

September 29, 2004

Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 09/29/2004

Charles H. Ellis Jr.
Northeastern University

Recommended Citation

Ellis Jr., Charles H., "Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 09/29/2004" (2004). *Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes*. Paper 54.
<http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d10004646>

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

TO: FACULTY SENATE
FROM: CHARLES H. ELLIS, Jr. SECRETARY, FACULTY SENATE
SUBJECT: MINUTES, 2004-05 FACULTY SENATE MEETING, 29 SEPTEMBER 2004

Present: (Professors) Alper, Bannister, Bobcean, De Ritis, Ellis, Futrelle, Glod, Hansberry, Heiman, Herman, Krishnamoorthy, Kruger, Lowndes, Margotta, Marshall, McKnight, Melachrinoudis, Morrison, Peterfreund, Powers-Lee, Reynolds, Sherman, Sherwood, Vaughn, Wiseman, Wray
(Administrators) Abdelal, Falcon, Finkelstein, Hill, Moore, Onan, Soyster, Stellar, Zoloth

Absent: (Professors) Bansil, Blank, Robinson, Schaffer, Shafai
(Administrators) Spieler

Provost Abdelal convened the meeting at 11:54 a.m.

I. **Minutes.** The minutes of September 15 were approved.

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

- A. **New Senators.** We are pleased to welcome Professors Neil Alper (Economics), Donald Heiman (Physics), and Thomas Sherman (Mathematics) who were duly elected by the College of Arts and Sciences to serve one-year terms to replace Professors Gerald Bursey (Political Science), Kathy Howlett (English), and Matthew Hunt (Sociology) all of whom resigned for various personal reasons. We also welcome Interim Vice Provost for Graduate Education Luis Falcon who President Freeland has appointed to replace Pat Meservey.
- B. **Meetings.** The Agenda Committee has met twice since the last Senate meeting, once in regular session and once with Provost Abdelal. The primary purpose of the meeting with the Provost was to share thoughts on issues to be addressed by the 2004-05 Senate. As a result of this meeting I can now announce three areas that the Senate will focus on this year. First, a special committee will be established to evaluate the summer term under the semester system. Second, a special committee will be established to develop recommendations on the structure and operating procedures of the Graduate Council that can permit more timely yet appropriately thorough evaluations of new graduate programs consistent with our drive for top-100 status and consistent with the changing and competitive demands of the external market place. Third, the Enrollment and Admissions Policy Committee will be asked to address diverse issues concerning transfer students as was mandated by resolution of the 2003-04 Senate. The specific details of the charges and committee compositions for these issues will be given to you shortly.

At the invitation of Vice President Kater Pendergast, the Senate Agenda Committee and the Financial Affairs Committee will meet with her tomorrow to be briefed on forthcoming changes concerning health benefits that are scheduled to be announced shortly.

- C. **Integrity Week.** I have been asked to draw your attention and encourage your participation in the forthcoming Academic Integrity Week during October 4-7 which is a program sponsored by the Office of Student Conflict and Conflict Resolution and the Student Government Association that is designed to highlight the principles of intellectual honesty and integrity both inside and outside the classroom. On the table are promotional materials about this that you may wish to review and share with your students.
- D. **Today's Agenda.** Unless there is objection, we shall ask that the proposed new Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies, item G on the agenda, be considered first after Question Time in order that

Professor Peter Rosen can speak to the issue before he must leave for another meeting.

E. **Next Meeting: October 13 in 450 Dodge.**

III. **Provost's Report.** Provost Abdelal reported the following.

- A. **Budget Indicators.** Credit hours are 2% higher than those of last fall, which reflects an increase in revenue beyond what was projected in the budget. Indirect costs also promise to be higher than projections. In the graduate area, the specific revenue figure appears to be closer to 1% than the expected 2%. The overall assessment is that we will meet the projected budget for the current fiscal year, but we need to improve our methods of gathering data in order to better inform chairs and deans of what is happening.
- B. **NSF Award.** NU has reason to celebrate, as we have received one of six awards just announced by the National Science Foundation for a nanoscale science and engineering center. The other leading institutions involved in the tough competition were the University of California at Berkeley, Ohio State University, the University of Pennsylvania, Stanford University, and the University of Wisconsin. This kind of achievement does much to burnish our image as an academic institution.
- C. **Voter Registration.** The Higher Education Act of 1988 requires academic institutions that receive federal funding to foster efforts to enable their students to register to vote by making forms available to them. Student Affairs Vice President Klotzbier has asked that faculty assist in this effort by informing students that they can obtain voter registration forms on campus.

