

January 25, 2006

## Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 01/25/2006

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*Northeastern University*

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### Recommended Citation

Peterfreund, Stuart S., "Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 01/25/2006" (2006). *Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes*. Paper 76.  
<http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d10004270>

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TO: FACULTY SENATE  
FROM: STUART A. PETERFREUND, SECRETARY, FACULTY SENATE  
SUBJECT: MINUTES, 2005-06 FACULTY SENATE MEETING, 25 JANUARY

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Present: (Professors) Alper, Bannister, Bobcean, Bruns, DeRitis, Glod, Hall, Hansberry, Herman, Janikian, Kane, Krishnamoorthy, McKnight, Melachrinoudis, Morrison, Peterfreund, Ramirez, Reucroft, Reynolds, Robinson, Sanchez, Schaffer, Sherwood, Strauss, Willey, Wiseman (Administrators) Abdelal, Falcon, Finkelstein, Greene, Moore, Onan, Soyster, Sridhar, Stellar, Zoloth

Absent: (Professors) Cokely, Marshall, Powers-Lee, Ryan

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

- I. **Approval of the minutes.** The minutes of the 12/07/05 and 12/14/05 meetings were accepted as posted.

Provost Abdelal welcomed Professor Deborah Ramirez from the School of Law to the Faculty Senate.

- II. **SAC report.** Professor Glod reported the following:

- A. Meetings. SAC met three times in regular session and once with the President and Provost. At the latter, a number of issues were covered: 1) SAC was updated on the contract review process by the President who reported that a new attorney has been hired to work specifically on contracts. A discussion was also had about triage and best practices, both of which are being worked out. A charge concerning those issues had been given to the RPOC as well. A related discussion also took place regarding the signature process, which is also being worked on. 2) SAC brought up the issue of faculty representation in the master planning process. Professor Glod hoped to be able to report fully at the next Senate meeting but said that discussions are going well. 3) SAC attempted to obtain closure on the faculty handbook and will continue to do so. 4) A review of the work of several key Senate committees—the *Ad Hoc* Calendar Committee and the APC—also took place.

- B. Senate Committees. Professor Glod thanked Professor Graham Jones for agreeing to chair the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Research Policy Oversight again. That Committee has been staffed and charged as follows:

Committee Members: Professor Graham Jones, Chair  
Professor Ahmed Busnaina  
Professor Paul M. Champion  
Professor Matthias Felleisen  
Professor Jeffrey A. Hopwood  
Professor Berry L. Karger  
Professor Michael B. Silevitch  
Professor Alexandro Makriyannis  
Professor Michail Sitkovsky  
Vice Provost Srinvas Sridhar (*ex officio*)  
Professor Stephen McKnight, SAC Liaison

Charges:

1) The RPOC is asked to report back to SAC by no later than 1 March 2006 on what has been done to rectify this problem of getting contracts approved through the University Legal Counsel's office according to solutions suggested last year and what, if anything, remains to be done.

2) The RPOC is charged to meet with the Provost, Chief Financial Officer, Senior Vice President for Institutional Advancement, and President to consider the process for setting priorities for the next building campaign to determine if the needs of the research effort will be represented in the planning process.

3) The RPOC is charged to study the administrative structure of the university as it impacts research, gather data on research administration at top-100 research universities, and make a recommendation about the creation of a new executive position for research or other administrative changes that would further the development of the Northeastern toward a top-100 research university.

4) The RPOC is charged to continue its roundtable discussions with the Provost and Vice Provost for Research to identify major issues where actions are needed to improve the University's competitiveness in sponsored research, and to develop solutions to accomplish this.

C. The 2004-05 Annual Report of the Faculty Senate is at <http://www.facultysenate.neu.edu/>

D. Apportionment. Letters have been sent to the deans concerning elections to the Senate for 2006-07.

E. Professor Glod thanked Professor Ron Willey, who has been chairing the Chemical Hygiene Committee. Their report has been posted to the Faculty Senate website. Professor Willey reports that during internal safety audits last year, roughly 60% of the university laboratories had deficiencies, of which 30% were quite serious (all of these laboratories are now in compliance). The Committee, composed of university faculty, administrators, and support personnel (facilities and public safety), worked on a recommendation report to the Provost to improve from 40% compliance to 100% compliance during audits.

