

October 01, 2001

## Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 10/01/2001

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*Northeastern University*

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TO: FACULTY SENATE  
FROM: JOHN G. FLYM, SECRETARY, FACULTY SENATE  
SUBJECT: MINUTES, 2001-2002 FACULTY SENATE, 1 OCTOBER 2001

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Present: (Professors) Aroian, Baclawski, Bobcean, Boisse, Flym, Giessen, Gilbert, Gilmore, Hall, Herman, Hope, Kane, Kelleher, Lowndes, Metghalchi, Platt, Powers-Lee, Rotella, Rupert, Sullivan, Vaughn, Wallin, Wertheim, Willey, Wray  
(Administrators) Hall, Mantella, Meservey, Greene, Pantalone, Pendergast, Putnam, Rigg, Zoloth

Absent: (Professors) Barnes, Bruns, Fox, Levine, Naylor, Shafai  
(Administrators) Onan

Convened by Provost Hall at 11:52 a.m.

- I. **Minutes.** The minutes of the 4 June Organizational Meeting were approved.
- II. **SAC Report.** Professor Lowndes reported the following.
  - A. New Senator. In accordance with the Senate resolutions of last year, duly approved by the President and the Board of Trustees, Coop elected Professor William Wray as its representative.
  - B. Parliamentarian. Professor Barnes has agreed to serve as Parliamentarian.
  - C. Grievance Coordinator. Professor Flym will serve as SAC Grievance Coordinator.
  - D. Senate Meetings. Senate meetings will be held in two different locations this year. Most meetings will be in the Raytheon Amphitheater, 240 Egan, with the remainder in 308 Snell Engineering.
  - E. SAC Meetings. Since its election last June, the Agenda Committee has met eleven times, including one meeting with last year's SAC, one meeting with President Freeland, one meeting with President Freeland and Provost Hall, and one meeting with Provost Hall.

The Agenda Committee is scheduled to meet with the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees on November 16.

F. **Last Year's Business:**

Resolutions. The following Senate resolutions have been approved by the President and, where appropriate, the Board of Trustees since the Senate last met: two resolutions recommending Coop representation on the Senate; the Ph.D. in Computer Engineering; Master of Architecture; Interdisciplinary Master's degree in Telecommunication Systems Management; and acceptance of the Financial Affairs Committee report.

Graduate Council Action. On 22 May 2001, the Executive Committee of the Graduate Council approved curriculum revisions to the Nurse Anesthesia Program as a program revision and not a new program, therefore obviating the requirement to send the proposal to the New Programs Committee or to the full Graduate Council for approval.

- G. AEOC Evaluations. Evaluation reports on Dean James Fraser (School of Education) and Dean Allen Soyster (College of Engineering) have been released for reading by the faculty of their units.
- H. Searches. The Provost has charged the Agenda Committee to initiate chair searches for the following departments:

African-American Studies (internal)

An election is scheduled for 11 October.

Art and Architecture (external)

The committee is staffed and the search is under way. Members are:

Professor Julie Curtis (Art and Architecture) (Chair)

Professor Neal Rantoul (Art and Architecture)

Professor Thomas Starr (Art and Architecture)

Professor Bruce Ronkin (Music)

Professor Gerald Schumacher (Pharmacy Practice)

Civil & Environmental Engineering (external)

The committee is staffed. Members are:

Professor David Langseth (Civil and Environmental)

Professor Sara Wadia-Faschetti (Civil and Environmental)

Professor Mishac Yegian (Civil and Environmental)

Professor Bill Giessen (Chemistry)

Professor Fabrizio Lombardi (Electrical and Computer)

Philosophy & Religion (internal)

Staffing is in progress.

- I. Faculty Senate Website. The Agenda Committee has begun plans to establish a Faculty Senate Website which will become operational later this year. In addition to Senate agendas and minutes, the website will provide information on all committees, their memberships, charges and reports. Other archival and interactive features are also planned. We welcome suggestions for the details and design of the website.
- J. Focus for the 2001-02 Faculty Senate. This year, the Senate Agenda Committee is presenting charges to its standing committees and some *ad hoc* committees that address issues with the potential to advance the University towards its top-100 status among national research universities. The Senate Agenda Committee supports this goal with great enthusiasm. At the same time, we recognize that all current top-100 institutions will be determined to maintain their status, and that institutions both above and below us will have the same aspirations as our own. For us to succeed, therefore, will require an integrated strategic effort that embraces significant "out of the box" advances rather than small perturbations.