IV. **Question and Discussion Time**

- A. Professor Vaughn asked where students should register to vote. Provost Abdelal replied that the *New York Times* had reported that students may register where they go to college or in their home towns. He added that a positive consequence of student participation in the voting process is that the elected leaders of Boston would view the student voters as constituents.

The floor was yielded to SGA Vice president Bill Durkin who announced that students may register at the SGA office on the third floor of the Curry Student Center. The SGA will also be conducting a voter registration drive over the next two weeks.

- B. Professor Margotta asked the dollar value of the nanotechnology award. Provost Abdelal responded that the grant is for \$12.4M over five years to NU as part of a consortium with UMass-Lowell, the University of New Hampshire, and some industry partners.
- C. Professor Herman asked whether the University is changing its policy on benefits for domestic partners in light of the decision of the Massachusetts Supreme Court. Some faculty are concerned as to whether the University's ruling applies only to those living in Massachusetts because it appears that those who live outside Massachusetts would be adversely affected. He urged that the implications of changing the University's policy on fringe benefits to same-sex partners be carefully considered.
- D. Professor Herman expressed concern that the \$5,000 allocation in this year's budget for the Library to purchase non-print media did not even cover all the materials that faculty had requested for teaching purposes. He urged that additional funding be considered and accelerated so that faculty can use those materials this semester rather than waiting for an allocation at the end of the spring term. Provost Abdelal explained that for this fiscal year the library had received \$600K for the collection, whether print or digital. Since the library's total budget is \$8M, that \$600K represents a considerable percentage of the collection budget and should be viewed in the context of a significant enhancement of the library budget. Professor Herman agreed. He noted that Cinema Studies had been given a budget line of its own to buy materials, but he was concerned that the teaching materials generally purchased by the library would diminish in priority. Provost Abdelal agreed to transmit this concern to Dean Warro.

- V. **Proposed Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies.** Professor Peterfreund moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded. The resolution read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies (SPCS) as approved by the UUCC on 11 May 2004.

The floor was yielded to Professor Rosen, Chair of the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, who presented a brief description of the curriculum, which is intended to target the large number of potential students who have expressed interest in such a program.

Professor Alper recommended adding an environmental economics course in place of macroeconomics.

Professor Heiman recommended the inclusion of a course or courses on energy-related issues, such as the amount of energy we use, where we get it, and where we will go in the future.

Professor Ellis asked why only 160 quarter hours were required instead of 170. The floor was yielded to Dean Leach who explained that it was largely to meet the competition in that the norm for part-time bachelors' programs is 120 semester hours. Equally important is the rule change with regard to transfer students; they must now take half their program with us, whereas the past requirement was for only 25% to get their NU degree.

Professor McKnight asked what the expected career path would be for a graduate of this program. The floor was yielded to Academic Specialist Todd Fritch who responded that the career path covered a broad range that includes industry, public office, and environmental consulting.

There being no further discussion, the Senate turned to a vote.

Vote: PASSED, 33-0-0.

- VI. **Proposed Associate of Science in Paralegal Studies.** Professor Peterfreund moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded. The resolution read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Associate of Science in Paralegal Studies in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies (SPCS) as approved by the UUCC on 11 May 2004.

Vice President Hopey explained that a demand exists for this program and that students can subsequently pursue baccalaureate degrees.

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

Vote: PASSED, 33-0-0.

As a point of order, Professor Peterfreund noted that some members of the Academic Council had expressed concern as to whether associate degree programs need to come to the Senate for approval and asked that this be clarified. SAC decided that any degree program should come to the Senate thus setting the precedent. Professor Herman added that, since the Senate Bylaws specify that degree programs need Senate approval, a precedent is not necessary. No particular degree programs are excluded.

