

5-21-1984

Board of Trustees Educational Policy Committee March 25, 1984

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UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

March 25, 1984
University of Maine at Augusta

EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE

PRESENT: Harrison Richardson, Chairman; Severin Beliveau, Geneva Kirk, Francis Brown, Thomas Monaghan. Staff: Chancellor McCarthy, Harlan Philippi, William Sullivan, Mary Ann Haas, Arthur Johnson, Frederic Reynolds, Judith Sturnick, Constance Carlson. Faculty representatives: Harry Kerr, Ralph Jans, Douglas Allen, Sharon Zimmer-Boucher, Carol-Ann Hall. Student representatives: Edmund Lindemanis, Robert Sezak, Nancy Scott, Kathleen Hunt, Christina Fornili.

Committee Chairman Harrison Richardson convened the meeting.

Student Evaluation of Faculty. Mr. Richardson briefly outlined the background of this item which was raised for discussion in the Committee earlier this year. At the Committee's request, the Administrative Council reviewed existing procedures for student evaluation, and had the Chief Academic Officers (CAO) develop a proposal for system-wide procedures. The proposal was approved by the Administrative Council and it incorporated changes proposed by Campus personnel. During discussion of the proposal, Professor Hall said that the issue of student evaluation is a negotiable contract item. Further, she reported that despite a reference to thorough review on each Campus, the proposal, in fact, had not been discussed by the Presque Isle faculty. Vice Chancellor Harlan Philippi said that, according to the CAO, the proposal was reviewed at each Campus, except Farmington and Orono, where the faculty had chosen not to review it. Mr. Monaghan raised questions about the origin of the issue and its relation to the collective bargaining process. Mr. Richardson explained that the issue emerged from Committee discussion at an earlier meeting when faculty and student representatives indicated they were uncomfortable with the way some evaluations were conducted. The Committee subsequently requested a review of existing procedures with the intention of insuring that due process is available, and that at least minimum guidelines are established for the system. With respect to the relation to contract negotiations, Mr. D'Amico, Associate Vice Chancellor for Employee Relations, reported that student evaluation of faculty is one component of the tenure review process and thus some faculty conclude that evaluation procedures are subject to collective bargaining. He noted, however, that establishing procedures is a management prerogative; should the management's guidelines be applied unfairly, the faculty would have a right to grieve. It was pointed out that the CAO proposal would not mandate uniform procedures throughout the system, but would set minimum standards for the design of evaluation procedures by each Campus. During further discussion, faculty and student representatives commented on the proposal. Professor Allen said it would serve only to tighten what he considered a meaningless procedure, and would send a message that the

faculty were not to be trusted. He reported that similar procedures had been circulated at UMO and were retracted in the wake of a faculty uproar, and he pointed out that there were internal mechanisms at Orono to deal with inappropriate faculty behavior. He questioned whether there actually were widespread problems with the process, as previously reported. Professor Jans said that the Machias Campus had been following the proposed procedures without difficulties for some years. He noted that in the early years there were complaints of faculty intimidation at Machias and that students' perceptions are that this occurs at other campuses also. Professor Kerr said he had spoken in favor of the proposed procedures before and while he did not believe the problems were widespread, he thought that there are some instances of intimidation and that guidelines should be in place even if the number of instances are few. Professor Hall supported student evaluation, per se, but opted for campus autonomy to deal with problems, as opposed to system-wide procedures. Student representatives Christina Fornili and Nancy Scott supported the proposal and said they thought the guidelines were needed. Ms. Scott said students she has consulted about the issue believe that the problems are substantial. She reported that students are required to sign the evaluation form if they wish to provide comments in addition to completing the rating form. Professor Hall noted that no signature is required unless the student wants the comments included in the teacher's personnel record. Ms. Hunt pointed out that students believe signed comments can be risky, particularly on a small campus or in a department where one must take several courses from the same teacher. Professor Allen said he knew of no one who had been denied tenure on the basis of a negative student evaluation and he suggested that the more important issue is the need for meaningful student feedback on teaching effectiveness. He said a serious effort should be made to develop ways to evaluate teaching. In response to a question from Mr. Richardson, Professor Allen acknowledged that the proposal would not be inconsistent with efforts to evaluate teaching. Mr. Believau noted that students perceive some intimidation in the way the evaluation process is conducted at present, and he thought that the Trustees should provide some security for the students. Mr. Brown pointed out that student evaluations were not intended solely for use in personnel discussions, and a primary goal of the evaluation mechanism is to improve teaching performance. He said he thought it would be beneficial to faculty to know how their teaching methods were being received. Professor Hall concurred with Mr. Brown and President Carlson indicated that students' comments have been valuable to some teachers who were unaware they had acquired poor teaching habits. There being no further discussion, Mr. Richardson determined that the Committee consensus was that the evaluation procedures should be referred to the public meeting for action, with the Committee's recommendation for adoption.