- K. **State of the Professoriate.** There are a number of trends that may compromise our reputation and thwart our ambition to become one of the top one-hundred national research universities. Two of these trends – the declining size of the professoriate, and the erosion of faculty salaries are discussed in the attached report.
- L. **Standing Committees of the Senate.** With the above focus and state of the professoriate in mind, therefore, the staffing and charges for four of the Senate Standing Committees have been completed.

### **Academic Policy Committee**

#### Membership:

Professor Susan Powers-Lee (Biology) (Chair)  
Professor Dorett Hope (Nursing)  
Professor Michael Lipton (Philosophy and Religion)  
Professor Hameed Metghalchi (MIME)  
Professor Robert Young (Marketing)  
SAC Liaison: Professor James Fox (Criminal Justice)

#### Background:

One notable characteristic of the *US News and World Report* Tier 1 and Tier 2 universities is their ability to recruit, retain, and graduate students with high academic abilities. A distinctive University Honors Program can provide a competitive advantage in recruiting, retaining and graduating highly motivated and talented students. Even a cursory review of honors programs at other institutions reveals a diversity of focus and operation. Northeastern's Honors Program has been extremely successful under the capable leadership of its former Director, Professor Michael Lipton. In the interim, while the University seeks his successor, it seems appropriate to review the Program and develop recommendations for its further enhancement that will provide strong support for our goal to attain top-100 status.

#### Charge:

1. Undertake a detailed assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the current Northeastern Honors Program.
2. Based on this assessment and a review of Honors Programs at other institutions, develop recommendations for the advancement of our Honors Program that will provide strong support for the recruitment, retention, and graduation of highly motivated and talented students. Among other issues, the Committee is asked to address the following:
  - a. What should be the goal and objectives of the Honors Program?
  - b. What should be the reporting structure for the Program?
  - c. Should the Director be full-time or part-time?
  - d. What credentials and qualifications should be required for the position of Director?
  - e. What search process should be used for the position of Director?
  - f. What should be the optimum size for the Program?

- g. What should be the student qualifications to join and stay in the Program, and who should decide these?
- h. What should be the procedure to admit and retain students in the Program?
- i. Should jurisdiction over Scholarships for Honors students be returned to the Honors Program?
- j. Should the Honors Program curriculum remain decentralized or become more centralized?
- k. How might awareness of the Honors Program be further advanced (to both prospective and current students)?
- l. What should be the appropriate incentive compensation levels for participating faculty and colleges?
- m. What dedicated space facilities improvements are necessary to advance the Program?
- n. Is the current honors resident hall adequate for the program? Does it promote the goals of the program?
- o. How might the current Campaign support the Program?
- p. What budget resources are necessary to support the recommendations for the Program?

The Committee is asked to present its report on this charge to the Senate Agenda Committee by no later than April 15, 2002.

### **Enrollment & Admissions Policy Committee**

#### Membership:

Professor Kostia Bergman (Biology) (Chair)  
 Professor Norman Boisse (Pharmaceutical Sciences)  
 Professor Jeffrey Hopwood (Electrical and Computer Engineering)  
 Professor Timothy Rupert (Accounting)  
 Professor Wallace Sherwood (Criminal Justice)  
 Vice President Philomena Mantella  
 SAC Liaison: Professor Denis Sullivan (Political Science)

#### Background:

Over the last several years, the University has significantly improved its financial aid policies so that students can receive support over the full five years of their studies. However, the University's practice has been to provide such support for only two terms of each academic year. This creates a particular disadvantage for students in Division C (i.e. students on campus full-time not involved with cooperative education), and the many other similar divisions. Vice President Mantella estimates that up to two thousand students may be subjected to limitations on their financial aid because of their divisional status. These restrictions on financial aid pose serious disadvantages to these students and obviously create a potential barrier for their retention and graduation.

A second issue concerns five-year programs. There is evidence from recent surveys of student applicants that our five-year programs are a significant reason for many students not to come to Northeastern. There is also evidence that this is an issue for our matriculants. In the May 1999 NUPulse Survey, it was revealed that 76% of

students thought that an advantage of the semester system would be that they could obtain a degree in four years with two coop assignments.