- VII. **Proposed Bachelor of Science in Leadership.** Professor Peterfreund moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded. The resolution read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Bachelor of Science in Leadership in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies (SPCS) as approved by the UUCC

on 11 May 2004.

Dean Leach explained that, in an effort to be competitive with other institutions, a group of faculty had developed this program after having conducted market studies.

Professor Margotta asked how “leadership” was distinguished from “management.” Joe Raelin, Asa Knowles Chair of the Center for Work and Learning, explained that, from the group’s perspective, management is aligned more with a position in the hierarchy, while leadership can embrace anyone in his/her role in the organization as long as that person contributes something to the progress of the particular industry, whether non-profit or corporate.

Professor Ellis wondered about the difference between the courses in this program and those in the master’s program. Dean Leach responded that they would be taught at a different level.

Professor Vaughn asked if evidence indicated a demand for a BS in leadership. Vice President Hopey explained that the Jefferson School of Leadership in the University of Richmond actually created a whole school on leadership, a growth area in higher education. NYU has the largest program in the country, and other models are operating in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

Professor Futrelle asked whether businesses, when hiring, seek people with these degrees. Vice President Hopey responded that 75% of our SPCS students are already employed in full-time jobs and want degrees in order to move up or have a larger role in their organizations, so this program fits well with that demand.

Professor Peterfreund noted that the program offers a chance to pay off on our urban mission as outreach to the people of this city in order to improve their position.

Professor Raelin explained that organizations today are less hierarchical and operate more on webs and partnerships, so that knowledge is available across the entire terrain of an organization. As a result, people can act quickly in response to customers and vendors. This program was designed to prepare students for that kind of organization.

There being no further discussion, the Senate turned to a vote.

Vote: PASSED, 33-0-0.

VIII. **Proposed Master of Science in Leadership.** Professor Peterfreund moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded. The resolution read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Master of Science in Leadership in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies (SPCS) as approved by the by the Graduate Council on 22 September 2004.

Dean Leach explained that this groundbreaking program was in response to interest expressed by students and employers.

Professor Onan suggested adding to each of the master’s proposals a minimum requirement of 40 credit hours and gpa of 3.000. Vice President Hopey agreed, adding that the Academic Council had voted on these requirements.

Professor Ellis pointed out that the catalog statement for each of the programs will specify its graduation requirements based on what is in the proposals.

Professor Herman explained that in Arts and Sciences one set of regulations is uniform for the entire graduate school, which is where the minimum graduate requirements are, and the program-specific regulations are for programs that exceed those minima.

In response to a question from Provost Abdelal about whether there is a difference between 3.0 and 3.000, Professor Ellis recounted that, in 1980, when degrees were being voted by what was then the University Academic Council, an attempt was made to slip through a master's candidate with a 2.95 average. The argument was made that 2.95 rounds up to 3.0. The argument was rejected, the degree was not approved, and that was when 3.000 became the minimum to avoid the effect of rounding the second decimal place. The issue is irrelevant for GPA's over the 3.0 minimum but is important for maintaining the standard when a student has not attained the average needed to graduate.

Professor Marshall asked how these initiatives, some of which would likely draw large numbers of students, would be staffed. Vice President Hopey replied that the majority of the teaching in SPCS is done by adjunct faculty, but for these programs full-time lecturers may be hired. He added that the SPCS will try to have full-time faculty in all its masters programs.

Professor Peterfreund noted that firewalls exist to separate SPCS students from day students and assured the body that the quality of instructional faculty in SPCS is of paramount importance.

Professor Ellis asked why the program was called "Master of Science" rather than "Master of Professional Studies." Vice President Hopey responded that potential students prefer the MS title, citing several other social science programs that confer the MS. He also noted that the MPS designation had been coined because a current graduate school program had voiced concern that an MS given by SPCS would lead to confusion with its existing MS program.

Professor Onan recalled that certificate programs in the former University College were mandated for review after 3-5 years. She wondered whether this was also the case with these programs. Vice President Hopey replied that the SPCS Academic Council had discussed it, adding that he preferred three-year reviews on the basis that we are only as good as our product.

There being no further discussion, the Senate turned to a vote.

Vote: PASSED, 30-0-2.