F. Finally, Professor Glod reported that the President informed SAC that a tenured professor was dismissed from the University. The procedure followed in arriving at the decision was strictly in accord with that part of the Handbook dealing with dismissal proceedings. The Hearing Committee did not differ with the BOT as to whether the professor's actions constituted gross personal misconduct related to financial improprieties.

However, the Hearing Committee was evenly divided about the appropriateness of dismissal as a sanction, and the BOT exercised its option, which was to dismiss the faculty member.

**G. Next Senate Meeting: Wednesday, 8 February at Raytheon, 240 EC**

Professor Peterfreund recognized the contribution of Professor Robert Lowndes in preparing the annual report in place of the Secretary, the late Professor Charles Ellis.

III. **Provost report.** Provost Abdelal reported that the University Fiscal Advisory Committee completed deliberations regarding the FY07 budget and communicated those findings to the President. The Committee expects the Board of Trustees Executive Committee to consider those findings on Friday, 27 January. Various budget presentations will then take place. It is fair to say that the budget is very tight for two reasons. The second half of increased financial

aid obligations, all of which could not be absorbed in the FY06 budget, is included in the FY07 budget on a recurring basis. This is approximately \$5½ million. The second reason is utilities expenditures. While costs increased this year, they did not cut into this year's budget. However, since we cannot expect costs to come down next year, utilities costs are estimated to be very high. These two factors significantly tighten our options. The Provost opened the floor to questions.

Professor Hall asked if the tight budget will affect faculty searches currently underway. The Provost responded that he expects continuing investment in faculty positions from the University as a whole.

Professor Herman noted that, in his personal opinion, an increasing number of operations are operating on the basis of administrative convenience rather than student centered-ness. He cited a recent instance of graduate student stipends/paychecks being withheld because the centralization of I-9 documents caused communication issues that no-one seemed to want to fix in a timely manner. Provost Abdelal agreed wholeheartedly with the importance of not letting administrative convenience prevail over the interests of the people who are serviced by the institution and, as a consequence, the institution itself. He acknowledged that some processes had implementation problems and that this is not unusual when a major new software system is installed. The important thing is that, when problems happen, we think of the best interest of the people involved. There are some recurring problems but the Provost's office agrees with Professor Herman's comment. The Provost asked for Vice Provost Luis Falcon's input.

Vice Provost Falcon added that when it was realized that I-9's were missing, immediate steps were taken and most grads were paid on the correct day. Those few who were not were paid at the next pay period. It is the first cycle dealing with this process. Meetings are now being scheduled at the Colleges & Schools to get the word out.

Professor Herman expressed appreciation of the Provost's and Vice Provost's responses but pointed out the importance of communication, especially at the levels of administrative staff that must deal with the students, so that NU doesn't appear to be either uncaring or inept. The Provost agreed and offered that the Vice President in Human Resources Management is very capable and should be able to deal with these issues. He encouraged anyone to email him in such instances so that he can forward the information to HRM (or to other relevant offices) for resolution. The Provost asked that the emails be worded diplomatically so they can be forwarded as is.

Professor Strauss brought up an issue regarding paying undergraduate students and was asked by the Provost to make Vice Provost Malcolm Hill aware of the circumstances. The Provost reiterated that he, too, is happy to engage in issues needing resolution.

Professor Willey asked if the library will receive the \$300,000 that was promised for collection purchases. The Provost responded that since SPCS does not follow the same calendar as the rest of the University, they are still working on their budget picture. For the same reason, and because the money is for collections only (no personnel), there is no urgency as to when the money is directed to the library. His expectation regarding that money remains the same. The Provost then reminded the Senate that there are two important issues on the agenda and asked for only one more question.