Naval ROTC, UMO. Vice President Richard Bowers presented the Campus proposal for the program, which would be offered as an extension of the Maine Maritime Academy program, wherein participants would receive a UMO baccalaureate degree, with the Academy operating the ROTC portion.

Dr. Bowers reported that the proposal had been approved by the Council of Colleges by a narrow margin after being reviewed and recommended by the Campus's Program Development and Curriculum Committee. He introduced a delegation from the Academy who were present to provide additional information: Cdr. Richard McHugh, Lt. Dana Swenson, Lt. Herman Nichols. Professor Charles Rauch, Chairman of the UMO Program Development and Curriculum Committee was also present as a resource person. Dr. Bowers and Cdr. McHugh responded to questions of interest from the Trustees and it was determined that

- Collaboration between UMO and the MMA is a cost-effective way 1) for the Academy to expand its program and 2) for UMO to provide additional options for students interested in ROTC, through a program the Campus would not be able to initiate from its own resources.
- The NROTC school at MMA is one of 64 in the nation. The Academy admits both contract and regular students and the program is open to women.
- Full scholarship aid covers tuition, books and fees, provides a stipend of \$100 per month, and requires a four-year active duty commitment.
- Of the 29 scholarships available in Maine through the Academy this year, 25 were awarded to out-of-state students. Sixteen UMO students have now registered for the program.

Faculty representative Douglas Allen reported on the controversy the proposal generated at Orono, where the Council of Colleges approved the program by a vote of 17-12, with three-fourths of the Council's faculty membership voting against it. Professor Allen said he expected that the program would be approved by the Board as well, but he requested that the Trustees consider some of the academic questions during debate on the issue. Mr. Richardson and Mr. Beliveau recommended that, rather than the Committee hearing the arguments and taking a position, the proposal be referred for debate by the full Board in the public meeting. Questions were raised about procedures for campus approval of the program and the Chancellor pointed out that the Committee setting would be appropriate to explanation of procedural questions and identification of any serious or compelling objections to the proposal. The major points of the discussion which followed are summarized:

- Dr. Bowers reported that new programs ordinarily are initiated within an academic department and forwarded to the Program Development and Curriculum Committee (PDC) through the department's College. In this instance, the Council of Colleges became involved as a means to initiate the program review process, since the MMA had no campus or college affiliation.

- Professor Allen pointed out that the documentation to support the proposal indicated that courses for the program were approved by an interim administrator rather than the faculty curriculum committee. Professor Rauch reported that the specific curriculum had not been approved and would not be negotiated until the Academy had standing on the Campus.
- Professor Rauch indicated that the procedural process was handled differently in this case, since MMA does not belong to a College, but the proposal was subjected to the same standards applied to other new program proposals.
- Cdr. McHugh pointed out that the approval process had to start somewhere. The PDC Committee approved the program concept and if the proposal receives Trustee approval, the Academy will have standing to complete the curriculum development process through the College of Business Administration, to which the NROTC would be assigned.
- Professor Rauch reported that the Collaborative Agreement includes a clause (3-B) which protects the University's right to set the final degree requirements, outside of naval science.
- Professor Allen inquired about the percentage of technical courses which would be applied toward the degree. Dr. Bowers indicated that ROTC courses would be used as electives. It was pointed out that the program may include courses which the University will not accept for credit although ROTC students will be required to take them anyway. Cdr. McHugh reported that ROTC students must meet both the University requirements and the Navy requirements which means completion of approximately 160 hours, compared to 120 hours for many University degrees.
- In response to questions about available space for the program on Campus, Dr. Bowers reported that MMA would share space with UMO's Air Force ROTC.
- When the agenda for the meeting was published, Professor Allen requested and received permission to comment on the proposal during discussion in the public meeting. In response to questions from the Trustees, Professor Allen acknowledged that some of his concerns would touch on the concept of ROTC programs, per se.

There being no further discussion, and the Committee members concurring, Mr. Richardson said the NROTC program would be referred to the full Board for consideration and action in the public meeting.

Cooperative Extension. Mr. Richardson reported that the Committee had met recently to review a proposal concerning Cooperative Extension and a report would be presented to the Board at the public meeting.

Adjournment.

JoAnne R. Magill
Clerk