- IX. **Proposed Master of Professional Studies Degree in Informatics.** Professor Peterfreund moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded. The resolution read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Master of Professional Studies Degree in Informatics in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies (SPCS) as approved by the Graduate Council on 22 September 2004.

The floor was yielded to Dean Chan who explained that this program answered both internal and external market demands. IT is increasingly posing challenges for the working professional. Professional associations have identified a number of skill gaps that could be filled by innovative integration and synthesis of business, communications, and technology skills.

Professor Herman pointed out that the program had been reviewed by the directors of other informatics groups on campus and none had objected to it as an intrusion upon their areas.

Professor De Ritis expressed enthusiasm for the program as the new domain of information technology and creative practice and predicted that it will be the future of economic development in this country.

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

Vote: PASSED, 31-0-0.

- X. **Proposed Master's in Liberal Arts Degree.** Professor Peterfreund moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded. The resolution read as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Master's in Liberal Arts Degree in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies (SPCS) as approved by the Graduate Council on 22 September 2004.

Professor Peterfreund explained that the proposal came from a market survey that indicates the desire on the part of the whole population to pursue such a degree for personal improvement. It is a degree that is completely separate from masters' and doctorate degrees in the departments of History and English. These are courses approved and tested in the classroom. Also, since they have been tested in the classroom, it is likely that some of the day faculty with expertise in these areas will teach the courses.

Vice President Hopey noted that NU has a large alumni base from core areas of business administration. These potential students are approaching retirement age and would like to come back and take intellectually stimulating courses in literature and the humanities.

Professor Herman pointed out that the market is obviously gravitating toward this kind of degree program for personal enrichment rather than specialization.

Professor Alper wondered how one could take urban studies without talking of economic issues associated with an urban environment. He also wondered whether some synergy would be possible between the day and evening programs. Professor Peterfreund explained that the calendars for the day and evening programs do not match, since SPCS is on a quarter system. Moreover, the reason for the firewall is to discourage any illusion that this program would be a stepping stone to a PhD in English or History.

Professor Alper noted that the only social science not included in the proposal was economics. Vice President Hopey responded that this was a great debate in the SPCS Academic Council. While we want to encourage students intellectually to explore ideas, we do not want them to believe this program might be a back door to a program that would be closed to them.

Professor Ellis suggested, as a friendly amendment, to delete the apostrophe from "Master's" and substitute "of" for "in" so that the title would read "Master of Liberal Arts," and this was accepted.

Professor Futrelle opined that if he were to go back to school in midlife he would not study science *per se*, but would prefer to study and discuss the history or philosophy of science.

Vice President Hopey, in response to a budgetary question, assured the body that funding is available to support full-time faculty teaching in this program.

Professor Peterfreund, to correct any cognitive dissonance, explained that the Academic Council of the SPCS is not the same "Academic Council" that existed in 1980.

Provost Abdelal assured the body that, when a college cooperates in a collaborative effort, it is with complete understanding that the expenses incurred from the college side will be reimbursed and day faculty participants compensated.

Dean Soyster urged that it be made abundantly clear that this program is for enrichment and not a stepping stone to doctoral programs. Vice President Hopey responded that the marketing materials would address this.

Professor Marshall supported the proposal but expressed concern that having a thesis requirement could be used as a basis for going on to a PhD program. He envisioned expansion in other concentrations over time, but he wondered whether people with the appropriate backgrounds would be available to deliver the courses. Professor Peterfreund responded that, as graduate programs are taught one night a week, he did not foresee a problem.

Professor Herman pointed out that it is not a certainty that no one would want to go on from this degree. All we can do is express the limitations with as much clarity as we can. Any graduate program provides

limitations as well as opportunities. For example, although there are exceptions, one with a master's in history would not be likely to go on directly to a PhD in physics. It is simply a matter of good advising.

Professor Kruger congratulated Vice President Hopey for his leadership in conducting systematic research and his collaborative endeavors to develop these degree programs.

Vice President Hopey noted for the record that he did not mean to imply that the Master of Professional Studies was a lesser degree than the Master of Science.

Adjourned at 1:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles H. Ellis, Jr.
Secretary