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# FAC'S SHEET

Newsletter of the University of Scranton Faculty Affairs Council  
November 2014

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## November Meeting Set!

FAC Schedules Membership Meeting  
for November 11<sup>th</sup> in the McHenry  
Ballroom, TDC

The third FAC meeting for 2014-2015 academic year is scheduled for Tuesday, November 11th in the McHenry Ballroom on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the DeNaples Center.

Lunch will be served beginning at 11:15 a.m. with the business meeting starting at 11:30 a.m.

The Executive Committee urges all members to attend. Check in the right hand column for the agenda.

### *FAC Meetings for 2014-2015*

The FAC Executive Committee has scheduled monthly membership meetings for the upcoming academic year on the following dates and at the places indicated. All regular meetings are set for **Tuesdays** and begin at 11:30 a.m. Additional meetings may be called to address special issues or concerns.

November 11, 2014	407	DeNaples Center
December 9, 2014	407	DeNaples Center
February 10, 2015	407	DeNaples Center
March 10, 2015	407	DeNaples Center
April 14, 2015	407	DeNaples Center
May 12, 2015	407	DeNaples Center

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## FAC'S SHEET

is published periodically by the Faculty Affairs Council at the University of Scranton. The editor is Betsey Moylan. Comments and suggestions from the membership are welcomed. Members may also check FAC's Web site at [www.scranton.edu/fac](http://www.scranton.edu/fac) for further information on the Faculty Affairs Council, an affiliate of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Copies of the Faculty Contract and Handbook are found on the site.

## AGENDA

for November 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting

1. Chair's Report - Michael Friedman
    - A. Preparing for Negotiations
    - B. Changes at the Handbook Committee
    - C. Merit Pay Survey and Appeals
    - D. Current Searches for Academic Administrators
    - E. Shared Governance - The Routing Committee
    - F. Executive Committee Elections
  2. Contract Administrator's Report - Kevin Nordberg
  3. Treasurer's Report - Dan West
  4. Grievance Officer's Report - Len Champney
  5. Old Business
    - a. Interdisciplinarity - Part 2
  6. New Business
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## When Silence Isn't Golden

by Michael Friedman

Every three years, at about this time, the editor of the FAC's Sheet runs a piece that I wrote several years ago entitled "Silence Is Golden." In that article, I explain that, before I became a union officer, I was always frustrated by the lack of detail included in the progress reports on contract negotiations given by the Chair of FAC. Instead of telling the membership exactly what issues we had brought to the table and what the administration wanted in return, the Chair simply informed us that negotiations were proceeding smoothly, but that there were still some undefined areas that separated by the two sides. Once I became

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## Minutes from October 7th, 2014 FAC Meeting

### 1. Chair's Report

**A. Preparing for negotiations** – The committees charged with carrying out the negotiations process have begun their preliminary work and are on schedule for the deadline required by the Faculty Handbook. The Salary and Benefits Committee has received its charge, and its members have begun their research. The Steering Committee will gather in October and November to look at the Town Meeting results and the faculty survey. The only information we have received from the administration about their Table Team is the name of their lead negotiator, Atty. Brian Jackson.

**B. FAC Forum on Search Committees** – The chair thanked those who attended the forum. He characterized the meeting as a spirited yet collegial discussion of various aspects of a preliminary proposal still before the Handbook Committee regarding the rights and duties of Search Committees. It is clear that the ranking of candidates continues to concern both sides. There is also division regarding whether or not the provisions in the proposal should apply to Presidential Search Committees, as well as to other Search Committees. The Handbook Committee will continue to debate the proposal in light of the suggestions made at the FAC Forum.

