She recommended a data base to be in place for September 2006 which would determine which faculty perform service to the university. Such a tool could also be programmed to identify eligible candidates for both elective and non-elective slots. The data base began preliminary implementation in the spring of 2006, which will include on-line voting. A bylaws change was made to forgo seconding of candidates for elective committees (a procedure not used in recent memory), and a stipulation that the Committee have at least one member elected from the School of Engineering.

Committee on University Art Collections

Amy Schlegel, Director of the Art Gallery, spoke about the need to revise both the membership of the Committee to make it more responsive to the needs of collections development. Often art work donated to the University is not deemed collectable and requires storage at an exorbitant cost. The membership of the committee was changed to bring faculty, staff, administrators and students who can exercise appropriate

expertise in choosing what is worth keeping. The new committee, renamed *University-wide Gifts of Art Committee*, was voted by the AS&E Faculty and approved by the Provost. When the new committee convenes and reports its first meeting to the Dean of Arts and Sciences – a statement to that effect must be submitted to the Executive Committee and the Secretary of the Faculty in order for the process to be complete.

Faculty Advisory Board for Administration

Judith Wechsler, Chair of the Faculty Advisory Board (FAB), spoke about the importance of this committee, which has broad authority, including representing the faculty in communications with the Administration, matters of administrative hiring, evaluation of administrators, jurisdiction over matters which are beyond the bounds of other faculty bodies, and intervention in urgent situations that need to be addressed. Wechsler was involved in discussions with the Provost, the Chair of the Executive Committee, aimed at reasserting the importance of this committee in various areas where its wisdom is needed. The bylaws changes were largely stylistic, but they expressed the committee's role in faculty governance more cogently. This spring FAB and the Executive Committee participated jointly in the evaluation of President Bacow sponsored by the Tufts Trustees.

Committee on Undergraduate Advising and Counseling

Juliet Fuhrman, the previous chair (2004-05)(there was no current chair), informed us that there are "no issues pending before it." Most of the advising duties have been taken over successfully by James Glaser, Dean of Undergraduate Education. Much of the academic advising has been streamlined by computer. In the bylaws revision, academic advising was placed in the office of the Dean, while a charge has been added to the duties of the *Committee on Educational Policy* to take upon itself "the oversight of academic advising." With regard to counseling, which often involves medical issues, the responsibility was taken over by the Health and Wellness Committee (a staff committee in the Dean of Undergraduate Education's Office) with two AS&E faculty appointed to it by the Committee on Committees to exercise appropriate wisdom in such matters.

The Executive Committee

Stylistic revisions were made to the charge of the Executive Committee, none of which were substantial. The motion from the Chair to stipulate that elected members of the Committee must be tenured faculty was voted down on the floor.

Grievance Panel

A change in the bylaws stipulated that the Ombudsman and Chairperson must be chosen by the Panel at the end of the academic year in case there should be a grievance over the summer – hence to obviate the possibility of a hiatus in processing a complaint. Another amendment designates that at least one member of the Panel must be from the School of Engineering.

Committee on Academic Awards

The Academic Awards Committee had never been duly constituted. Now there is an article to certify its legitimacy and a corresponding charge of its duties.

Committee on Budget and Priorities

An amendment to the bylaws stipulates the current names of Departments for the purposes of representation. The membership was reduced from four to three undergraduate students; added was the Dean of Student Services and a liaison from the Executive Committee, both without vote.

The following Committees were interviewed:

Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid

Peter Winn, the current Chair, spoke for a number of initiatives that the Committee was implementing. The Committee has been working with Dean Coffin on the issue of recruiting minority students – not only of ethnic background but socioeconomic origin – and has been identifying financial resources for these goals. The Committee has also worked toward a broader recruitment approach that highlights not only the broad advantages of Tufts, but also the less well-known possibilities that are sometimes neglected. Winn does not believe there is a need for a special task force on admissions.

LA&J Curricula Committee

This Committee was revised in 2002. At the time it took on the functions of Interdisciplinary Minors and Plan of Study Majors. The workload is huge, but the Committee does not see the need to split back into separate small committees. Anyone who undertakes the task of chairing the Committee (currently Jack Ridge, and next year Francis Chew) will face a huge burden nevertheless. Technical Support is now helping to create a data base that will greatly expedite the huge number of minor and major revisions of course descriptions, majors, and prerequisites.

Other "Agenda Items":

Faculty Governance

The Executive Committee has been concerned about how to maintain faculty input in the governance of Arts and Sciences, and Engineering. At the behest of Dean Sternberg the Committee organized a panel led by Sheldon Krinsky on April 12. Panel dealt with the problem of staffing committees, recruiting senior faculty for elected committees, the diminution of the role of the AAUP in faculty affairs and its reduced membership, the reluctance of department chairs to nominate untenured faculty for service. Some questioned whether service counts for anything. If not, the whole culture of faculty governance is jeopardized. Several expressed the view that faculty meetings have become less useful on issues the faculty care about. Other questions arose: Is service

addressed when new faculty are hired? Is it still important to the university? Some thought faculty have less and less involvement in charting the future of the university.

Because of these concerns, the Executive Committee wrote the Provost on May 5, to open a dialogue about how to preserve the culture of good citizenship. We understood the importance of excellent scholarship, but the tradition of Tufts is a university where faculty are happier when they have a say in what goes on. We would be disappointed if there is no open dialogue with administrators. At this juncture we see no cause for alarm. The Provost responded very generously and we met on with him on May 23 to discuss how the faculty can share in the stewardship of the university. It seems clear to us that service must be brought above ground and be addressed in terms of reasonable expectations that would be generated by the administration and the faculty. At the meeting, Dean Abriola and Sternberg stressed that faculty ought to perform service of some kind to the university – not necessarily committee work, although the standard expectation ought to be that a faculty member generally serves on committees. Without this understanding, the committee structure may atrophy.

Technological Support, Open Courseware, Special Learning Testing, Research Assistants

One issue that seems also to be moving toward resolution is the effort of Jim Roberts, the Deans, and the Computer Facilities Usage and Committee (led by Don Weingust) to bring together the various players in technological support under a single umbrella. A proposal for demonstration of Open-Courseware was not feasible this year but may be revisited (contact Nancy Wilson). Kathleen Camara brought to our attention the problem of finding appropriate locations for students with special learning needs who require a distraction-free space and extra time to take finish tests. There was also a request to look into research assistantships for faculty in the humanities from Laurence Senelick.

Respectfully submitted,
2005-06 Executive Committee

elected faculty members:

Behrouz Abedian
Cristelle Baskins
Boris Hasselblatt
George Norman
Kent Portney
David Sloane , Chair

administrative members

Linda Abriola, School of Engineering
Robert Sternberg, Arts & Sciences