

MEETING OF OCTOBER 27, 2000

President George Rupp, the chairman, called the Senate to order shortly after 1:15 p.m. in Schapiro Engineering Auditorium. Forty-four of 82 senators were present during the meeting.

Minutes and agenda: The minutes of September 22, 2000, and the agenda were adopted as proposed.

President's report:

--The President brought greetings from West Coast alumni, who had asked many questions about Columbia's sexual misconduct policy, which was criticized in a recent *Wall Street Journal* editorial.

--Homecoming for College alumni was a great success.

--Prof. Eric Kandel has won the Nobel Prize in medicine for work on the physiology of memory; he is the fourth Columbia Nobelist in as many years.

--The President praised the recent work of the student-run Columbia Political Union, which has organized excellent forums in connection with upcoming elections. Speakers have included Warren Buffett, Robert Rubin, Hillary Clinton, Ralph Nader, and Al Gore, and invitations are also out to major Republican candidates.

--The Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing has held its first open forum, and will hold others.

--The committee responsible for overseeing the implementation of the new University copyright policy has been appointed, with significant overlap with the committee that drafted the policy last spring, including the same co-chairs, Ira Katznelson and Jane Ginsburg. A student position, added last spring at the request of the Senate student caucus, has been filled. The appointee is Jeff Williams, a Ph.D. student in Applied Physics and Mathematics.

--The Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC) has been working effectively in recent months with GSAS Dean Eduardo Macagno on a number of issues of concern to graduate students, including stipends, housing, health insurance, and library support.

Sen. Eugene Litwak (Ten., A&S) asked if faculty senators will be on the oversight committee for the copyright policy. Sen. Paul Duby (Ten., SEAS), chairman of the Executive Committee, said he was going to mention in his report that Sens. Letty Moss-Salentijn (Ten., SDOS), Richard Bulliet (Ten., A&S), and Frank Lichtenberg (Ten., Bus.), who all served on the drafting committee last spring, will also serve on the oversight committee.

Report of the Executive Committee chairman:

--Changes in Committee Assignments: The chairman presented a list of changes in committee assignments that had been distributed in the packet. Sen. Rohit Aggarwala, chair of the student caucus, added one new appointment—Collamore Crocker (Nonsen., Stu., Bus.) to the Elections Commission. The Senate approved the list.

--Executive Committee meeting of October 23: One item of business was a

continuing discussion of the Senate's relationship with the Trustees. The chairman called attention to the letter in the Senate packet from himself and the President soliciting nominees for Senate-selected Trustees. The deadline for names is only two weeks off. At the beginning of December an Executive Committee subcommittee will submit a short list of names to a counterpart committee of Trustees. All members of the Columbia community, not just senators, are welcome to submit names.

The Executive Committee also discussed the Honors and Prizes Committee, whose work is mostly confidential, bearing fruit on Commencement Day, when the University awards honorary degrees. A letter to the community soliciting nominations for honorary degrees went out during the summer over the signatures of the chairman and Steven Friedman, Trustee chairman, but the Senate Honors and Prizes Committee is still looking for additional

nominees.

With Sen. Aggarwala, the chairman attended the October 7 plenary Trustee meeting as an observer. The main issues were the future physical development of the University, the relationship of the Medical School to New York Presbyterian Hospital, the success of Columbia Innovation Enterprises, and the University's on-line ventures, including Fathom.com. The chairman understood from a presentation by Executive Vice Provost Michael Crow that the Trustees will be making a major decision about Fathom in December, which may become public early in 2001. The chairman said the time is right for the Senate to learn more about the plans and express an opinion, particularly about distance-learning initiatives.

The Executive Committee also discussed plans to set up e-mail lists to facilitate communication between senators and their constituents, and the Provost gave permission for the Senate office to pursue this initiative.

The Provost's annual letter to the Senate was available at the door for the present meeting. The chairman urged all senators to read it, and all committees to study sections relevant to their work.

Sen. Aggarwala noted that the Provost's annual letter says nothing about the long-term possibilities of expansion beyond the present campuses that were raised at the last Trustee and Senate meetings. He suggested that the Senate Physical Development Committee should be consulted about these issues.