On a related note, recently, the FAC officers received word that a search for the Associate Dean of KSOM had been conducted internally by the University's Human Resources Department, not in compliance with the Faculty Handbook, which requires an election of search committee members from the faculty who would then participate in a formal search and make a recommendation to the President. When FAC brought this matter to the Provost, he explained that, as a result of an "unfortunate miscommunication" over the summer before his arrival, the Handbook had indeed been violated, but that once he and his colleagues had discovered this violation, they took steps to rectify it, including a request to Betsey Moylan to conduct an election for faculty members to serve on a search committee for the position. Murlji Rajan is continuing as the Interim Associate Dean of KSOM for this year, and we expect that he will be a candidate for the permanent position. Since the violations of the procedure have been corrected, there is nothing more for the FAC officers to do at this time, but they will monitor the situation to make sure that all other provisions of the CBA are observed.

**C. Sub-committee on 2.3.3.A** – The work of the Handbook sub-committee reviewing the Department's Role in the Rank and Tenure Process is now underway. The chair asked Gretchen Van Dyke, a member of the sub-committee, to comment on its progress. She noted that the group had held two separate meetings with the Math department and will continue its deliberations throughout October.

**2. Contract Administrator's Report** – Kevin Nordberg reported that a new direct relationship with Transamerica Investments will result in lower fees for the faculty who have chosen them for their pension plan. He also addressed a question regarding the Affordable Care Act and its impact on "Cadillac" health insurance plans. He assured the membership that the steering committee of FAC is investigating this fact for its impact in negotiations.

**3. Treasurer's Report** – Michael Friedman reported for Dan West, who was traveling, that all accounts are up to date.

**4. Grievance Officer's Report** – Len Champney reported that there are no active grievances or complaints.

### 5. Old Business

**A. Interdisciplinarity:** Responding to faculty comments at the May 2014 FAC meeting, the sub-committee in charge of the document has made several changes to the first half of the proposal. The chair explained the changes, noting several heading changes and acronym definitions. He also called attention to the language clarifying governance and curriculum changes for the programs. Finally, he noted the changes in the timeline that were recommended at the May meeting. A question arose regarding programs that had no director, and Friedman clarified the policy in that particular instance. Since there was no quorum at the meeting, the chair directed the FAC secretary to conduct an electronic vote at the earliest convenience. He also stated that the second phase of the proposal will be discussed in depth at the November FAC meeting.

**B. Merit Adjustments** – At the September FAC meeting members engaged in a heated discussion regarding merit pay. The Chair asked for a continuation at this meeting and also announced that the Merit Pay Survey would be distributed late in the week. He encouraged all members, whether they were awarded adjustments or not, to participate. Additional points

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### ***When Silence Isn't Golden***

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a union officer, I began to understand the reasons why it is usually better for contract negotiations to proceed in relative secrecy. As I wrote, "Contract talks are, in certain ways, like a game of cards. We union representatives sit down across the table from our opponents, and we play our hand to the best of our abilities. And although our faculty colleagues would like to sit behind us and peek over our shoulders to see which cards we keep and which we discard, that's probably not a good idea. For one thing, our opponents gain an advantage if they know what's in our hand, and a friendly observer might unintentionally give away the cards we're holding. We also become self-conscious being watched so closely, which might cause us to pass up an opportunity to take a bold risk that could pay off later in the game."

So, usually, we warn the faculty early in the process that we do not plan to divulge detailed information about the substance of negotiations while they are in progress. Indeed, we fully intend to adhere to that policy in our upcoming negotiations, but after our experience in 2012, we cannot be absolutely certain that such a stance would be in the faculty's best interests. Those of you who were here for our previous round of contract talks will remember that the FAC officers were forced by circumstances to alter our usual procedure. We reluctantly provided the faculty with specific information about various proposals that the University had brought to the table because we perceived those proposals as attacks upon Shared Governance and the right of our union to bargain collectively in matters concerned with wages, hours, and working conditions. As a result of the intense and very public opposition to such proposals demonstrated by various sectors of the University community, the faculty was able to fight off these initiatives and to protect aspects of Shared Governance that we consider essential to the mission and operation of a first-rate academic institution.

