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Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 03/31/2005

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TO: FACULTY SENATE
FROM: DEE VIGEANT for the SENATE AGENDA COMMITTEE
SUBJECT: MINUTES, 2004-05 FACULTY SENATE MEETING, 31 MARCH 2005

Present: (Professors) Alper, Bansil, Bannister, Blank, Bobcean, De Ritis, Futrelle, Glod, Hansberry, Heiman, Herman, Krishnamoorthy, Lowndes, Margotta, Marshall, McKnight, Melachrinoudis, Morrison, Peterfreund, Powers-Lee, Reynolds, Shafai, Sherman, Wray
(Administrators) Abdelal, Falcon, Finkelstein, Hill, Onan, Soyster, Spieler, Stellar

Absent: (Professors) Ellis, Kruger, Robinson, Schaffer, Sherwood, Vaughn, Wiseman
(Administrators) Moore, Zoloth

Provost Abdelal convened the meeting at 2:28 p.m.

- I. **Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of 9 March were approved.
- II. **SAC Report.** Professor Lowndes reported the following.
 - A. **Meetings.** SAC met once in regular session since the last Senate meeting. Vice President Lyford attended a portion of that meeting to discuss the proposed new Strategic Plan of the Division of Cooperative Education.
 - B. **Faculty Senate Bylaws.** The ballots for the vote by the teaching faculty on the proposed changes to the Faculty Senate Bylaws have been distributed. To be counted, ballots must be returned to the Senate Office by 4 April 2005. Please encourage colleagues to participate.
 - C. **Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 6 at 11:45 a.m. in Raytheon Amphitheater (240 EC).** If necessary that meeting will be continued on **Thursday, April 7 at 2:50 p.m. in 308 SN.**

Professor Lowndes announced that any new programs that the Senate approves will go to the Board of Trustees on 12 April. He proposed to reorder the agenda and start with the proposed programs. There being no objection, the Senate turned to item E on the agenda.

- III. **Direct Entry Master of Science in Respiratory Therapy.** Professor Peterfreund moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Direct Entry Master of Science in Respiratory Therapy in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies as approved by the Graduate Council on 14 January 2005.

The floor was yielded to Vice President Hopey who reported that the SPCS had been working on this program for about a year with the understanding that this model, which is the only one of its kind in the country, would respond to a projected shortage of respiratory therapists.

Professor Barnes explained that respiratory therapists are on duty 24/7 in every general hospital throughout the country. They work closely with critical care physicians, anesthesiologists, surgeons, and others in pulmonary medicine. They respond to every respiratory and cardiac arrest in the hospital. Applicants to the proposed program will be people with degrees in biology, chemistry, or engineering. Respiratory therapy is a specialized field that needs to be well-marketed and presented in order to attract students who will be needed to fill the growing demand for respiratory therapists with a foundation in leadership in the areas of education, management and supervision, and clinical practice. The baccalaureate program will stop taking students into the freshman year effective with the class of 2009. The RT program will continue in Bouvé until the class of 2007 graduates.

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

Vote: PASSED, 26-0-0.

- IV. **Master of Professional Writing and Information Design.** Professor Peterfreund moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Master of Professional Writing and Information Design in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies as approved by the Graduate Council on 14 January 2005.

Professor Peterfreund explained that this program maintains the ten-course curricular design of the former daytime technical writing program. It will be on the quarter system, but the courses will be robust, 4-credit, two-plus hours and will therefore be able to cover much of the same subject matter as the day program. The main difference between this program and the day program is that this one fits the requirements for employment at high-tech companies. Extensive consultation with Genzyme was helpful in developing a program that would appeal to companies seeking individuals with communications skills in biomedical technology, computer technology, or business and financial planning.

Vice President Hopey added that this program would correspond nicely with existing certificate SPCS programs in biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and other concentrations.

Professor Futrelle suggested that the biggest challenge might be in finding instructors. Professor Peterfreund responded that one of the consulting team from Genzyme was a MTPW graduate, and at least two of the people coming through the pipeline have chosen health professions and medical writing as their focus areas.

Professor Margotta asked whether there were any overlap between the information design aspect of this program and the communications studies program that the Senate passed a few weeks ago. Dean Leach replied that there was not because the focus was different for each. This program is focused on the professional writing aspect across a few different industries, including the biotechnology area where corporate and organizational communication has less of a writing focus and is more concerned with understanding organizational processes.