The chairman said this topic, mentioned briefly at the last Executive Committee meeting, will likely be one agenda item for the once-a-semester meeting between senators and trustees that is provided for in a 1987 agreement between the two organizations. Another item will be online learning. He said he will report the date and agenda for this meeting to the Senate once University Secretary Keith Walton has scheduled it.

The President saw no reason why Physical Development shouldn't participate in general discussion of long-range space issues. The Trustees went into executive session in order to discuss specific possible transactions, because public discussion at such an early stage would be imprudent. He strongly urged that Physical Development serve as a forum for such issues, with the relevant administrators, at a level of abstraction from particular sites.

Sen. Aggarwala said abstract discussion of this kind at an earlier stage would have made the September *New York Times* story about Columbia's interest in land by the Hudson below 72nd Street a good deal less sensational.

The President said it is no secret that Columbia faces severe space constraints, or that it has considered an array of options for faculty and grad student housing and other kinds of expansion. Prospective sellers would welcome public discussion of specific possibilities at this stage, but this would make it harder for Columbia to pursue such initiatives. Still, there is every reason for Physical Development to study fundamental space issues that the University faces, as it has already done with Emily Lloyd and others.

At the request of Sen. Roosevelt Montas (Stu., GSAS/H), a member of the Executive Committee, the chairman elaborated on plans to create e-mail lists for Senate constituencies. The chairman said the Senate staff will serve as gatekeeper for e-mail communications between senators and their constituents. He said the Executive Committee will report to the Senate once the e-mail lists are in use.

New business: The chairman explained that the first report on the agenda, assigned to Faculty Affairs, would actually be two presentations from Sen. Litwak, the first as External Relations chair, the second as Faculty Affairs chair.

- **Distance learning and Fathom.com:** A new ad hoc subcommittee has been formed, to be led by Sens. Richard Bulliet (history), chairman of Budget Review and the faculty caucuses, and Sharyn O'Halloran (political science), a member of External Relations. It will raise the following questions, among others: What will Columbia's formal link be with Fathom.com, the for-profit enterprise recently founded and later spun off by Columbia for the dissemination of academic content on the internet? Will content provided for Fathom by a Columbia professor be a Columbia product? Will a faculty author be allowed to determine the suitability of advertising to be displayed in conjunction with his article? What will be the relationship between the University's on-line initiatives, including Fathom.com, and its fundamental academic priorities? Who will take responsibility—as faculty committees on instruction do for Columbia's own academic programs—for the quality of the content disseminated by Fathom, and by such distance-learning initiatives as the business courses offered by UNext.com and the continuing-education courses being developed by Cognitive Arts? How will profits from online ventures be distributed? Can some be earmarked for student fellowships and other urgent academic priorities? Who decides?

Sen. Barry Allen (Research Staff, Health Sciences) mentioned another question of interest to the subcommittee, of which he is a member: What is the exact legal relationship between Columbia and Fathom? For example, Columbia is now performing payroll services for Fathom. What are the limits of the University's liability?

Sen. Duby said the Executive Committee has spoken of inviting Fathom CEO Ann Kirschner and Executive Vice Provost Michael Crow to give a presentation at the November or December Senate meeting. He added that the new subcommittee would be adding a student member.

Sen. Letty Moss-Salentijn (Ten., SDOS) said the Education Committee, which she chairs, has been studying some of the issues on the subcommittee's agenda, particularly distance learning. She suggested adding a member of Education to the subcommittee.

President Rupp suggested that it might make more sense for Ann Kirschner and Michael Crow to speak with the subcommittee, instead of the Senate, or instead of both. Sen. Litwak agreed.

Sen. Aggarwala said he did not know such a subcommittee had been created, and suggested that it should be an ad hoc Senate committee, because its inquiry touches on issues of concern to every Senate constituency, including students. Business students, for example, have expressed discomfort with the distance-learning arrangement between their school and UNext.com. He also suggested that the procedure in similar inquiries has been to speak to relevant administrators both in committee, on confidential issues, and, eventually, in the full Senate.

