Minutes
Faculty Educational Policies Committee

May 7, 1975

A meeting of the Faculty Educational Policies Committee was held at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, 1975 in Dickinson 117.


The minutes of the April 30 meeting will be presented for approval next week.

Lionel Nowak reported that Peter Pochna, a student, has requested permission for himself and another student to observe FEPC in action; they are doing a joint project on the structure of the College. The group felt uneasy about this idea, but agreed that when it is ready to discuss educational policy, probably in two weeks, it would review the matter again.

Black Music Curriculum

The subcommittee asked Bill Dixon to describe the activities of Black Music so its curriculum would be better understood; their specific questions related to quarters, ensemble, and student and fellow teaching. Bill explained that ensemble is only part of a quarter, that the student-directed ensembles are supervised by full faculty members, with reports written by faculty. He further explained that the curriculum specifies a number of courses which may or may not be offered, dependent upon demand, and that it is so constructed because the division has only three half-time faculty members, one half-time associate and two teaching assistants to work with.

MOTION: that we approve this curriculum as described, including the revisions to be scrutinized by Ronald Cohen, and including Henry Letcher's participation in the teaching of one ensemble under supervision of a faculty member.

VOTE: Yes 6; No 0; Abstain 5. Passed.

Some abstainers explained that they were troubled by the fact that students and student assistants would be teaching courses.

Dance Curriculum

The subcommittee asked Judith Dunn to give the rationale for an option in the first-year Dance quarter which would permit substitution of either Stagecraft or Lighting Design for the Composition element in the usual Composition-3 Techniques class unit; and asked also how this would weigh on the teaching schedule of the Stagecraft and Lighting Design staff. Judy explained that the option is not new and that the substitution can offer a beginner, overly insecure about composition, an effective alternative; she also said the personnel concerned had approved the possibility and that the Division would discourage enrollment by any but serious students.
MOTION: that FEPC approve the Dance curriculum as explained by Judith Dunn.

VOTE:  Yes  10 ; No  0 ; Abstain  1 .  Passed

After Judith Dunn left there was discussion about the propriety of taking a vote in front of the visitor; the chairman acknowledge his carelessness and agreed to avoid this situation in future.

Music Curriculum

The subcommittee questioned Henry Brant on the quarter credit for the Motet Choir and on the problem of reporting on individual progress. Henry stated that for a choir such as this to be effective it needs the dignity of a course so that standards can be maintained. The circumstance (group endeavor) does not permit any sensitive individualized report. He and Frank Baker, however, will talk directly with and report individually on those few students who participate in the Choir in fulfillment of the performance requirement connected with Composer's Lab.

MOTION: that FEPC accept the Music Division curriculum as presented.

VOTE:  Yes  9 ; No  2 .  Passed.

Drama Curriculum

The subcommittee noted that Dance for Actors has been withdrawn from the curriculum; its other questions to Drama were 1) the desirability of offering Introduction to the Theatre as presented, 2) the role that Video Tutorial should play in the Drama curriculum, and 3) whether the two introductory courses in design (Introduction to Lighting Design and to Stagecraft) should be combined into one course. Leroy Logan said that at division meeting today the (1) Introduction to Theatre has been replaced by an A, B, C, D, two-year sequence which will include Design, Acting, Directing and either History of Theatre or Playwriting. (2) The Video is being used as a tool by both the Dance and Drama divisions and this tutorial is offered to instruct students in use of video. (3) The design people have found they can't cover the four components of material of Lighting Design and Stagecraft in less than a half term each; furthermore the material is set up so that a student can take either one or both years.

After discussion FEPC and Leroy agreed that the Video tutorial could be offered without public announcement, as are a number of other tutorials; this would avoid registration by students other than those who are directly concerned with it as a tool for their division.

MOTION:  that Introduction to Theatre not be taught, but be replaced by the A, B, C, D plan; that Introduction to Lighting Design and to Stagecraft be taught as described; and that we do not list the Video tutorial in the curriculum.

VOTE:  Yes  10 ; No  0 ; Abstain  1 .  Passed.
The meeting was adjourned at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Florence I. Burggraf
Secretary

For references about discussion of student teaching, refer to FEPC minutes for November 11 and 13, 1974.
TO: Gail Parker, Lionel Nowak

FROM: Josef Wittman

RE: FEPC Structure

May 9, 1975

I propose the following structure of the FEPC:

The committee would consist of 10 members. One member would be elected from each of the College's eight divisions. Two members would be elected from the faculty at large.

This structure seems to me the only one which would allow for direct, continuous, and informed input from all divisions of the College. The size of this committee would not be much larger than the present FEPC, yet the committee would be large enough to represent a balanced view of the educational concerns of the College.

There appears to be some fear that the presence of all divisions in FEPC would cause an excess of lobbying. We should be careful not to apply quasi governmental terminology to our operations. Hopefully, government in Washington and in Bennington has little in common. I reject the notion that presentation of our educational needs tends to be equated with the operation of special political, social, or commercial pressure groups, whose interest, by the way, may cut across the whole electorate. Even in that sense, the term "lobby" is a misnomer.

Members should serve a limited time. Immediate reappointments should not be allowed. A system of staggered office terms, in the manner as is happening now, would ensure some continuity and carry over of committee policies.

I would also like to comment at this point, on our own system of balloting, which never results in a real divisional representation, in the sense that a division can elect its representative. Divisional samplings, chosen by the faculty at large, may be a more apt description of the process, at least as far as the small divisions are concerned.

Any committee established to deal with our total educational processes should include members appointed, or at least nominated, by each division.

Maybe our college election procedures should be reexamined at this point. Presently, only the members of the Interdivisional Committee are elected by and from within each division.

Josef Wittman