April 28, 2003

Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 04/28/2003

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TO: FACULTY SENATE
FROM: JOHN G. FLYM, SECRETARY, FACULTY SENATE
SUBJECT: MINUTES, 2002-2003 FACULTY SENATE MEETING, 28 APRIL 2003
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Present: (Professors) Alper, Alverson, Aroian, Baclawski, Barnes, Brookins, Bruns, Ellis, Hall, Hearn, Herman, Hope,
    Kane, Lowndes, Morrison, Ondrechen, Powers-Lee, Serafim, Shafai, Sherman, Vaughn, Wallin, Wray
    (Administrators) Abdelal, Greene, Meservey, Onan, Pantalone, Soyster, Stellar, Zoloth

Absent: (Professors) Bannister, Flym, Gilmore, Khaw, Metghalchi, Platt, Sherwood, Wertheim
    (Administrators) Mantella, Putnam

Convened by Provost Abdelal at 11:59 a.m.

I.   **Minutes**. The minutes of 14 April were approved as amended.

II.   **SAC Report**. Professor Lowndes reported the following.

      A. **Meetings**. SAC met once in regular session since the last Senate meeting. The Faculty Development
         Committee attended part of that meeting to discuss its draft reports on Faculty Workloads and on Teaching
         Awards. SAC suggested some changes, which the FDC will consider. The FDC will also meet with Provost
         Abdelal regarding faculty workloads and with individuals concerned with teaching awards before preparing
         their final reports.

      B. **Architecture Chair Search**. This committee has been staffed. Members are

         Elected:
         Professor Mardges Bacon (Architecture)
         Professor Peter H. Wiederspahn (Architecture)
         Professor Maureen Zell (Architecture)

         Appointed:
         Professor Peter G. Furth (Civil and Environmental Engineering)
         Professor Stephen G. Harkins (Psychology)

      C. **University Standing Committee on Tenure Appeals.** Members are

         Elected members whose terms expire 30 June 2003:
         Professor Donna M. Bishop (Criminal Justice)
         Professor Anthony Iarrobino (Arts and Sciences)
         Professor Robert P. Futrelle (Computer Science)

         Elected members whose terms expire 30 June 2004:
         Professor William Sanchez (Bouvé)
         Professor Mustafa R. Yilmaz (Business Administration)

         Elected member(s) whose terms expire 30 June 2005:
         Professor Ronald Mourant (Engineering)
         Professor David M. Phillips (Law)

         Appointed Members:

Professor Anthony J. Devaney (Electrical & Computer Engineering)
Professor John E. Kwoka, Jr. (Economics)
Professor Mary Loeffelholz (English)
Professor William F. Miles (Political Science)
Professor Vladimir P. Torchilin (Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Professor Carol M. Warner (Biology)

C. **Resolution**. President Freeland has approved Semester Conversion Resolution #22 on Credit toward Tenure (passed 1/27/03). Trustee approval is not necessary.

D. **Next Senate Meeting: <u>Monday, May 5, at 11:45 a.m. in Raytheon</u>**.

III. **Provost's Report**. Provost Abdelal indicated he had nothing to report this week.

IV **Question and Discussion Time**

A. Professor Vaughn asked the status of the teaching evaluation process. Provost Abdelal replied that, when he arrived last August, he was informed of the plan to send the evaluations to the University of Washington at a cost of $200K. He was concerned about both the outside processing and the high cost, which was not in the budget. He would like to see the process regularized and perhaps create a system whereby it can be done here. Vice Provost Hill added that he was looking at options. Three vendors are arranging appointments on campus to demonstrate their services, and by the end of May we should have a sense of how to move ahead for operation next fall.

Professor Vaughn recommended that faculty be included in discussions with the vendors. Vice Provost Hill was agreeable to this. Professor Lowndes added that the Agenda Committee had become aware of this last week and had come to agreement with the Provost that a committee be established to analyze the data.

B. Professor Hall asked whether the evaluations are being sent out at present. Provost Abdelal replied that they go to New York. Professor Herman reminded the body that the Student Government Association was also involved in the process and that students should participate in any changes to the content of the questionnaires.

C. Professor Ellis reported that his department had attended a primer on the use of Blackboard because the SGA had mandated that syllabi be placed on the Web using Blackboard. He felt that such a mandate should come from the Senate. Vice Provost Meservey noted that the SGA had requested electronic access to the Registrar and to other faculty materials, such as syllabi, and that Blackboard will be connected to the Registrar's system for faculty and student convenience.

D. Professor Hope asked about the status of workload policy. Provost Abdelal responded that he had shared a draft with the Deans Council three months ago and that he would be meeting with the Faculty Development Committee next week.

V. **Proposed Academic Standing, Probation, and Dismissal Policies for Full-time Undergraduate Students**. Professor Herman moved the following resolution, and the motion was seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Academic Standing, Probation, and Dismissal Policies for Full-time Undergraduate Students, as approved by the UUCC and by the Senate Academic Policy Committee.

