

January 28, 2004

Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 01/28/2004

Charles H. Ellis Jr.
Northeastern University

Recommended Citation

Ellis Jr., Charles H., "Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 01/28/2004" (2004). *Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes*. Paper 39.
<http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d10004889>

This work is available open access, hosted by Northeastern University.

TO: FACULTY SENATE
FROM: CHARLES H. ELLIS, Jr., SECRETARY, FACULTY SENATE
SUBJECT: MINUTES, 2003-2004 FACULTY SENATE MEETING, 28 JANUARY 2004

Present: (Professors) Alper, Alverson, Aroian, Bannister, Bansil, Barnes, Blank, Brookins, Bruns, Bursey, Ellis, Flym, Futrelle, Howlett, Hunt, Khaw, Krishnamoorthy, Kruger, Lowndes, Margotta, Morrison, Ondrechen, Peterfreund, Serafim, Shafai, Sherman, Sherwood, Vaughn
(Administrators) Abdelal, Finkelstein, Greene, Hill, Meservey, Onan, Soyster, Stellar, Zoloth

Absent: (Professors) Hansberry, Metghalchi, Wray
(Administrators) Weiss

Provost Abdelal convened the meeting at 11:53 a.m.

- I. **Minutes.** The minutes of January 14 were approved.
- II. **SAC Report.** Professor Lowndes reported the following.
 - A. **Meetings.** SAC met twice since the last meeting.

The list of agenda items for the Senate continues to grow; some of these will require Trustee approval and so these will need to be completed by the Senate by late March. Accordingly, SAC is scheduling more meetings to address this. Additional Senate meetings have been scheduled for **March 10 (in 308 SN)** and **March 31 (in 450 DG)**. Since most Wednesdays are already filled with other activities, we will also be scheduling a number of additional Senate meetings, to continue the unfinished business, during Thursday afternoon Activity Periods following a regularly scheduled Wednesday Senate meeting. This will commence in mid-February. Details will follow as quickly as possible. SAC apologizes for any inconvenience or conflicts that this may cause.

- B. **Resolutions.** President Freeland has responded to thirteen Senate resolutions. With regard to the Financial Affairs Committee Resolution #2 on the market/equity gap, the President responded, "I do not believe the 'gap' is \$1.6 million and therefore disagree with the statement embedded in this resolution. The data showed the 'gap' to be more like \$480 thousand." His response to Resolution #4, which recommended increasing by \$2M a year the non-salary operating funds for academic programs, was that he "would need to see some evidence for this assertion before finding it persuasive."

President Freeland's response to the Library Policy and Operations Committee resolutions was that they were informational and that he shares the goal of increasing the library budget. He approved the Enrollment and Admissions Policy Committee resolution recommending long-term strategy to achieve top-100 status and, to this end, for the Provost and the Senior Vice President of Enrollment Management to report annually to the Senate.

President Freeland approved the SGA Resolution requiring online and hardcopy syllabi.

- C. **Minor in Leadership Studies.** SAC approved unanimously the proposed minor which had been received from the UUC; Senate action is not required.
- D. **CBA Dean Search Committee.** Peter Antonellis, the SGA representative on the CBA Dean Search Committee, has resigned because of schedule conflicts; SAC has selected Allyson Savin (CBA student) to replace him.

E. **Next Meeting:** February 11 in Raytheon Amphitheater (240 Egan). It is expected that President Freeland, Provost Abdelal, and Senior Vice President Mucciolo will be visiting the Senate to present details about the 2005 budget and future investments.

III. **Provost's Report.** Provost Abdelal reported that the schedule for merit evaluations has been extended by one week and that the unit reporting deadlines will be up to the Colleges.

IV. **Question and Discussion Time**

A. Professor Futrelle suggested that Senators exert some discipline so that discussions do not continue overlong. Provost Abdelal responded that he would list the Senators who wish to speak and call them in order.

B. The floor was yielded to SGA Vice President Peter Antonellis who reported that the Student Senate meets on Thursdays during Activity Period, which would prevent students from attending the Faculty Senate's Thursday meetings.