Charge:

1. To review the current practices of financial aid distribution at Northeastern, and to make a recommendation on whether or not to revise these practices to ensure that students in good standing are guaranteed financial support for all eleven quarters/eight semesters of their baccalaureate degree work. In addition, to make recommendations on whether those students pursuing double or dual majors, which might entail more than eleven quarters/eight semesters of full study, should be eligible for one or more quarters/semesters of additional financial aid support. In both cases, the Committee is urged to assess and report on the cost of any changes proposed. The Committee should present its recommendations on these matters by no later than November 23, 2001.
2. In terms of improving recruitment, retention, and graduation, to assess and report back on the desirability and feasibility of converting more of the undergraduate programs to become four-year programs. The Committee should present its recommendations on these matters by no later than March 29, 2002.

### **Faculty Development Committee**

Membership:

Professor Stuart Peterfreund (English) (Chair)  
Professor Thomas Barnes (Cardiopulmonary Sciences)  
Professor Janet Bobcean (Theatre)  
Professor Jacqueline Isaacs (MIME)  
Professor Edward Wertheim (Human Resources Management)  
SAC Liaison: Professor Thomas Gilbert (Chemistry)

Background:

The evaluation of courses and instructors plays a pivotal role in shaping our academic reputation. The current instrument for course and faculty evaluation (the Teaching Course Evaluation System or TCEP questionnaire) was originally approved by the Faculty Senate and the Student Government Association, but is now barely functional. A temporary solution for the current academic year will rely on an outside vendor to process the current evaluation questionnaires. The Director and staff of the Center for Effective University Teaching (C.E.U.T) seek a permanent solution to the problem that will provide a state-of-the-art evaluative instrument that yields more useful and formative evaluations of both faculty and courses.

A second issue concerns faculty development resources. The achievement of top-100 status will demand that we draw on the commitment, talent, and creativity of the faculty in their educational and scholarly endeavors. All faculty members have the responsibility to advance their professional development in teaching and in research, scholarship, or creative expression. But such development requires

resources, and the University has a responsibility to provide these in a manner that broadly empowers and supports the faculty to these ends.

During the last ten years, resources for the three central instruments of faculty development, the Research and Scholarship Development Fund (RSDF), the Faculty Development Fund (FDF), and the Instructional Development Fund (IDF), have been seriously diminished. In 1990-91, more than \$650,000 was budgeted to service these funds; in 2001-02, less than \$220,000 is budgeted.

Charge:

1. To work with the Director and other members of the C.E.U.T. to:
  - a) Review the literature and the current status of teaching evaluations in higher education.
  - b) Review Northeastern's current TCEP system.
  - c) Review alternative models to the current system.
  - d) Recommend the components of a student evaluation instrument that will well serve our needs to assess and improve teacher and course effectiveness.
  - e) Provide an assessment of the budgetary impact of these recommendations.

The Committee is asked to report back on this matter by no later than December 14, 2001.

2. Develop recommendations that reflect current innovative trends for a comprehensive approach (i.e. beyond student course evaluations) to evaluate and review teaching.

The Committee is asked to report back on this matter by no later than April 15, 2002.

3. To review the availability of faculty development moneys available to faculty at other competitive institutions.

To recommend appropriate levels of funding for the RSDF, FDF, and IDF.

4. To recommend whether a new additional fund should be established that provides a guaranteed annual grant for faculty development directly to each faculty member. If such a fund is recommended, at what general level of support it should be, whether the annual grants should be linked to the annual performance of the faculty member, and whether unused moneys could be carried forward into subsequent years.
5. To recommend any other new areas of funding support that will enhance all faculty development.

The Committee is asked to report back on items 3-6 by no later than December 14, 2001.

### **Financial Affairs Committee**

Membership:

Professor Jeffery Born (Finance) (Chair)  
Professor Kenneth Baclawski (Computer Science)  
Professor Michael Vaughn (Physics)  
Professor Bruce Wallin (Political Science)  
Professor Ronald Willey (Chemical Engineering)  
SAC Liaison: Professor Marjorie Platt (Accounting)

Background:

Academic reputation is an important factor in achieving top-100 status, and academic reputation depends on the quality, commitment and successes of the professoriate. Faculty salaries play a vital role to this end. Competitive faculty salaries are essential for both the retention of existing faculty and recruitment of new faculty. The growth in faculty salaries at Northeastern since 1990 has been well below that of other regional and national matchmate institutions and groups. As a result, the relative standing of faculty salaries at Northeastern University has declined significantly since 1990 and our competitive advantage diminished or lost.

