

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes: September 3, 1999

Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, room 162
2:00 P.M.

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:07 P.M. Vice Provost Robert Smith presided.
2. It was moved, seconded, and passed without dissent on a voice vote to approve as distributed the minutes of the 4/2/99 meeting.
3. The list of Plans of Study and Dissertation Proposals approved throughout the summer months was distributed.
4. J. Henkel addressed the group concerning several goals and objectives:
 - The New Web Site for Research and Graduate Education - The new site was demonstrated and explained. It includes a "Graduate Administrative Support Web Site," which includes a new database for GRE scores. Access to the Administrative Support site is restricted.
 - Electronic Payroll Authorization Processing for Graduate Assistantships - Significant and rapid progress on this new system has resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of graduate assistants who will receive an on-time first pay check this semester. Many staff members throughout the University have contributed to this effort and to its success. It was estimated that 1,500 approvals of the approximately 1,700 assistantship authorizations expected this semester already have been granted using the new system.
 - PeopleSoft Implementation - Progress continues to be made in the effort to implement the newly-acquired PeopleSoft software. The new software will replace several of the student data systems currently in use (e.g., THESIS, SARS, and SAMS).
5. R. Smith spoke about several matters:
 - Graduate School Fact Sheet - A fact sheet entitled "The Graduate School at a Glance" has been developed for general use to highlight the functions and recent levels of productivity of the various offices (i.e., Vice Provost and Dean, Graduate Admissions, Graduate Records, and Graduate and Research Information Systems) within the Graduate School. Copies were distributed.
 - Best Practices Group - This group will be active in the coming academic year and will consider a variety of issues.
 - Student Quality of Life Task Force - Vicky Triponey, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Services, and R. Smith are forming this group to explore the many aspects of student life on the campus with an eye toward enhancing the overall quality of the student experience. This effort is expected to continue for at least the next year. Faculty, administrative staff, and students are being selected for the group.

- Next Round of National Research Council (NRC) Ratings - It is expected that the next NRC ratings will be published in 2003. There was discussion about the process. It was noted that agricultural fields will be rated this time.
 - Third Annual Celebration of Research and Creativity - The event is planned for October 6, 1999. Highlights will include a presentation by Gary English, Interim Dean of Fine Arts, and a performance by political satirist Mark Russell. This year's celebration is dedicated to the memory of the late Bob Gray, Dean of Fine Arts. ConnectiCalendar, a newly-created calendar University leaders in research and creativity, will be unveiled. A Celebration web site is being created, as well.
 - Budgetary Challenges - There was discussion about the recent announcement from the Chancellor's Office concerning steps that are to be taken to close the budget gap, which represents less than 1% of the University's operating budget.
6. J. Marsden raised for discussion the matter of the significant increase in the size of this year's incoming freshman class and the resulting increased teaching demands (e.g., the need to staff on short notice dozens of additional sections of required undergraduate English courses). In the course of the discussion, L. Strausbaugh noted that there also are implications for the years that follow the freshman year. Concern was expressed that the quality of graduate programs might be adversely affected (e.g., increased teaching load for graduate assistants, increased time to degree, etc.). The point was made that graduate students should be viewed as an "output," not as an "input" for something else.
 7. As a result of the discussion, it was moved (G. Anderson) and seconded (L. Strausbaugh) that the following issues be studied formally by appropriate groups: (1) appropriate and adequate housing for graduate students, (2) the teaching loads of graduate assistants, and (3) the character and the overall quality of the graduate-student experience at the University of Connecticut. The motion passed without dissent on a voice vote. It was agreed that issues #1 and #3 will be referred to the Task Force on the Quality of Student Life that is being formed and that issue #2 will be referred to the Best Practices in Graduate Education group that will be active in the coming year.
 8. It was agreed that a meeting of the Graduate Faculty Council should be called for Wednesday, September 29, 1999, to proceed with work related to the motion just passed (see #6 above).
 9. T. Peters described for the group a proposed design for custom academic regalia for holders of University of Connecticut doctoral degree. A sample of the design (provided by Oak Hall Industries of Roanoke, Virginia) was displayed. There was discussion. There was consensus that the design is appropriate and that formal approval should be sought. R. Smith agreed to pursue the matter further with the Chancellor for University Affairs.
 10. Adjournment was at 4:05 P.M.

Present:

- Anderson, G.
- Epling, G.
- Faghri, P.
- Henkel, J. (Associate Vice Provost)
- Marsden, J.
- Maxwell, G. (Associate Dean)

- Pagoulatos, E.
- Peters, T. (Assistant Dean)
- Sacks, S.
- Smith, R. (Vice Provost)
- Strausbaugh, L.

Regrets:

- Carmichael, G.
- Grasso, D.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas B. Peters
Secretary