Professor Marshall recalled the fate of the tech writing graduate program that had declined and asked whether this program, too, might have to be transformed in five or six years. Professor Peterfreund responded that what had killed the tech writing program was not low enrollments but the financial constraints that prevented the replacement of one of three faculty members. That program had just been updated to reflect the shift from the high tech boom to a more diverse technical and informational design environment. In fact, this program is flexible in its areas of concentration and will be subject to updating. Consultants from the day program who were involved in the design of this one are also available, so it will be market-responsive.

Vice President Hopey pointed out that much of the SPCS philosophy is that the curriculum of any professional program should be reviewed every five years in order to stay relevant.

Professor Sherman expressed concern that sometimes scientific knowledge lags behind one's writing skills. Professor Peterfreund explained that the applicant pool for the program would consist of people with degrees in the bench sciences and other technical fields who are interested in bridging the divide by applying their technical knowledge in writing environments.

Professor De Ritis noted that people with these skills are needed desperately. Writers, content developers, and scientists can work together so that their communications contain language and science that are clear and correct.

Professor Onan, referring to the IDM 390 Integrative Seminar on page 3, thought it did not sound like a major project. Professor Peterfreund replied that it did not replace the work product of the curriculum. One of the things the Genzyme team emphasized was the need for not only professional expertise but professionalism in the field.

Professor Onan asked whether students would be doing a work project or working only on their own development skills. Professor Peterfreund explained that this would be at the discretion of the designer of the course. He shared her concern and concurred in the preference that this be project-driven rather than casebook-driven; however, the Genzyme people cited problems in finding employable people who are attuned to the corporate culture, so probably the answer is both. He apologized for not having a detailed course description. Professor Onan replied that she liked the description on page 7, given that this is graduate work.

Professor Krishnamoorthy asked if it would be possible for a person with a biology degree to sign up for a business and financial planning track in the program. Professor Peterfreund responded that it would, but that person would have to produce competent financial services or financial sector writing. Professor Krishnamoorthy's concern was the possible lack of depth of knowledge, for example, in the regulatory environment of public accounting, the liability of financial information, capital markets, and the goals of the SEC. Professor Peterfreund explained that applicants will have to provide some sense of what their qualifications are and then be screened to ascertain whether they have the qualifications to succeed in the program.

Professor Futrelle thought that the program should provide some background from which people can be launched into further learning through work experience.

Professor Peterfreund pointed out that tech writers do not exist as male caribou off on their own; they exist as part of teams that produce the final product. The knowledge is always resident in the team if not in each person. Technical writing developed in the most ad hoc of ways because, after WWII, we needed people to do specialized writing for the burgeoning fields of science and technology.

Professor Heiman favored whatever might be done to close the chasm between lay people and technology.

Provost Abdelal noted that the first drafts for the Research magazine, which are often unintelligible to people outside the immediate discipline, are edited in an interdisciplinary effort by faculty and then sent to academic leaders nationwide.

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

Vote: PASSED, 30-0-0.

- V. **Graduate Entry Doctor of Pharmacy.** Professor Reynolds moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Graduate Entry Doctor of Pharmacy degree program in Bouvé College of Health Sciences as approved by the Graduate Council on 10 January 2005.

The floor was yielded to Dan Robinson, Dean of the School of Pharmacy, who explained that students who come to Northeastern with a bachelor's degree and have met all our prerequisites for the Pharmacy program will have opportunities to develop and focus some of their training in areas of leadership and management. Initially this will be a small program. We have about 548 applications from students who wish to transfer into the third year. Last year we admitted sixteen students, fifteen of whom already had degrees.

Professor Onan thought the requirements for the different categories were written rather broadly and asked if a list were available from which students may take a course that would meet the diversity requirement in Arts and Sciences or Bouvé. Dean Robinson responded that checks and balances on the courses will be provided, and students' skill sets will complement their career goals.

Professor Onan asked whether students would have free rein to design their own course curricula or need an advisor's sign-off. Dean Robinson replied that a graduate committee would work with these students.

Professor Reynolds explained that the portfolio process throughout the Pharmacy curriculum can apply here as well, whereby students identify specific planning activities in their professional curricula. This would provide another mechanism for discussion with advisors about selecting courses that would build on existing skills and help set them in the direction of their professional goals.

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

Vote: PASSED, 30-0-0.

- VI. **Professional Masters Degree in Marine Biology.** Professor Powers-Lee moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the proposed Professional Masters Degree in Marine Biology in the College of Arts and Sciences as approved by the Graduate Council on 4 February 2005.

Professor Powers-Lee reported that the Department of Biology had unanimously and enthusiastically approved the proposal.