Professor Hall, noting that he would accept an answer at another time, asked (1) if there is likelihood of a longer-range budget frame so that when it's time to offer stipends to graduate students the budget is known; and (2) has the University done as much as possible to further enhance energy savings over the longer term. The Provost offered to take up those questions following consideration of the two agenda items, if time permitted.

**IV. 2005-06 Senate Academic Policy Committee report on student academic appeals process. Proposed change to wording of Graduate Student Appeals Procedure.** Professor Herman moved the following resolution, and it was seconded.

**BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the insertion of the words “or the faculty member” into the first sentence of Step #44 of the Graduate Student Appeals Procedure in order to make that policy consistent with all other NU academic appeals procedures. Step #4 would then read as follows:**

**Step #4: If the student *or the faculty member* is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter by the dean, or if the appeal has not been resolved within sixty working days after originally submitted to the dean, he or she may further pursue the matter by requesting in writing that the vice provost convene an Appeals Resolution Committee. This committee has been designated by the president as the final authority on these matters. This request must be made within ten working days of the report of the dean.**

Professor Herman explained that the Academic Policy Committee (APC) undertook a study of the students' academic appeals process which, while consistent when they existed in the same graduate/ undergraduate handbook, had begun to diverge somewhat when those handbooks were separated some time ago. The Committee wanted to be sure that the undergraduate, graduate, and SPCS appeals procedures are consistent with students receiving equitable treatment. Since University Counsel had been working to bring those policies into alignment, it turned out that they are equitable to students. However, the graduate student handbook does not include a faculty members' right to appeal to the Vice Provost to convene an Appeals Resolution Committee. This resolution is an attempt to bring that in alignment with other handbooks.

Professor Peterfreund proposed a friendly amendment to add “or at the end of the 60-day resolution” at the end of the above resolution. Professor Herman accepted that as a friendly amendment.

Professor Vaughn expressed perplexity as to whether these academic appeals procedures had ever come before the Faculty Senate prior to this. Professor Herman explained that when changes are made to procedures, they are presented to the Senate Agenda Committee (SAC) who then decide whether to charge them to a Senate Committee. The appeals procedures date back to the early 1980's and originate with the Faculty Senate. They have been reviewed by the SAC from time to time. Professor Vaughn reiterated that he had never seen these issues come before the Faculty Senate and, in looking at the Handbook last year, found that the appeals procedures were not of the Faculty Council. He suggested that, since grading is fundamental, the Senate should not review a change to a procedure that had not been approved in the first place. He urged the Senate to remand the resolution back to the APC with a charge to review the entire academic grading appeals procedures for consistency with the Faculty Handbook and the Operations Manual.

Professor Herman responded that that was indeed the charge to APC and that the APC felt the procedures are consistent except in the area of this resolution.

Professor Alper noted that during his service on a grievance committee, that committee found two areas that were inconsistent among the handbooks and those had been sent to SAC at the time. Professor Herman explained that for the last two years University Counsel and Student Affairs have been working to bring the policies back in line so the APC was working with those updated and consistent policies, which may not yet be published in the grad and undergrad handbooks.

There was some exchange concerning whether or not SAC reviewed any changes and whether or not University Counsel actually submitted any changes to SAC.

Professor Morrison submitted that this motion is legitimate and that other issues should be dealt with separately, whereupon Dr. Onan wondered why the issue is in the Senate at all since both Legal Counsel and Student Affairs have been working on it. She suggested that perhaps it should be a recommendation to the "holder of the policy" rather than a motion.

Provost Abdelal interjected that it would be very unusual for academic appeals *not* to be invested in faculty decision-making. He added that the policy should come before the Senate for full review as any discussion of the grades appeals process outside of the academic context is not the national norm. Professor Peterfreund added that, if not this body, then who? The Senate represent the faculty and this is a faculty issue.

Motion. After further discussion, Prof. Morrison moved to close the discussion and the motion was seconded.

Vote to close the discussion: PASSED, 32-1-2

There being no objections, the Faculty Senate turned to a vote on the Resolution as amended.