A second key area for change concerns the budgeting process. The changes and enhancements to move us forward towards top-100 status will demand significant additional resources. Despite recent improvements, Northeastern's budget remains strongly tuition dependent, unlike most of our competitors. Consequently, there is a tightness to the revenue streams that frequently hinders much needed investment and forces an excess of micromanagement and reallocation. All of this has led to an increased frustration with our current, centralized, incremental, budgeting approach. Many national universities have moved to address similar problems by adopting some form of a responsibility center management (RCM) budgeting system in order to enhance resource generation and management effectiveness and thereby keep pace with change and thrive. As we move towards top-100 status we shall need to generate new revenues and create a climate of efficiency. RCM may hold the potential to achieve these.

Charge:

1. Based on current information and any other analyses that it may wish to undertake, the Committee is asked to make recommendations on appropriate merit raises and equity adjustments for 2002, with a particular emphasis on restoring our earlier competitive advantage. In making recommendations on any equity adjustments, the Committee is asked to recommend whether the recent practice of instituting bonus awards should be continued. The Committee is also asked to make recommendations concerning fringe benefits for faculty. The Committee should present its recommendations on these matters by no later than November 9, 2001.
  2. The Committee is asked to review the various approaches to RCM and how successful they have been, and to provide an in depth report on these approaches together with a recommendation on whether RCM might be pursued at Northeastern. The Committee should present its report on this matter by no later than April 15, 2002.
- M. Blue Ribbon Committees. The Agenda Committee will be establishing a number of blue-ribbon committees to address vital issues. Final details are being worked out on



two: ***Ad Hoc Committee on Institutional Management Practices***, and the ***Ad Hoc Faculty Handbook Review Committee***. The former will focus on a review of a number of recent management practices and administrative unit reorganizations implemented with the goal to better serve the university community. The latter will focus on a review of the draft for the proposed new *Faculty Handbook* with the goal of facilitating a future Faculty Senate deliberation on the matter. Other committees may be established to address facilities, graduate programs, and research.

- N. **Calendar Change**. The Agenda Committee will be meeting with Executive Provost Pantalone on a monthly schedule for continuous updates and discussions on the calendar change.
- O. **Appendices**. Appended to these minutes are two documents, *Background to Charge on Responsibility Center Management* (Appendix A) and *The State of the Professoriate at NU* (Appendix B).
- P. **Next Meeting**. President Freeland will attend the next Senate meeting, on 15 October. Faculty are invited to submit written questions for the President to the Faculty Senate Office (442 Ryder) by 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, 9 October. Please note that the meeting will be held in 240 Egan Center (Raytheon Amphitheatre).

III. **Provost's Report**. Provost Hall reported that his office was moving forward on the following priorities.

- A. **Retention Strategy**. Retention efforts will focus on the following three themes: (1) removal of institutional impediments such as Division C problems with financial aid; (2) intervention approaches to help vulnerable students at both ends of the grade spectrum by tracking the reasons they leave and working through university resources, honor programs and access programs; and (3) enhancement of research around retention and attrition under Mark Putnam's leadership in Institutional Research, to identify why students leave, based on hard evidence rather than anecdotal evidence.
- B. **Semester Conversion**. Provost Hall is in the process of reviewing curriculum changes for the colleges. Systems for managing students and data need to be addressed. Improved systems for managing students and data need to be put in place during this year. Some fundamental issues have been raised such as whether we should have a four-year Coop program and a five-year Coop program, or a four-year program that does not include Coop.

Summer instruction also has to be on the table with regard to what it would take to have full-time faculty in a ratio that matches the rest of the year so that summer students do not feel penalized.

- C. **Faculty Needs**. The Provost will continue to advocate salary increases, programs in instructional development, funding for teaching with technology, and base funds that are not restricted. Last year, \$240K went into the Teaching with Technology Fund. Another priority is the needs of part-time faculty and of graduate assistants upon whom faculty are dependent. To attract the best and brightest from both groups we need to identify the categories in which we are behind the competition and to invest some resources there.