V. **Ad Hoc Faculty Handbook Review Committee Report.** Resolution #3, on the floor from the previous meeting, read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate approves Section V.H (Grading) presented in the Revised Draft (4/16/03) from the *ad hoc* Committee to Review the Faculty Handbook, to go into effect when published in the revised edition of the *Faculty Handbook*.

Professor Alper declared his intent to move two amendments on which he would like separate votes.

Motion. Professor Alper moved to amend by deletion of "(Pass/Fail)" after "S/U" in the first paragraph on the S/U policy, on page 64, and the motion was seconded. Professor Ellis accepted the amendment as friendly.

Motion. Professor Alper moved to amend by substitution of "Registrar" for "instructor" in the last bulleted item on page 65, and the motion was seconded. The sentence would then read, "Students have until the end of the second week of the term to declare to the Registrar their intent to receive an S/U grade; however, this deadline may, at the option of the Registrar, be extended to the end of the tenth week." The motion was seconded.

Professor Alper explained that the playing field for grades would be more level if the instructor does not know whether a student is taking a course on an S/U basis.

Professor Peterfreund, as a point of order, noted that the instructor and not the Registrar should be involved in the decision if a major is in fear of taking a course and getting a low grade. On the other hand, an instructor might permit or encourage a non-major to take the course S/U.

Professor Vaughn pointed out that not all colleges allow their majors to take courses S/U. He suggested that faculty are more appropriate to advise students about taking courses S/U.

Professor Blank felt that S/U grading should be blind to the instructor. He thought that such courses could easily be defined and that the Registrar's Office could program them.

Professor Bruns pointed out that the amendment included another part and recommended deleting it. Provost Abdelal responded that her two options were either to offer a friendly amendment or to wait and present another motion following action on Professor Alper's amendment.

Motion. Professor Blank moved to divide the question, and the motion was seconded.

Vote to substitute "Registrar" for "instructor": FAILED, 2-30-2.

Motion. Professor Bruns moved to delete the second part of the sentence, which read, “however, this deadline may, at the option of the instructor, be extended to the end of the tenth week.” The motion was seconded.

Several Senators favored retaining the text because it would provide flexibility in deciding to take a course for a grade and also the opportunity for enrichment in exploring electives.

The floor was yielded to Professor Herman who pointed out that the ten-week deadline had been created so that students could feel free to broaden their education by taking courses outside their majors.

Discussion continued, with several Senators favoring the two-week deadline.

The floor was yielded to Peter Antonellis who spoke in favor of the ten weeks so that students might be allowed to experiment in new areas of study.

Professor Peterfreund noted that ten weeks seemed extreme in a 15-week semester and added that the resolution did not attend to differences in the calendars of Law and University College.

Motion. Professor Peterfreund moved to refer the resolution to the Agenda Committee for revision. The motion was seconded.

Professor Blank called the question.

Professor Ellis, opposing the motion to refer, pointed out that the motion was a simple one to amend further, or to vote upon immediately.

Professor Lowndes explained that it would not be useful for the Agenda Committee to make revisions when the will of the body was not clear, adding that it could still lead to protracted discussion in a later Senate meeting.

Professor Peterfreund withdrew his motion.

Professor Bruns, having been persuaded by Mr. Antonellis, suggested substituting “fourth week” for “second week.”

The floor was yielded to Professor Herman who pointed out that both Law and University College have their own grading systems, which appear in their respective handbooks.

Vote on Professor Bruns’s motion to delete: PASSED, 18-12-2.

Motion. Professor Peterfreund moved to amend by substituting “the middle of the term as designated by the Academic Calendar” for “the end of the tenth week.” The motion was seconded.

Professor Vaughn called for a point of order and asked whether this motion would undo what the body had just decided, which was to eliminate the option.

Professor Barnes responded that it was up to the Chair to rule.

Provost Abdelal pointed out that the motion had been seconded.

Professor Peterfreund spoke to his motion and explained that its purpose was to address the concern of the body that two weeks were not enough to make the decision and also to address calendars in semesters and summer. To solve the problem, the Registrar would determine the middle of the term and state it in the academic calendar.

The floor was yielded to Mr. Antonellis who deemed the wording adequate.