The floor was yielded to Salvatore Genovese, Director of the East West Marine Biology Program, who explained that the program has been successful for twenty years in preparing students for careers in marine biology without offering a degree. It has evolved to the point at which nearly half its students hold bachelor's degrees and so it seemed a good idea to offer a degree, especially since Biology now has programs in bioinformatics and biotechnology. Students would spend a year in coursework and do a six-month internship and research project. They would experience very different ecosystems. In the fall, students would take foundational courses at the marine lab in Nahant; in the winter, they would be on the South Pacific Island of Moorea for ten weeks; and in spring, they go to Santa Catalina Island off the coast of California.

Although she was in favor of the proposal, Professor Onan asked for clarification on the lack of admissions criteria and whether it would be undergraduate or graduate in nature. Professor Genovese responded that courses can be crossed and this one would have additional requirements for graduate students, usually in the form of presentations and papers.

Dean Soyster thought the courses seemed indistinguishable as to whether graduate or undergraduate. Professor Powers-Lee responded that the tradition is that, because biology is so broad, there is no distinction except in the expectation of more knowledge, research, and skills for graduate students.

Provost Abdelal confirmed that this is the norm for the biological sciences.

Professor Alper thought admissions requirements should be specified. Dean Stellar responded that he had used the same requirements as those for the biotechnology and bioinformatics programs (pp. 5-7).

Professor Onan wanted to see more specificity in the language, such as a degree from an accredited institution.

Professor Peterfreund pointed out that every new degree proposal that comes through CAS does not specify a degree from an accredited institution because it is taken for granted.

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

Vote: PASSED, 30-0-0.

- VII. **Library Policies and Operations Committee Report.** Professor Melachrinoudis moved the following resolution and the motion was seconded.

WHEREAS the University is committed to a course of rising to become a top-100 research university through a policy of academic investment; and

WHEREAS the University Library plays a crucial role in the teaching, learning, and research mission of the University; and

WHEREAS the recent history of flat or erratic funding for the Library's collections will be viewed with disapproval by the NEASC accreditors in 2008; and

WHEREAS the Library now fails to meet both the standards for admission to the Boston Library Consortium, and the benchmarks set by its main comparator groups; and

WHEREAS the Library has pursued a prudent and cost-effective course of action in its use of funds to date; and

WHEREAS the collections of books, journals, and electronic databases available in the University Library already fall short of the needs of the academic community and are inadequate to support its research and teaching activities and aspirations; now, therefore,

- 1. BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate, endorsing both the goal of becoming a top-100 research university and the tactic of enhanced investment in the University's academic mission, supports the clear imperative to develop a robust operating budget for the Library during and beyond the period of the Academic Investment Plan.**
- 2. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate supports, as part of this robust operating budget, the recommendation of the Library Policies and Operations Committee that the Library shall receive sufficient additional funding for that period specifically to offset the phenomenon of journal price inflation, thereby exempting it from the need for any additional reductions in the size of the collection of journal subscription base.**
- 3. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate supports the recommendation of the Library Policies and Operations Committee that funding to improve the range and quality of the collections as a whole be made available in accordance with the Committee's proposed budget plan, including funding to enable access to the Web of Science citation database.**

Professor Melachrinoudis reported that the main charge to the committee was to evaluate the faculty needs of the Library and come up with a five-year budget plan that is consistent with the five-year Academic Investment Plan.

The floor was yielded to Professor Harlow Robinson who explained that the Library is facing some serious challenges as the University strives to enter the top 100. Although the Library is doing better in terms of facilities such as the media center and others, additional upgrading is needed, particularly to the collection. NU falls woefully behind in our number of volumes as compared with the Lucky 13 and top-100 institutions. We also lag in the areas of monographs, salaries, and operating costs. He believed that at the center of any great university is a great library, and our library has not kept pace with all the other enormously positive changes, in academic standards, quality of students, and faculty. Another important issue outlined in the report has to do with the inflationary costs of serials, journals, and the benefits of moving to the electronic format.

Provost Abdelal suggested introducing all the resolutions because they are related and the committee addressed all the issues at the same time, and then taking a vote on each one. There being no objection, the remaining resolutions were placed on the floor.

- 4. WHEREAS the Library is currently understaffed; cannot support the additional requests for research instruction by the English, writing, and honors programs and the expanding research needs of the academic community; and cannot provide peer tutoring for large numbers of students requesting such services;**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate supports the recommendation of the Library Policies and Operations Committee that there be no reductions in Library staffing, and that additional funding to address the Library's additional staffing needs be made available as detailed in the proposed budget plan.

