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Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 03/03/2003

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TO: FACULTY SENATE
FROM: DEE VIGEANT for the SENATE AGENDA COMMITTEE
SUBJECT: MINUTES, 2002-2003 FACULTY SENATE MEETING, 3 MARCH 2003

Present: (Professors) Alper, Alverson, Aroian, Baclawski, Bannister, Barnes, Brookins, Bruns, Ellis, Gilmore, Hall, Herman, Kane, Khaw, Lowndes, Morrison, Ondrechen, Platt, Powers-Lee, Serafim, Shafai, Sherman, Sherwood, Vaughn, Wertheim, Wray
(Administrators) Abdelal, Meservey, Onan, Pantalone, Soyster, Stellar, Zoloth

Absent: (Professors) Flym, Hope, Metghalchi, Wallin
(Administrators) Greene, Mantella, Putnam

Convened by Provost Abdelal at 12:03 p.m.

- I. **Minutes.** Minutes were in progress.
- II. **SAC Report.** Professor Lowndes reported the following.
 - A. **New Graduate Certificate Program.** SAC has received and signed off on a new UC graduate certificate program in Information Resources Management.
 - B. **Searches.** SAC has been asked to initiate three searches-Coop Vice President (external), History Chair (internal), and Architecture Chair (internal).
- III. **Provost's Report.** Provost Abdelal reported the following.

Market Equity Adjustment. The Budget Committee has made its recommendations to President Freeland. The Agenda Committee met with the President on the issue of whether market equity adjustment funds could be found to fully fund, rather than annualize, the \$1M for faculty. Subsequently, President Freeland met with the Budget Committee with recommendations revised so that the market equity adjustment will be effective 1 July. The rest of the budget remains the same, with a few minor adjustments.
- IV. **Question and Discussion Time.**
 - A. Professor Sherman asked about the charge to the Coop Vice President Search Committee. Provost Abdelal responded that the committee was still being constituted, after consultation about its structure with the Agenda Committee. The charge will be delivered to the committee at its first meeting.

Professor Sherman expressed the hope that the ultimate result of the transition will be a strengthening of the academic side of Coop. Provost Abdelal responded that the primary responsibility of Coop is to prepare students for learning in the workplace and to assist them in assessing how their experience contributes to their majors. It is a complex process and involves complex roles for the Coop administration, faculty, and staff.
 - B. Professor Barnes asked whether the cost-of-living income for market adjustment would come to the colleges. Vice Provost Meservey replied that she was in the process of collecting information on salary levels. Information will be provided, but the responsibility to do the calculations will not be placed on colleges or departments. Provost Abdelal added that he was coming to consensus with deans and departments on matchmate lists. Eventually, he would like to formalize the data.

C. Professor Alverson asked about cost-of-living adjustments. Provost Abdelal replied that the adjustments would be based on specific matchmate lists for each department, and a market equity adjustment would be made for each list.

V. **Semester Conversion Resolution #23: Required Summer Teaching.** The following resolution was on the floor from the last meeting, when the Senate came out of the quasi committee of the whole.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

In section IV.D.2.b on p. 70 of the *Faculty Handbook*, replace

"No faculty member, however, can be employed to teach for four academic quarters in successive years, except under extraordinary circumstances, and then only if such employment is approved in advance by the Provost."

with

"Northeastern University operates on a twelve month academic calendar. From time to time, therefore, faculty members may be needed to teach during the summer semester as part of their base academic year contracts. Such assignments for academic year contract faculty are subject to the following rules:

- **Faculty members on probationary tenure track appointments cannot be required to undertake summer teaching requirements.**
- **Before requiring a faculty member to undertake such an assignment, the University will make every reasonable effort to accommodate the faculty member's personal wishes and professional obligations.**
- **A final decision on whether a faculty member will be needed for such an assignment will be communicated to the faculty member no later than 1 December of the year preceding the summer semester involved.**
- **A faculty member required to undertake such an assignment will have the right to designate which other semester will constitute the remainder of his/her base contract.**
- **No faculty member can be required to teach during the summer semester as part of his/her base contract more than once in any five-year period.**
- **No faculty member can be required to teach during a term or semester that is not part of his/her base contract."**

Vice Provost Meservey asked the date for notification of summer teaching. Professor Ellis responded that it should be 1 December or earlier.