Vote: PASSED, 30-3-1

As amended, the resolution reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the insertion of the words "or the faculty member" into the first sentence of Step #44 of the Graduate Student Appeals Procedure in order to make that policy consistent with all other NU academic appeals procedures. Step #4 would then read as follows:**

**Step #4: If the student *or the faculty member* is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter by the dean, or if the appeal has not been resolved within sixty working days after originally submitted to the dean, he or she may further pursue the matter by requesting in writing that the vice provost convene an Appeals Resolution Committee. This committee has been designated by the president as the final authority on these matters. This request must be made within ten working days of the report of the dean or at the end of the 60-day resolution.**

V. New School Academic Advisory Committee proposal for new School of Social Sciences, Urban Affairs, and Public Policy to be housed within the College of Arts and Sciences. (*Vote by affiliated CAS department faculty: 59-2-5; vote by CAS College Council: 20-1-3.*) Professor Morrison moved the following resolution and it was seconded.

**BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the establishment of the proposed School of Social Sciences, Urban Affairs, and Public Policy as approved by the College of Arts and Sciences College Council and agreed to by its associate departments.**

Professor Morrison yielded the floor to Professor Herman, Chair of the CAS College Council, who explained that College Council approved this proposal as a framework for future development predicated on two assumptions: if resources do not come through then this should not go forward; and this does not involve approval for any of the proposed centers. College Council is very clear that any new centers proposed in the report must go through the same center approval mechanism as any other center. Professor Herman reiterated that College Council approved the framework or structure predicated on availability of new resources.

Professor Bluestone, who chaired this effort with a committee of approximately 60 faculty members, offered a history of the proposal as follows. In January 2003 President Freeland requested that a dozen people in CAS, including chairs of a number of social science departments, put together a philosophical argument about the possibility of creating a school of public policy within the CAS. The Provost and the Dean of CAS approved that first committee and, for the first 6 months of 2003 it laid out a fundamental philosophy and rationale for the creation of a new School of Social Science, Urban Affairs, and Public Policy. The thought was that each of the social science departments is in some sense below scale and bringing them together would enhance the kind of regional and national recognition that a top 100 university would hope for. There is room in the Boston area for NU to excel; other universities have done this in the past 4-5 years, University of Delaware for example; and it fits with NU's particular mantra of urban affairs and public policy. The idea, then, is create this shell where the social science departments and a number of existing centers would be brought together.

In September 2004, the President, Provost and Dean of CAS asked for a larger committee to work out the details of such a proposed school. The committee met with each department that would be involved—economics, history, sociology, political science, African American studies, the law, policy and society department, as well as some centers—at four separate meetings and this past fall received overwhelming support from these CAS faculty members by a vote of 60-2-5. It was then brought before the College Council and passed there as well. The key point is that it provides the shell to build stronger social science departments, work more closely with the community, and raise very substantial amounts of money over the years for the school and the units within it, including 8 core centers that the committee developed. Each area has opportunity to bring in significant external resources. Professor Bluestone added that it is, in Dean Stellar's words, a "big bodacious idea" that has the opportunity of bringing in people from outside the University with the right talents and a lot of dollars. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, [we] held the first of what may be a series of breakfasts with over 50 civic and business leaders from across greater Boston. It was co-hosted by the Mayor and tremendous support was expressed for the idea of NU stepping forward in the community to create such an institution to work toward resolving issues within the Commonwealth and the region. At no point did the committee think of the proposed new school as separate from everyone else. It is housed within the CAS and has direct links to other departments, such as journalism and education, as

well as to deans of other colleges. The committee sees the proposed new school as a shell that will enhance the social sciences and [our] teaching-research missions as well as the mission of the University as a whole.

Professor Peterfreund asked to return to Professor Herman's comments. He added that, for mutual understanding and for the record, the centers within this school will be separately established, meaning that they will be subject to the provisions of the Academic Operations Manual, specifically Section D, which has to do with the establishment and evaluation of centers. Centers must be periodically evaluated, and one of the criteria is the success, or lack thereof, of their ability to exist as autonomously funded entities as a further guarantee these centers will either sit on their own bottoms or they won't sit.

