

Minutes of the General Faculty Meeting 15 April 2003

President Regan convened the meeting at 12:53 p.m.

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of October 31, 2003, was duly made and seconded. The minutes were approved.

The proposed agenda of the meeting was adopted upon approval of a motion to do so, duly made and seconded.

The President began his presentation by reporting on efforts to amend the University's current five-year tenure clock to a seven-year schedule, consistent with AAUP standards. Baruch College has taken a leadership role within CUNY on this issue. The President called on Provost Dannenbring who reported the following: Amending the timetable requires a change in state law to give the CUNY Board of Trustees the authority to set the standards for the tenure clock. Currently, the University has put this issue on hold while pressing budget issues are dealt with. Once the tenure clock issue is back on the table, the Provost recommends that the University consider a phase-in of the policy. That is, faculty hired under the five-year provisions could choose to abide by the new, longer clock, or to come up for tenure review in the fifth year, but with no early penalty. The Provost also reported that we have pressed for the establishment of an automatic terminal year, for those not granted tenure, so that they have the opportunity to take advantage of the fall job market for securing another position.

The President then introduced a number of task forces he has convened and charged with exploring various issue related to the College's operation. He then called upon Associate Provost Barbara Lawrence to report on the work of the task forces. Dr. Lawrence gave brief reports as follows:

Academic Scheduling – chaired by Associate Provost David Potash – will examine ways of enhancing students' ability to graduate in a timely fashion. A software program, SchedulExpert will be piloted in Fall '04 to run parallel course schedules to the actual schedule, with the goal of generating a report on how we might more efficiently schedule classes.

Achieving Parity – chaired by Provost David Dannenbring – will document ways Baruch College is disadvantaged in the allocation of resources by CUNY. The task force is preparing a policy paper to be used by President Regan in conversations with CUNY.

Entrepreneurial Activities – chaired by Associate Dean Abe Tawil – will explore new sources of revenue (e.g. utilization of our athletic and theater spaces) and new ways of generating funds for our educational mission.

Economic Impact – chaired by Vice President David Gallagher – will generate a report on the economic impact of Baruch on the City and State.

Productivity – chaired by Professor Harry Rosen – will explore ways the College can become more efficient. The task force has commissioned five teams of MBA students to look at specific management functions within the College to make recommendations about maximizing efficiencies.

Student Aid – chaired by Dean Myrna Chase – will identify the many sources of student aid and make recommendations on rationalizing their deployment.

Student Services – chaired by Dean John Elliott – explore ways to improve student engagement and student satisfaction.

Tuition and Fees – chaired by Dean Stan Altman – will explore a variety of tuition models and predict potential impact in order to make recommendations to CUNY regarding the impending University-wide tuition increase.

The President concluded his presentation with a report on the current state budget and its impact on the University and College. There will be cuts in state aid to the University, and a net reduction of \$90 million is currently being considered. Some of this shortfall will be made up through productivity and efficiency measures (e.g. the centralization of some tech services), but there will almost certainly be a tuition increase as well to offset the cuts.

The Chancellor has repeatedly said there will be no retrenchment of faculty; in fact, the President said, we have been encouraged to add to the ranks of our faculty. The President speculated that there might be some staff eliminations at some campuses, but no specifics were available as yet.

The President went on to say that Baruch College might be able to have a real impact on the University in the next few weeks, with regard to the budget. The state budget will probably be passed in May, he predicted. If it is not passed until sometime during the summer, it will be a real hardship for us and our students. The University is unable to raise tuition rates until after the state budget passes. The President suggested that a tuition increase might be voted on at the May 27 CUNY Board of Trustees meeting.

SUNY has passed a tuition increase of \$1200 for undergraduate students. Chancellor Goldstein has suggested that this figure is way too high for our students to absorb. He has been very firm in his criticism of the CUNY plan. We are currently working with a model that would include an increase of \$600 for in-state undergraduates, \$1200 for non-resident undergraduates and resident graduate students, and more for non-resident graduate students.

The main principles driving CUNY's decisions are that undergraduates need to be protected for unreasonable increases in order to avoid a severe decline in enrollment, and that tuition rates for non-resident students need to be brought more in line with the actual cost of education, as is the case at many state institutions. A drastic increase in non-resident tuition might be difficult for Baruch as it would bring our cost close to that of our nearest competitors (e.g. Fordham), compared to whom we've always been a bargain. Finally, the University is also leaning heavily towards charging students on a per-credit basis, instead of flat charges for full-time study.