Professor Hall asked the due dates for submitting proposed courses. Executive Vice Provost Pantalone offered to find out. Provost Abdelal added that the academic year schedule is being set, but all the data is not yet available. He cautioned that, when a deadline has been set, it should not be a "target."

Professor Barnes expressed concern that many faculty who depend on the income from summer teaching may not have that assurance. He recommended that summer assignments be in base contracts. Professor Herman responded that, until 1992, a number of non-chair faculty had 45-week contracts, based on a 12-month year. Downsizing had resulted in most of them being converted to 39-week contracts. He suggested that this might be a good time to restore the longer contracts.

Vice Provost Meservey thought the five-year cycle might cause difficulty in small departments.

Professor Ondrechen agreed and suggested a three-year rotation.

Professor Lowndes countered that the Provost was planning to make the summer terms more attractive so that faculty will want to volunteer. He added that departments might want to consider moving certain required upper level courses out of the summer sessions if only a limited number of faculty could teach them.

Professor Vaughn agreed with Professor Lowndes and noted that, ultimately, people will do whatever is necessary to run their programs.

Provost Abdelal explained that he would work with the deans so that only qualified people, with doctoral degrees and postdoctoral experience, will be hired to supplement summer teaching. He also thought that visiting faculty might be attracted to Boston in summer.

Professor Ellis suggested adding "academic year" before "contract" in the last two bulleted items. This was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Vice Provost Meservey suggested clarifying the academic year as twelve months rather than two semesters. Professor Lowndes noted that the University operates on a 12-month calendar but added that he was not saying that base contracts would be for twelve months. He cited Professor Ellis's friendly amendment.

Professor Barnes reported that a tenured and highly qualified faculty member is thinking of leaving due to concern about losing a summer contract.

Executive Vice Provost Pantalone, in response to a question, affirmed that a separate letter is sent to confirm a summer teaching contract.

In response to a question from Dean Zoloth, Professor Lowndes explained that coverage of courses during the summer could come via a variety of ways and that this resolution addressed just one of them, namely, faculty teaching during the summer as part of their base contract. The intent of the resolution was to provide a fair and equitable way to handle this.

Professor Herman noted that there are several ways to induce outside teaching. The resolution provided parameters that might not be needed often but would be there when all else failed.

Professor Ondrechen recalled that downsizing had created the need for rotation in summer teaching, and she thought the proposed resolution would be practicable if the money were available to compensate full-time rather than part-time faculty.

There being no objection, the Senate turned to a vote.

As amended, the resolution read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

In section IV.D.2.b on p. 70 of the *Faculty Handbook*, replace

"No faculty member, however, can be employed to teach for four academic quarters in successive years, except under extraordinary circumstances, and then only if such employment is approved in advance by the Provost."

with

"Northeastern University operates on a twelve month academic calendar. From time to time, therefore, faculty members may be needed to teach during the summer semester as part of their base academic year contracts. Such assignments for academic year contract faculty are subject to the following rules:

- Faculty members on probationary tenure track appointments cannot be required to undertake summer teaching requirements.
- Before requiring a faculty member to undertake such an assignment, the University will make every reasonable effort to accommodate the faculty member's personal wishes and professional obligations.
- A final decision on whether a faculty member will be needed for such an assignment will be communicated to the faculty member no later than 1 December of the year preceding the summer semester involved.
- A faculty member required to undertake such an assignment will have the right to designate which other semester will constitute the remainder of his/her base contract.
- No faculty member can be required to teach during the summer semester as part of his/her base academic-year contract more than once in any five-year period.
- No faculty member can be required to teach during a term or semester that is not part of his/her base academic-year contract."

Vote: PASSED, 24-0-5.

VI. **Academic Policy Committee Report on Classroom Usage Patterns and Preliminary Recommendations.**
Professor Herman moved Resolution #1, and the motion was seconded. The resolution read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, as an operations premise, the administration accepts that slack or idle space must exist so that the University can properly align classroom configuration with pedagogical objectives.