- University policy on e-mail privacy: Speaking now as chairman of Faculty Affairs, Sen.

Litwak addressed the implications of a recent violation of the privacy of a Columbia faculty member's e-mail account. Deans in a Columbia school had asked to inspect the e-mail of an employee whose administrative duties had been terminated. An official at Academic Computing and Information Services had declined this request but had inspected the employee's e-mail message headers himself, and turned over messages with work-related titles to the deans.

Without commenting on this particular grievance, Provost Jonathan Cole agreed that e-mail privacy is an essential principle, to be overridden only under conditions to be defined in a new policy that the administration is drafting now, for review by the Senate and other bodies.

Sen. Herve Varenne (Fac., TC) asked how long the University keeps tapes of employees' e-mail, before they are completely eliminated from the system. The Provost said he did not know.

Sen. Allen added that at Health Sciences, all computer files—not just e-mail—of dismissed employees have sometimes been taken over and inspected. Still another problem has been the opening of regular mail. Sen. Litwak said Faculty Affairs has encountered the latter problem in the course of the same grievance investigation.

The Provost cautioned against discussing this particular grievance, since some of the facts are in dispute. Sen. Litwak agreed, saying he was only raising the issue in a general way now. Faculty Affairs might be reporting on the specifics of the grievance at the November Senate meeting.

--Report from Education: Sen. Moss-Salentijn summarized the two issues in the report, which had been distributed in the packet. The first was a controversy that had accompanied a proposal from the Division of Continuing Education and Special Programs to establish an eight-week summer program leading to a Certification of Professional Achievement for the Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Teachers College had objected to the TESOL proposal as an encroachment on its core mission. The Education Committee had acknowledged TC's jurisdiction in pedagogy programs, but had determined that the TESOL proposal was unique, involving a specially qualified faculty in Special Programs and a particular audience, and did not conflict with any present or currently envisioned TC program.

Sen. John Broughton (Fac., TC) expressed appreciation for the committee's work, but mentioned two concerns about the report. One was uncertainty about whether the report is simply summarizing the two sides of a conflict between Teachers College and Columbia's Division of Special Programs over responsibility for the pedagogical portion of an academic program, or stating a resolution of the conflict. The second concern was an apparent implication in the report that it was TC that obstructed collaboration efforts in the preparation of the TESOL

program.

Sen. Moss-Salentijn stressed again the uniqueness of the present case, which she said should not preclude the possibility of collaboration between the institutions in future programs.

The second issue in the Education report concerned student dissatisfaction with the coordination of dual-degree programs. Sen. Alex Oberweger (Stu., Bus.), focusing on graduate programs, and other students on the committee have identified problems with advising, support services, recruiting, overall administration, and the lack of a sense of community. The committee will be meeting with administrators from schools with the most dual degrees (Business, Law, Public Health, SIPA) to seek some solutions to these problems.

Sen. Aggarwala said he was glad that Education is actively investigating this issue, which is a priority for the student caucus. He said the two topics of the committee's report amount to a poignant commentary on the problems of a highly decentralized university. He anticipated that the current trend toward interdisciplinarity will only exacerbate this condition. The Senate had seen a related problem two years ago, when SIPA students complained about the possible impact of a new GSAS M.A. program on their degrees; Sen. Aggarwala said there does not appear to have been much strategic thinking about such problems since then. The solution, he said, may be some form of central coordination.

Sen. Gordon Christopher (Stu., SEAS), another member of Education, stressed that undergraduates are also facing problems in dual-degree programs, particularly in advising.

Sen. Sekou Campbell (Stu., Arts) said the priority of creating a community of scholars should override preoccupations with jurisdiction and division of labor.

President Rupp thanked Sen. Moss-Salentijn for her report, and asked if there was other business. Sen. Fran Pritchett (Ten., A&S) asked about the success of the recently instituted housing assistance program—offering incentives for employees to buy homes in neighborhoods in upper Manhattan. The President said that there has been considerable interest in the program, though few finalized purchases, and that the program has recently been expanded to take advantage of new opportunities. He promised to report in more detail at the next meeting.

He adjourned the meeting at around 2:20 p.m.