Professor Brookins suggested substituting “midpoint” for “middle”, and this was accepted as a friendly amendment.

Professor Peterfreund’s amendment then read, “Students have until the midpoint of the term, as designated by the Academic Calendar, to declare to the instructor their intent to receive an S/U grade.”

Vote on Professor Peterfreund’s amendment: PASSED 33-0-2.

The Senate returned to the main motion, as amended.

Professor Alper asked whether academic appeals committees exist. Professor Ellis responded that these committees are appointed *ad hoc* as the last point of appeal on student academic issues, and are defined in the Student Handbook section on academic appeals.

Vote on Resolution #3: PASSED, 33-0-1

Professor Ellis moved Resolution #4, and the motion was seconded. Resolution #4 read as follows.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate approves Section V.I (Tutoring) presented in the Revised Draft (4/16/03) from the *ad hoc* Committee to Review the Faculty Handbook, to go into effect when published in the revised edition of the *Faculty Handbook*.

Professor Lowndes explained that the intent of the language was to prevent conflict of interest for individuals who are teaching in the same discipline.

Discussion ensued as to whether this policy prevents departments, colleges, or academic assistance centers from hiring teaching assistants to tutor students.

Provost Abdelal added that hiring by academic unit was not at issue. Professor Ellis pointed out that the policy rules out fee-for-service arrangements between TA’s and individual students, under the conditions specified. It certainly allows TA’s to tutor in subjects that they teach when tutoring is arranged and compensated by the University through one of its units.

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

Vote on Resolution #4: PASSED, 35-0-2.

- VI. **Faculty Workload Policy Resolution.** Professor Morrison moved the following resolution, and the motion was seconded. The parts of the resolution would be voted seriatim.

WHEREAS it is vital that Northeastern University establish competitive workloads and teaching loads in its quest for top-100 research university status,

AND WHEREAS the goal of such workloads and teaching loads must be to ensure equity while recognizing and supporting faculty members’ diverse strengths, talents and contributions to the University,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the following Workload Policy be implemented University-wide in the 2005-06 academic year:

1. Matchmate Workloads

A normal workload for faculty at research universities includes instruction, research/scholarship/creative activities, and service. An equitable workload policy must emphasize equity of total workloads, rather than equity in one or two components of the workload.

Academic units vary in their contributions to the University mission ranging from units that focus primarily on undergraduate education to those with substantial graduate and research programs, and so it is understood that the components of the workload policy will vary from one unit to another.

Each department, school or similar unit, in consultation with the dean of the college and the Provost, will establish the metrics of its own workload policy based on comparisons with appropriate matchmate units for the academic unit. At very least, the matchmate data must identify the teaching load range and average for each matchmate unit.

2. Teaching Loads

Each academic unit may define its teaching loads based upon the number of courses, the number of credit hours taught, or classroom contact time, as appropriate. Either way, academic units should allow for reductions in teaching load for large classes over 75 students, writing intensive courses, supervision of doctoral theses, and the like.

3. Tenure-Track Faculty Workloads

Tenure-track faculty must meet the expectations of teaching, research, and service as articulated in the policy on promotion and tenure in the Faculty Handbook. Therefore, newly hired tenure-track faculty will be assigned a teaching load reduced by at least one four-credit course (or its equivalent in the unit) in each of their first two years at the University to provide the opportunity for developing their teaching and scholarly efforts. Furthermore, service expectations will be more limited than for tenured faculty.

4. Course Buyout

The course buyout rate for faculty seeking to reduce their teaching load using funds from external sources (i.e. grants, contracts, etc.), will be 1/6 of the faculty member's academic year base salary (including benefits) for each four credit-hour course bought out. The funds used by a faculty member for course buyout will remain in the faculty member's department or equivalent unit. All course buyouts are subject to the approval of the Dean of the School or College.

5. Merit and Equity Raises

The specific weighting of the components of a faculty member's workload must be followed in the determination of a merit or equity salary increase for the faculty member.