Therefore, the FAC officers cannot say definitively at this time what kind of reports you will receive from us once contract negotiations begin. We expect that the administration will respect the faculty's collective bargaining rights and will bring to the table proposals that accord with the principles of Shared Governance. If so, then we will gratefully provide you with vague progress reports that offer little or no detail about the issues being discussed. However, in the unlikely event that the administration disregards the faculty's rights and

seeks to impose upon the institution a top-down governance structure, then we will bring those matters to your attention and ask for your public support. In 2012, it took time for the officers and the faculty to recognize the precarious situation we were facing and to devise plans to deal with it. This time around, the FAC officers will be prepared to respond immediately to such a situation, if it occurs, and to call upon the membership to sustain us in our efforts.

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### ***Minutes from October 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting***

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made at the October meeting concerned rubrics and assessment, transparency, inequity among the college awards, and the focus on scholarship above all other factors. A sub-committee to study evidence-based practice on merit was formed and four faculty members volunteered to serve.

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsey Moylan, FAC Secretary

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### **FAC to Hold Annual Executive Committee Election**

On **December 1 and 2, 2014**, FAC will conduct its annual election for positions on the FAC Executive Committee. Michael Friedman and Kevin Nordberg are coming to the end of their current two-year terms. Therefore, there are two positions up for election for terms beginning June 1, 2015.

Friedman has expressed his intention to seek reelection, but Nordberg has announced that he will not do so. FAC welcomes the written nomination of any members in good standing. Such nominations should be submitted to FAC Secretary, Betsey Moylan by Tuesday, **November 25**.

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### **NOTICE TO NON-UNION MEMBERS**

All non-union members who are NOT conscientious objectors have until November 30 to file if they so desire, an agency fee objection. If you are NOT a union member and wish to file, please contact FAC secretary Betsey Moylan.

## FAC OFFICERS 2014-2015

### *Chairperson*

Michael Friedman, English  
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### *Contract Administration Officer*

Kevin Nordberg Philosophy  
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### *Grievance Officer*

Len Champney Political Science  
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### *Secretary*

Betsey Moylan Library  
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### *Treasurer*

Daniel West HA. & HR  
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### **Report on AAUP Summer Institute** by Steve Szydowski

The 2014 AAUP Summer Institute, held July 17 – 20, 2014 at Hofstra University, provided me with the opportunity to discuss current academic trends relating to a host of critical opportunities and challenges facing faculty and other academic professionals. Representing the University of Scranton as the recipient of the Sheldon I. Rosenberg Union Leadership Development Grant, I engaged with fellow faculty from academic institutions across the country to discuss topics such as shared governance, financial stability, faculty advancement, and overall support for academic principles in higher education. This privilege added deeper insight for me on how faculty can contribute to the betterment of the University of Scranton community.

The Summer Institute focused on the core premises of academic freedom, commitment to excellence in

advancing research and teaching, and the integral role faculty play in achieving institutional mission and financial sustainability. Comparative review among academic institutions of similar size to the University of Scranton provided me with the opportunity to benchmark areas for improvement and aspects of excellence on our campus. Faculty discussions, both formal and informal, allowed participants to share best practices in research, teaching, and service on campuses throughout the nation.

Upon reflection, I now realize the importance of shared governance as an essential element in achieving institutional mission and strategic goals. Collegial commitment by faculty and administration to excellence in education, scholarship, and service stands as a hallmark for institutional advancement and ultimately student success. It is evident that effective and transparent communication within a University provides a foundation for institutional achievement. Faculty commitment to working with administration, students, and other academic stakeholders is required to support our mission and ultimately to change our global society for the better.

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## *Luncheon Menu for November 11th Meeting*

- Green salad with two dressings
- Sliced Oven- baked Ham
- Sliced Turkey Breast
- Onion & Sage Bread Dressing
- Mashed Potatoes and Gravy
- Fresh Vegetable
- Cranberry Sauce
- Rolls & Butter
- Apple or Pumpkin Pie
- Coffee, Tea, Soda, and Water

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**Serving will begin at 11:15 a.m. in the  
Room 407 of TDC.**