Dean Soyster complimented Professor Bluestone on his presentation and offered several comments. In his experience, having someone's name attached to the school could make a significant difference. And having departments work together gives more leverage in terms of internal resources. The dean offered support of the idea and suggested the committee put together very specific initiatives to bring to potential donors.

Professor Bluestone indicated that the committees did just that this past year and developed eight specific projects. An example was work done with philosophy department for creation of a center on ethics, values and public policy. The Committee believes there are people in Boston who would want their name attached to this. They have also been talking to potential donors who are interested in having a world cities initiative composed of smaller cities facing the same kinds of issues as Boston in areas of housing transportation, infrastructure, and so forth. The hope is that, over time, funding would be received for both large and small initiatives.

Dean Stellar weighed in with several points. He has observed that one of NU's strengths is its interdisciplinary nature. This is something, too, that CAS tries to do well (Professor Herman directs the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies) and tries to reach out to other Colleges so that everyone is involved who wishes to be involved. In addition, CAS has a history at NU of pursuing some larger scale operations, albeit in different formats. He cited the biotech institute, the competitive awards institute and nanotech. The proposed School of Social Sciences is just another of those larger scale operations. Another point the dean made is that his office has been clear that resources cannot be diverted from other areas because (1) there aren't any, and (2) it's a large-scale idea. He went on to say that the intent was to come up with an investment-grade idea that big donors would give millions to and be comfortable talking about. In the past we may have not thought big enough. This [proposal] is a "hunting license" to see what funds can be raised and none of it will be possible without raising the funds. Dean Stellar found a high level of interest among some very "heavy hitters" at the December breakfast who would not have been there if not for the level of this idea. He reiterated that he does not plan to divert resources.

Provost Abdelal prefers the term collaborative framework rather than hunting license—a collaborative framework for the interdisciplinary social sciences as it relates to public policy and urban affairs. He reminded the Senate that this was an area targeted in the Academic Investment Plan. It is not very different from what has been done in other areas where a framework was put together.

Professor Strauss proposed a friendly amendment to add a sentence at the end of the resolution which says "Establishment of the school depends upon sufficient funding." Dean

Stellar accepted the friendly amendment and Professor Morrison clarified that the Dean did, in fact, view it as friendly.

Professor Reucroft said that every few years something comes along which effects the structure of CAS. There is usually a lot of discussion but he has spoken to 12-13 faculty members, none of whom knew anything about this proposal. He went on to say that he is not convinced that the CAS faculty is unanimously behind this idea and suggested it be remanded back to the College for discussion at an "open, general meeting" of the faculty.

Dean Stellar explained that College Council distributed the report electronically last fall. It was also distributed to the council chairs. According to CAS governance, the documents should also have been brought back to the departments by their representatives. The Dean apologized to Professor Reucroft for possible communication glitches and expressed understanding that some people have reservations. He reiterated that there was no intent to keep this secret. It did go through CAS governance process in the normal way. The Dean also emphasized that the College is not contemplating restructuring nor would this proposal threaten the structure of the College. So, while sympathetic to the idea of more discussion, Dean Stellar expressed loyalty to the process and to the 60+ people who put time and effort into the proposal. He suggested moving forward and not remanding it back to the College and apologized for disagreeing with his colleague.

Professor Herman added that the procedure is an appropriate one and is the same one used for the approval of nanotechnology and biotechnology and all the other initiatives which the CAS has undertaken.

Professor Glod said that the Agenda Committee received the proposal at the end of November, and SAC had asked for more specific budget implications. She had also suggested that the proposal be more widely discussed within the CAS. It is important to acknowledge that some colleagues in CAS have apparently not had time to read and think about it and respond to it. Having said that, she raised several specific questions:

- 1) Is the Dean of the proposed School an Associate Dean of the college?
- 2) Reading from the bottom of page 22: "...most importantly, the new school cannot succeed without an infusion of substantial resources—both in the form of external resources from a vigorous development effort and from internal university sources." Since there have been statements made that internal resources will not be diverted because there are none, what does this statement mean?
- 3) How many of the new hires to be made under the auspices of the Academic Initiative Plan will be allocated to this new school?