The proposed policy read as follows:

Academic Status: Students at Northeastern maintain good academic standing when they meet the following criteria: (1) an overall QPA of 1.800 at the end of their freshman year and a minimum cumulative

QPA of 2.000 at the end of each semester thereafter and (2) earn at least 12 semester hours in the semester just completed. Individual colleges may have additional requirements that are specified in each college's advising literature; see your dean's office advisor for details.

Academic Probation: Full-time students who fail to meet the criteria for good standing described above and any additional criteria specified by their college will be placed on academic probation effective for the following semester. The action will appear on the internal record, but not on the transcript.

To be removed from academic probation, the student must meet the criteria for good academic standing in the next semester for which they are registered. If the student does not meet the criteria, the student may appeal to the Academic Standing Committee in the college for an additional semester.

Academic Dismissal: Students who remain on probation for two semesters will be dismissed from the University. This action will appear on the transcript.

Academic Standing Appeals: Students may appeal academic standing statuses if they can provide documented evidence supporting an appeal. A student on probation may be granted no more than one additional semester to meet the criteria for good academic standing. Students may appeal to the Academic Standing Committee of their college. If a student believes that a decision that results in dismissal is not justified, they may appeal to the University-level Appeals Resolution Committee.

Dean Soyster expressed concern that the proposed policy would be too restrictive. The College of Engineering created a policy that has worked successfully to retain students whose averages in the first year or two were below 2.0. He distributed copies of Engineering's Academic Standards and cumulative student QPAs by class; however, it was not clear where in the statistics the students with early low averages fell in terms of graduation numbers.

Executive Vice Provost Pantalone noted that the proposed policy was consistent with policies at most other universities.

Professor Vaughn did not think paragraph 3 was clear on the criteria for the additional semester being a one-time occurrence. Professor Herman explained that students on probation need an appeal mechanism.

Professor Ellis pointed out that if the Senate were to approve this policy it would be a major change in University policy, as the current policy allows each college to establish its own policy.

Provost Abdelal suggested limiting the number of additional semesters a student could be granted.

Dean Stellar suggested deleting the text after "Academic Standing Committee." Professor Herman accepted this as a friendly amendment.

Professor Lowndes asked whether the standards were intended to be minimum University-wide standards that colleges could raise if they wished. Executive Vice Provost Pantalone replied that this was the case.

Professor Powers-Lee suggested deleting the third paragraph and sentence 2 in the last paragraph, and moving paragraph 4 to paragraph 2 for clarification.

Professor Vaughn suggested recommitting the proposal to the committee.

Professor Lowndes pointed out that the catalogue deadline was April 30. He suggested deleting paragraph 3 and keeping the rest. This was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Dean Soyster favored whatever would help with graduation rates.

Vice Provost Meservey noted that the purpose of the proposed policy was to identify students with little chance to graduate and then help them to succeed.

Professor Bruns preferred a single standard for all colleges.

Professor Lowndes pointed out that the impact on the graduation rate if six to eight students failed was about .03 percent.

Discussion continued on the merits of having a formal structure and on the value it would provide to students at academic risk.

Professor Lowndes called the question.

Vote on cloture: PASSED, 26-0-2.

Vote on the resolution to approved the policy as amended: PASSED, 25-2-1.

As passed, the policy read as follows:

> **Academic Status:** Students at Northeastern maintain good academic standing when they meet the following criteria: (1) an overall QPA of 1.800 at the end of their freshman year and a minimum cumulative QPA of 2.000 at the end of each semester thereafter and (2) earn at least 12 semester hours in the semester just completed. Individual colleges may have additional requirements that are specified in each college's advising literature; see your dean's office advisor for details.

> **Academic Probation:** Full-time students who fail to meet the criteria for good standing described above and any additional criteria specified by their college will be placed on academic probation effective for the following semester. The action will appear on the internal record, but not on the transcript.

> **Academic Dismissal:** Students who remain on probation for two semesters will be dismissed from the University. This action will appear on the transcript.

> **Academic Standing Appeals:** Students may appeal academic standing statuses if they can provide documented evidence supporting an appeal. A student on probation may be granted no more than one additional semester to meet the criteria for good academic standing. Students may appeal to the Academic Standing Committee of their college. If a student believes that a decision that results in dismissal is not justified, they may appeal to the University-level Appeals Resolution Committee.

As specified on the agenda, the Senate turned to agenda item G at 12:45 p.m. Item F will be on next week's agenda.

VI. **Institutional Management Practices Committee Report on Information Services**. Professor Herman moved to accept the report, and the motion was seconded.

> **BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate accept the Institutional Management Practices Committee's Report on Information Services.**

Vote to accept the report: PASSED, 30-0-0.