6. Workload Evaluation Committee

Every department or similar unit will establish in its bylaws a performance evaluation committee consisting of at least two members of the tenured faculty plus the department chair or unit head. The committee members will be chosen by a method agreed to by the unit. On a periodic basis of either three, four or five years, as determined by the bylaws of the department or equivalent unit, the Workload Evaluation Committee will review the contributions and effectiveness of each faculty member in teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities and service based on the matchmate data for workloads or teaching loads from comparable units and on information for each faculty member such as annual reviews, curriculum vitae, teaching evaluations, publication records, service activities and the like. After completing these reviews, the Workload Evaluation Committee will establish workloads for the faculty within the unit with respect to research/scholarship/creative activities, teaching and service. Each unit will also establish an appeals mechanism for faculty members who disagree with the workload profile established by the committee. Although the particular workloads may vary from person to person or from time to time, each faculty member is expected to contribute to some extent to each of the three areas.

Professor Morrison explained that the report of last year's Faculty Development Committee had been discussed by the Provost and the Agenda Committee. While the Agenda Committee had been in favor of the themes of the report, it had not concurred with all the details and had crafted its own, less specific resolution.

Professor Sherman asked the relationship between the last year's committee report and this resolution in terms of legislative intent.

In answer, Professor Lowndes first explained that Provost Abdelal had raised the issue of workloads upon his arrival two years ago. Provost Abdelal's interest had focused on equitable workloads with components that may vary over time as a faculty member's interests might change. While supportive of that, Professor Lowndes' interest had been focused more on establishing equitable teaching loads compared to external matchmates. Professor Lowndes' knowledge, based on repeated information from deans around the country, was that teaching loads in many disciplines in Arts and Sciences at NU were high. He was aware, too, that teaching loads in other colleges at NU were also high. In assessing teaching loads with other institutions, it is vital to compare in the same currency – credit hours not courses – because most other institutions teach three credit courses rather than four credit courses that are more the norm at Northeastern. Professor Lowndes indicated that the FDC report was a good one but that both the SAC and the Provost had separate issues with parts of it. SAC had therefore worked to establish a resolution that embraced much of the FDC report, but also endeavored to address SAC's issues and the Provost issues, and this was the one now before the Senate

Provost Abdelal said he is committed to the premise of workload equity, which requires consideration of the work of each faculty member in all three areas: teaching, research, and service. Everyone does not have to contribute to the mission of a college equally in every area but, instead, by agreement, all would contribute in their most effective areas. The teaching focus would not be only on formal course assignments, and would include the guidance of graduate students. Much of what we need to do this is already in place. We have matchmates, national norms, and chairs can figure out how to maximize teaching and service for departments. Merit assessments will consider all three areas, and equity is not equity unless you know all that faculty are doing. He cautioned that the 18-hour maximum in the committee report would offer protection only in certain disciplines.

Professor Vaughn asked how much of the report would be included in a vote for the resolution. Provost Abdelal responded that the resolution was separate from the report.

Professor Alper, who chaired last year's committee, noted that most of the resolution was consistent with the report but with different details. Unlike the report, the resolution did not specifically address a 24-credit-hour maximum for non-tenure-track faculty, nor funding when matchmate data that show a shortage of faculty in a unit, nor the means to protect faculty from a maximum load that is too high.

Professor Lowndes thanked the 2002-03 Faculty Development Committee for its fine work, adding that the Agenda Committee had embraced the spirit of the report as well as a portion of the Provost's proposed policy. SAC's intent was to give maximum discretion at the unit level, to resist intrusions from other levels, and to defer implementation until the resources are in place. This latter was especially important. He did not want the workload policy implemented until any new resources that would be needed were in place. Hence, if the resolution was adopted, completion of the matchmate analysis this year would give some sense of the resources to be added to the 2006 budget year to enable implementation in that academic year.

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

Vote on #1: PASSED, 34-0-0.

Professor Blank suggested that, in #2, the enrollment number for a large class size should be left up to the unit.

Professor Ondrechen, who had been on the Faculty Development Committee last year, asked that a friendly amendment be offered to allow for varying class size.

Motion. Professor Vaughn suggested adding "very" before "large classes" and deleting "over 75 students" and this was accepted as a friendly amendment.

As time had run out, a motion was made to adjourn.

Adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles H. Ellis, Jr.
Secretary