Dean Stellar said that the Dean of the proposed school reports to the CAS Dean so, in that sense, it's an Associate Dean position. That person's responsibility would be to manage the centers and any endowed professorships. Other processes would go through normal and current College processes. That is where the academic investment plan would play in, or whatever plan is in operation five years from now. There are other components to the question, but this answers the one Professor Glod asked.

Dean Stellar said that the Dean of the proposed school reports to the CAS Dean. That person's responsibility would be to manage the centers and any endowed professorships. Other processes would go through normal and current College processes. That is where the

academic investment plan would play in, or whatever plan is in operation five years from now. There are other components to the question, but this answers the one Professor Glod asked.

Professor Bluestone answered Professor Glod by saying that there is no budget for this at the present time. The Centers will be the most costly elements of the new School and their size will depend almost exclusively upon the money that can be raised for each of them. The shell will enable us to raise funds but there is no budget. The final scale of the School could range from something small that just serves to integrate the social sciences, to very large with new core centers and endowed chairs. Professor Bluestone then asked the Senate to reconsider the friendly amendment. He explained that what President Freeland sees is creation of a new school, vetted by the Faculty Senate and Board of Directors, with potential components that can be partially or fully funded. To seek funding we need to say the School exists and that NU has a commitment to it.

Provost Abdelal clarified that Professor Bluestone was asking that the friendly amendment be withdrawn and Professor Herman indicated that a formal motion will need to be made.

Professor Sherwood motioned to strike the friendly amendment and it was seconded.

Professor Sherwood then explained that, while having great respect for the issue that Professor Strauss raised with the friendly amendment, it is clear that the University is not going to move forward without adequate funding. We should not have reservations when asking for funding and he hoped that such a message does not get out there. It does not mean there should not be such concerns.

Professor Peterfreund said that he would not have wanted to challenge that amendment except for one thing [Professor Glod again reads from page 22]: Can someone explain the second part? On the one hand we're hearing that no resources are earmarked that are from other units, and on the other hand, the report mentions internal university resources. The Professor indicated that his vote on the amendment and on the proposal will depend on someone explaining where those internal resources will come from.

Professor Bluestone explained that the wording does not mean monetary resources but a significant amount of faculty effort committed to this idea by the participants.

Dean Stellar indicated that these could be called "in kind" resources. For instance, faculty are paid 100% time as faculty during the academic year but don't teach 100% of the time, so the time being spent on research is essentially university-supported research time which has often been referred to as an "in kind" resource. Those words were not used because there could be some insignificant resources that might not be "in kind". The Dean explained, too, that he supported the friendly amendment because he thinks it better to get this resolution passed. He told the Senate that if it thinks it can trust them, he would rather remove it.

Professor Strauss expressed the opinion that she would rather give funding knowing that funding was needed. She also added that, in regards to internal resources, it is frightening to not have them defined. Given the complications that can arise, she would rather see it stated and the friendly amendment retained.

Professor McKnight expressed agreement with Professor Sherman on this issue. He cited CenSSIS, where the argument was made that the center needed to be established in order to demonstrate to funding agencies that it was worth funding because it was already in place.

This proposal is well-written and will benefit the entire university. Redirecting funds from one department to another to, say, hire a professor, can be done any time. It is a reasonable thing to think big but to say it's predicated on receiving funding is not nearly as strong as saying that it is an area that is related to the urban mission of the University. It has an internal consistency with potential for extreme growth and it's a way to put NU on the map. Professor McKnight recommends proceeding in a positive manner.

Motion to close the discussion on the amendment was seconded.

Vote to close the amendment discussion: PASSED, 26-3-0

Motion. Professor Peterfreund moved to amend the proposal by striking what had originally been accepted as a friendly amendment and the motion was seconded.

Vote to remove Professor Strauss's friendly amendment: PASSED, 24-5-0

Professor Willey then motioned to adjourn and it was seconded.

Provost Abdelal adjourned the meeting at 1:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart S. Peterfreund,  
Senate Secretary