Professor Herman noted that the average American university operates at 80-85% capacity, while Northeastern is operating at 94-102%. He stressed that our operating principle should be to accommodate the need to free space for pedagogical concerns rather than class size and to have enough space for classes that break into segments and nonacademic uses.

Provost Abdelal thought the national norm was 10-15%. He suggested rephrasing the resolution with a clear number instead of the undefined phrase, "slack or idle space."

Professor Hall recommended that the norm be in the range of the top 100 rather than a generic norm that included all universities.

Provost Abdelal pointed out that progress to improve salaries, find money for summer teaching, hire more tenure-track faculty, and improve classrooms is gradual and incremental; it must proceed with continuous balancing so that each area benefits.

Professor Lowndes supported Provost Abdelal's suggestion that classroom occupancy follow the national norm because it set a goal for the University that, when achieved, would allow the flexibility we do not have now. He added that even 85% occupancy was on the high side for a top 100 university.

Motion. Professor Herman moved to add "the national norm of 15% slack or idle space must exist here at Northeastern," and this was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Motion. Ondrechen moved to substitute "a maximum 85% occupancy rate in each size category" for "15% slack or idle space must exist here at Northeastern", and this was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Motion. Professor Hall moved to substitute "operating" for "operations" and this was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Professor Alverson asked where the new space would come from. Provost Abdelal replied that, in the near future, he expects a proposal for Site F, with 50% academic space, to include the O'Bryant Institute, and 50% residential space.

Motion. Professor Lowndes moved to add "for effectiveness consistent with our top 100 goal" after "premise" and this was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Professor Ondrechen asked whether the Law School classrooms were included in the inventory charts. Professor Herman responded that, unlike other classrooms, the Law School does not fall under the Registrar's control.

Professor Platt asked whether the Law School's classrooms are as heavily used. Professor Herman replied that they are.

Professor Platt asked whether information would become available on technology use. Professor Herman replied that Audio-Visual Services is developing a database that will contain all classrooms and available electronic facilities, including photographs and seating configurations.

Professor Vaughn asked how much technology is being used in classrooms now. Professor Herman responded that most classes are assigned by size and, until it becomes possible to assign classes based on the dominant form of pedagogy to be used, that data is superfluous. The goal of the classroom task force is for all classrooms to have a basic level of technology. The lack of surety that, from one term to the next, faculty can rely on technology in classrooms is a major disincentive to develop technology-rich presentations.

The resolution, as amended, read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, as an operating premise for effectiveness consistent with our top 100 goal, the administration accept that the national norm of a maximum 85% occupancy rate in each size category is needed to ensure that the University can properly align classroom configuration with pedagogical objectives.

There being no objection, the Senate turned to a vote.

Vote: PASSED, 28-0-0.

Professor Herman moved Resolution #2, and the motion was seconded. The resolution read as follows:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Faculty Senate recognizes that the ongoing shortage of appropriate classrooms, particularly in the 15-25 seat and 300-600 seat ranges, acts to inhibit curricular reform, teaching innovation, and student satisfaction. The Senate therefore encourages the University administration to identify space not currently used for instruction, and, working in close consultation with faculty, design and quickly build as many state of the art classrooms of these sizes as is practicable.

Professor Herman explained that this resolution was a stopgap and that more information on assessment would become available later in the year.

Discussion followed on the range of classroom sizes and their uses.

Professor Herman noted that the current report is preliminary and that, when data is available on semesters, the committee would come back with information on specialized and different size classrooms.

Motion. Vice Provost Meservey moved to delete "particularly in the 15-25 seat and 300-600 seat ranges," and "of these sizes", and this was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Executive Vice Provost Pantalone called the question.

Vote on cloture: PASSED, 25-0-0.

The resolution, as amended, read as follows:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Faculty Senate recognizes that the ongoing shortage of appropriate classrooms acts to inhibit curricular reform, teaching innovation, and student satisfaction. The Senate therefore encourages the University administration to identify space not currently used for instruction, and, working in close consultation with faculty, design and quickly build as many state of the art classrooms as is practicable.

Vote on Resolution #2: PASSED, 25-0-0.

Adjourned at 1:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Vigeant
for the Agenda Committee