We at Baruch will urge the University to seek balance: while we recognize the need to protect our undergraduate constituents, we do not want graduate or non-resident costs to go so high that enrollment will drop off. In addition, we will push for the University to make sure that the tuition increases factor in the need for funds for improved services, and that we are not in the position of charging students significantly more for equal, or perhaps even reduced, services. It would appear that SUNY has factored this additional funding into their tuition increase. We need the funds to augment both our faculty and non-faculty ranks.

The President reported that tuition discounting is not being considered at this time. Tuition discounting is a practice employed by many private and public colleges, to insure that those in higher income brackets pay more, while those with fewer resources pay less. We have raised the

idea with CUNY and will press for it as a more egalitarian approach to tuition; perhaps it will be considered next year.

The President reported that the issue of tuition indexing – i.e., the practice of linking tuition increases to the annual rate of inflation – is also sliding off the negotiating table for this year. We will continue to lobby for this saner, more gradual system of tuition increases.

The President went on to say that it will be extremely important that the state does not pull additional funding to match the increased tuition revenue.

The tuition task force is working to make sure we are treated fairly and in a manner consistent with good public policy.

Professor Peterson raised the question of how funding that supports student aid would respond to the increase. Dean Chase replied that we expect TAP to correspond with tuition. While there was some concern that a change in policy might result in a 1/3 holdback of TAP funds until graduation, this regulation does not now seem likely. CUNY, SUNY, and private colleges and universities are all in agreement on this.

The President concluded his report by encouraging faculty members to share any questions or ideas they had with him, or with the chairpersons of the various task forces.

The President then asked if there were any additions to the written reports of the College officers.

Vice President Sam Johnson reported on the results of the student government elections, which were held during the first ten days in April. At the graduate level, 123 students took part in an online election for the first time. Eleven candidates competed for nine positions. The incoming president is Christina Cerroni. In addition, students passed a referendum to raise student activity fees by \$3. At the undergraduate level, a record 18% of the student body voted; 97 candidates vied for 43 positions in 17 contests. The new undergraduate student president is Adrian Lovell. The undergraduate student activity fee structure was also changed, reducing four categories of fee assessment to two, allowing for a reallocation of funds and an increase in student activity fee revenue.

Provost Dannenbring reported that the College's Commencement would, thanks to the lackluster performance of the NY Knicks and NY Rangers, be held in the arena at Madison Square Garden this year. It will be the first time in some years that we are able to hold a single ceremony encompassing all degree candidates. Commencement will take place Wednesday, May 28, at 11:00 a.m. He encouraged all faculty to attend this most exciting of public events. He noted that a Commencement speaker had not yet been confirmed but that students government leaders were involved in the selection process.

The President then moved on to a review of the reports of the Committees of the General Faculty and asked if any Chairs wished to give an oral report.

Professor James Guyot asked a question of the Committee on Student Evaluations. He asked if the committee, in examining ways of making the evaluation process more useful, had considered

making an adjustment for the grade received in relation to the evaluation given. The Economics and Finance department did a complicated statistical analysis, and determined that while there is correlation between grades and evaluations, there is not a causal link. Professor Hansen suggested that when evaluation data is summarized, P&B committees should also be given grade distributions for consideration. Committee Chair David Potash responded that the committee had discussed these issues, but had not yet resolved them; a wealth of psychometric research exists in this area. The Committee has primarily concerned itself with determining how the surveys can be used more effectively. They are working with the Faculty Senate to set up mechanisms for wider faculty input, with a timetable to be determined.

Professor Alexander Reisz, on behalf of the Committee on Collegiate Athletic Activities, encouraged his colleagues to remind students that we now have great athletic facilities. The President added that he frequently swims in the pool and is sometimes the only person there.

Professor Meir Lubetsky, on behalf of the Committee on Committees, reported on elections for the University Faculty Senate. The faculty need to elect three senators for three-year terms (May 2003 – May 2006). The Committee on Committees put forward two nominations: Bobbi Pollard of the Library and Robert Friedman of the Zicklin School. Professor Howard Ross was nominated from the floor. Professor Lubetsky moved to close nominations at that point; the motion was seconded and passed. No elections will be necessary.

In addition, the faculty needs to elect two alternates to serve a one-year term (May 2003 – May 2004). James Defilippis of Black & Hispanic Studies was nominated from the floor. No further nominations were forthcoming. Professor Lubetsky will solicit further nominations via email, with a vote to be held later if necessary.

The President called for any new business to be brought before the faculty. Professor Burt Hansen suggested that the Honors Committee was addressing issues that required some further discussion, particularly that of the required grade point average for latin honors.

With the business of the meeting having been transacted, it was adjourned by acclamation at 1:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Parker
Secretary, General Faculty