

Minutes of the Emory Faculty Council

January 16, 1996

Present: Beard, Brogan, Clark, Cody, Falls, Frye, Johnson, Letz, L'Hernault, Liebeskind, Moneyham, Rubinson, Sale, Schlant, Smith, Wenger

At the request of Provost Billy Frye, University Registrar Charles Nicolaysen and Francine Mangham of the Information Technology Division gave a presentation on a developing on-line student information system. Nicolaysen said that three or four years ago, some faculty members had discussed the possibility of being able to access student information on-line to better plan and advise their students. He said a student information system has existed for 20 years, and student records have been stored electronically for more than 10 years, but access to that system has not been especially convenient.

Nicolaysen said one of the main goals of the current project is to provide a more user-friendly way to access the data. The project team is attempting to accommodate requests for information on students both in the aggregate and on particular students. The issue of aggregate information is being addressed by a data warehouse, the prototype for which is currently being implemented. Providing information to faculty on particular students is a more complex issue, and the project team is currently working out security issues, such as determining what types of student information should be freely available to faculty and what types should not be.

An on-line system accessible by students that allows them to update portions of their information, such as address changes, should be up and running by April 1, Nicolaysen said. Eventually, students may even be able to order and purchase textbooks through the system.

Steven L'Hernault asked whether security measures being taken are strong enough to prevent computer hackers from corrupting the systems data. ITD staff member Susan Ament said each message sent over the system will carry a security element with it, and that most of the files on the system are read-only. She said if a World Wide Web element is added to the system, then the potential for data corruption could present a problem.

President Rick Letz asked Nicolaysen and his team to come back to the Council when they reach the point of making major decisions about faculty access to student records.

Provost Billy Frye announced that the \$400-million, five-year Emory Campaign had been completed on Dec. 31 with a total of \$419 million in gifts and pledges. Frye also announced that he is establishing a Commission on Teaching that will be charged to examine the most critical issues that pertain to the quality of teaching at Emory and prepare a report that assesses the current state of teaching and the teaching environment at Emory. The Commission will be asked to make specific recommendations concerning what can be done, consistent with the University's total mission, to assure Emory's continued commitment to and success in achieving teaching of the highest possible quality in the years to come.

Frye said the Commission is primarily composed of regular faculty, but with representation by non-tenure track faculty, alumni and students. Frye said his staff is planning a series of small group discussions on teaching this semester, similar to those of two years ago which ultimately resulted in the publication of *Choices & Responsibilities*. He said an effort to establish