Professor Herman moved Resolution #1, and the motion was seconded. The resolution read as follows:

1. **BE IT RESOLVED That faculty governance in the arena of information and related telecommunications systems be restored as they relate to the teaching, research, and service functions of the academy by the creation of a Standing Senate Library and Information Systems Policy**

Committee. This Standing Committee will permit faculty and individual units to share their vision and participate in the assessment planning, implementation, and evaluation of Information content, systems, and distribution facilities and infrastructures. The committee would consist of nine teaching faculty appointed by the Senate Agenda Committee and six administrators, two of whom are appointed by the Provost, two by the Senior Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Life, and two by the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance. The Dean/Director of the University Libraries and the Vice President for Information Systems serve as *ex officio* members. Membership also includes two students, one appointed by the Student Government Association and one by the Graduate and Professional Student Association. The Committee's charge is as follows:

a. This Committee serves as a forum for discussion, exchange of ideas, and advice on issues affecting the development, maintenance, security, and availability of information resources and infrastructures to members of the University community;

b. The Committee periodically reviews the changing requirements in Library and Information Systems priorities, policies, resources, and operations and, based on these reviews, makes recommendations concerning activities that may improve operations or enhance the seamless flow of data and information to the communities that depend on it;

c. The Committee also makes recommendations to the Senate Agenda Committee, the administrative heads of the Libraries and/or Information Systems, or to others in the administration (as appropriate) on matters concerning operations, resources, or policies.

Professor Herman explained that the resolution would restore faculty governance in this area. Over the years, a number of library and computing committees were instituted and subsequently disbanded. With the emergence of information technology and telecommunications, the library has been working closely with Information Systems. Since information technology represents a large portion of the budget, it is time for faculty to resume its oversight role.

Professor Alper expressed concern that faculty did not represent a majority on the proposed committee. He suggested a friendly amendment, to reduce the number of administrators from six to three, with one each appointed by the Provost, the Senior Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Life, and the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance. Professor Herman accepted the friendly amendment.

Dean Greene suggested a matchmate study of information services to get a sense of how much money should be spent, how much faculty oversight exists elsewhere, and the level of service we should be able to expect. Professor Herman responded that such an undertaking was beyond the means of a faculty committee, but an oversight structure could commission just that kind of report. The question of whether the library should be separate from, or joined with, Information Systems (IS) has been discussed at length. The problem is that they overlap to such a great extent that the committee would not be averse to separating them as long as they operate coherently.

Professor Ondrechen supported the resolution and recommended adding subcommittees to deal with the heavy workload.

Professor Vaughn noted that the University Technology Council (UTC) had tried to function in so many areas that it would be difficult for one committee to handle them effectively.

Professor Lowndes, who has sat on the UTC for the last year and a half, reported that it was not working well. It generally did not engage in policy discussion. Its primary purpose seemed to revolve around the allocation of equipment moneys via a somewhat time-consuming and arguably flawed process. He suggested establishing two standing committees, one for the library and one for information systems.

Professor Alper pointed out that if the new committee becomes a standing committee of the Senate the Agenda Committee would be able to charge it based on faculty input.

Professor Herman recalled that in the 1980s separate committees were set up to deal with separate functions in terms of telecommunications and information systems, but they turned out to be the same thing. He was concerned that the electronic transmission of data, both from the prime resources to the library and from the library outward, might be so interconnected that it would be difficult to separate them. While we might contemplate the existence of two committees, he thought an independent entity would be the most forward-thinking at the moment.

Dean Zoloth favored having separate committees and recommended looking into ways that other universities provide services.

Professor Barnes favored keeping the library and IS together.

Professor Aroian noted that the committee had focused on student and faculty issues with the goal of promoting a spirit of collegiality. She emphasized that faculty need to be able to participate in deciding what kinds of systems we are to have.

Provost Abdelal thought it important to have a Senate standing committee to deal with information services. He also supported having a separate standing committee to deal with the library. That committee would be able to address ways to deliver information and assess collection needs.

Professor Herman explained that the committee had received a great deal of feedback with regard to software requests that IS sends to the library and the library sends back to IS, and neither can afford to license the databases. The committee foresees that much of what the library will purchase in the future will be electronic, therefore, much of what IS is licensing for classrooms and other purposes is essentially the same. A point of integration is needed, and that is where faculty oversight should be. The faculty voice has been largely absent from the operations of IS, and the simplest way to deal with the questions that have been raised would be an amendment that separates the library from IS.

Motion. Executive Vice Provost Pantalone moved to have the Institutional Management Practices Committee craft proposals for separate committees for the library and information systems. The motion was seconded.

Professor Lowndes noted that the Senate's Library Advisory Committee has been working with Library Dean Warro.

Discussion continued on the need for the amendment.

Dean Soyster called the question, and the motion was seconded.

Vote on cloture: PASSED, 27-0-0.

Vote on Executive Vice Provost Pantalone's amendment: PASSED, 20-7-0.

Professor Herman requested that the Library Advisory Committee work on the structure of the proposed library committee.

Professor Herman moved to adjourn, and the motion was seconded.

Adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John G. Flym
Secretary, Faculty Senate