5. **WHEREAS the cost of technology to access information is increasing, and the complexity of the information environment requires that the Library increase its investment in the hardware and software necessary to provide that access;**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate supports the recommendation of the Library Policies and Operations Committee that additional funding be made available to meet the Library technology requirements detailed in the proposed budget plan.

6. **WHEREAS the Library does not provide adequate spaces for group learning, the use of digital media, and undergraduate research and instruction;**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate supports the recommendation of the Library Policies and Operations Committee that additional funding be made available to address the Library facilities needs detailed in the proposed budget plan.

Vice Provost Hill presented the perspective of the Provost's Office. While every member of the University community would undoubtedly be in favor of increasing the resources for the library, the question is how, on a hypothetical amplifier to plan for the next three years, to move four or five knobs around, each of which denotes a major library need. As he read through the resolutions for the stipulations on what would have to happen, there seemed to be nothing to do for the library for the next few years but add money to it, which is happening and has happened consistently over the last few years. The overall FY03 library budget was about \$8.6M: for FY04 it increased by \$400K from centralized University funds; for FY05 it increased \$315; and for FY06 the projected increase is \$500K. Regardless whether one thinks the library budget is increasing fast enough or provides enough additional resources, the actual increase has been something on the order of 17%. As an administrator, the question for him was where to find the level of funding recommended in the resolution in a time of tight finances. The library expenditures of the top 40 research institutions for the twenty years from 1982-2002, there is a consistent downward trend of library expenditures at each institution as a fraction of overall university expenditures. This is an indicator that institutions to which we aspire to compare are not throwing huge funding increases at their libraries either, so we are not grotesquely out of scale with what is happening elsewhere, overall.

Vice Provost Sridhar addressed the issue of price inflation in Resolution #2, which is roughly 10% and would end up being around \$300K for the coming year. While we cannot look at a continuing price increase forever, we need to continuously be attuned to a number of variables. As a result of the efforts of Dean Wakeling and library staff members, deans, chairs and faculty, particularly Professors McKnight and Eric Miller who coordinated the process, it seemed to make sense to reallocate the funds of essentially fifty journals amounting to \$60K for a collection of electronic and other essential journals. His group is now working with other departments to help them get the journals they need. Price inflation should not be perceived as reductions but rather as reallocations in a dynamic process.

Professor Futrelle expressed concern that the Provost's Office approach was like rearranging the chairs on the *Titanic*. He rides the T to other universities in order to do his research because he cannot compete for grants with the resources here. He considered the graph, with its declining library expenditures, analogous to the current position of the U.S. in the world with respect to technology. The lack of resources also prevents us from attracting new faculty; they are surprised to learn we do not have resources like the Web of Science.

Professor Peterfreund pointed out that the Reign of Terror during the French Revolution was probably the greatest period of reallocation in western history. Nothing but additional resources will solve this problem. He expressed concern that we are spending 3%, normalized for tuition discount, without any hint about whether the statistics on the graph have similarly been normalized for tuition discount. He also uses another library for his research. Northeastern has historically filled its shelves with textbooks bought for courses so

that students who could not afford those books could have the use of them on reserve before the books are relegated to the stacks. To consider as part of the collection the obsolete textbooks and other useless publications would further diminish the number from 890,000 to 750,000. We need to fill the shelves with titles that were important in 1985 and continue to be, as well as those that are issued this year. While he has the luxury of going to Widener, his students do not, and they deserve better.

Professor De Ritis wondered which forty libraries were in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) list and what the average operating budget was for those libraries. Provost Abdelal replied that the ARL information came from its website and includes Harvard, whose library budget is \$102M.

Provost Abdelal emphasized that no one in the Provost Office was suggesting that funding for the library is not a high priority and that the library in fact has experienced significant increases in the last two budget cycles. The Committee on Funding Priorities, the deans, the Provost Office, and the President recognize the need to increase the funding. The FY03 budget was in the year before the University really started investing in the library, faculty positions, and other initiatives. He considered the graph important because it showed national norms and the increase in support for our library, which is not the case nationally. The ARL website indicates that what we spend on serials is quite respectable, and in fact is higher than some of the University of California campuses. His conclusion was that our budget for serials is respectable, but our budget for books and monographs is not. We need to weigh the serials, the print, the digital, the collections, and the monographs and books and reflect on what is reasonable and what needs increasing because there is absolute commitment to increases for the library. Last year the library, appropriately, received the highest percent increase of any unit. We also need to reflect on whether to increase support for the tutorial budget in the library or to have supplemental instruction done through graduate teaching assistants in academic departments.

As time had run out, a motion was made to adjourn and there was no objection.

Adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Vigeant
for the Senate Agenda Committee