The practice-oriented learning communities will be funded with upward of \$150K this year. One idea under development is to have a customer service program for faculty members; there is a sense that faculty sometimes have a difficult time navigating through this university when problems arise or resources are needed.

- D. Practice-oriented Education. A number of individuals have applied for the first learning community, and an advisory committee created by the Provost is going through the applications. The new Center for the Study of Practice-oriented Education will have as anchor the Knowles Chair in Coop. The main focus of the center is to better understand the connection between work and learning, and how we as an educational institution can begin to make this a more robust educational process.
- E. Diversity. Vice Provost Meservey is working with the deans and Vice Provost Mantella to attract students and faculty who bring diversity to the University.
- F. Interdisciplinary Institutes. Three interdisciplinary institutes were funded last year, and Provost Hall hopes to be able to establish three more this year.
- G. TCEP. The Provost's Office has employed an outside vendor as a temporary solution for teacher evaluations over the summer and will continue the process until more feedback is available, at which time Vice Provost Barabino will report her findings to the Senate.
- H. Classrooms. Concerns were expressed last year about the number and quality of technology-oriented and general-use classrooms. Usage is at 85% vs. 75% at other universities. Sophomore retention has increased to 81.5% from 70%. This is good news, but it contributes to the pressure. Additional pressure is created because some students did not get the Coop jobs they wanted and the number of graduate courses is up. The University allocated \$800K to improve eighty-one classrooms on line over the summer, but more are needed.

Technology replaced data projections in Dodge and Shillman amounted to \$300K recurring dollars. Some funding comes from the University Technology Council. Altogether, \$400K will be available in fall 2002. Behrakis will provide four 60-student classrooms, one 120-student classroom, and one 100-student room, but we need more, possibly by adding floors to existing buildings.

#### IV. **Question and Discussion Time.**

- A. Professor Aroian asked whether customer service would extend to staff and the rest of the University community. Provost Hall responded that the focus is on faculty as valued resources. Vice Provost Mantella will address student needs, and David Winch, the new Director of Customer Service, has a mandate that goes beyond financial customer services for students. Professor Sullivan noted that tensions are high among staff. They serve an important intermediary role and need to be recognized as well.
- B. Professor Wertheim expressed concern that some faculty who need technology in their classrooms do not have access to it, while others who do not need it are assigned to classrooms that have it. Registrar Linda Allen responded that the first concern in room assignments is the size of the class. She added that we need more movable technology.

Professor Herman added that inability to match technology with faculty need is a disincentive, but the problem derives from the near 100% of classroom use. Additional resources will begin to make a difference. A number of students are frustrated by not being able to get into required classes. Mugar should be considered. Registrar Allen pointed out that it is difficult to estimate class size. Other variables include the maximum number of students a room will hold, pre-registration, small group needs, and classrooms for 75-80 students.

In response to several other speakers, Executive Vice Provost Pantalone acknowledged the problems and assured the body that the issue of classroom space and usage needs would be a priority for next year.

Registrar Allen added that the semester change would change the modeling based on sequences. A multitude of elements must be addressed in order to provide flexibility. For example, Nursing has three-hour classes that cross over sequences.

- V. **2000-2001 Academic Policy Committee Resolution.** Professor Kane moved the following resolution, and the motion was seconded:

**BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate approve the 2000-2001 Academic Policy Committee recommendation that a student may not enroll in a course again after having received a grade of F three times in that course.**

Professor Willey asked how many students would be affected by the change in policy. Professor Kane estimated 1-3%, but he added there are alternatives that may be employed before a student fails a course. Students who repeat a course take the place of other students who might need it.

Motion. Professor Giessen moved to change the numbers “**three**” to “**two**”. This was accepted as a friendly amendment.

The floor was yielded to Erin Dayharsh, SGA President, who expressed the view that a course should be available to a student until that student passes it.

Professor Kelleher thought the problem should be settled within the department rather than be made University policy, particularly since the problem occurs so seldom.

Professor Herman called the question, and there was no objection.

Professor Kane suggested withdrawing the motion and sending it to the 2001-2002 Academic Policy Committee for review and clarification.

Professor Herman pointed out that the motion could not be removed from the floor, since the question had been called. The Senate then moved to a vote.

Vote: FAILED, 0-29-2.

Adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John G. Flym

Secretary, Faculty Senate