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Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 12/13/2006

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TO: FACULTY SENATE
FROM: STUART S. PETERFREUND, SECRETARY, FACULTY SENATE
RE: MINUTES, 2006-07 FACULTY SENATE MEETING, 13 DECEMBER

Present: (Professors) Alper, Bosso, Bruns, Cokely, Daynard, Fox, Hall, Gilbert, Glod, Hansberry, Herman, Hill, Janikian, Krishnamoorthy, Marshall, Meador, McKnight, Peterfreund, Reynolds, Robinson Wood, Sanchez, Sherman, Strauss, Wallin, Willey, Zarembo
(Administrators) Abdelal, Falcon, Finkelstein, Moore, Onan, Sridhar, Stellar, Zoloth

Absent: (Professors) Hafner, Kane, Reucroft, Touran, Starr, Welch
(Administrators) Hopey, Metghalchi,

Provost Abdelal convened the meeting at 11:57 AM.

I. The minutes of 29 November were accepted as posted.

II. **SAC report.** Professor Glod reported that the Senate Agenda Committee had met twice since the last Senate meeting. The SAC has been asked to convene a search Committee for a Chair of the Department of Math. It will be an internal search.

The Physics Chair Search Committee has convened and is staffed as follows:

Elected members:

Professor George Alverson (Physics)
Professor J.T. Sage (Physics)
Professor Tomasz R. Taylor (Physics)

Appointed members:

Professor Frederick C. Davis (Biology)
Professor Jacqueline A. Isaacs (Mechanical & Industrial Engineering)

SAC liaison: Professor Stephen McKnight (ECE)

The Committee for the 2006-07 Excellence in Teaching Awards has been staffed as follows:

Professor Daniel J. Givelber (Law)
Professor Meredith H. Harris (Bouve-Physical Therapy)
Professor Jack Levin (CAS-Sociology & Anthro)
Professor Guy L. Rotella (CAS-English)
Professor Timothy J. Rupert (CBA-Acctg)
Professor Tomacz R. Taylor (CAS-Physics)
Professor Ibrahim Zeid (COE-Mechanical and Industrial Engg)

The Presidential Inauguration is scheduled for week of March 25, 2007 with the inauguration ceremony on that Monday. Professor Glod reported having attended a meeting where she brought up concerns about the difficulty of making up Monday-only classes; the need for an interdisciplinary approach among the Colleges; and the hope that a spirit of community involvement will prevail, including broader participation from the student sector. She stated that these sentiments were echoed by the SAC as well as the cost of the event(s) and the source of that budget.

Registrar Allen confirmed that representatives from Colleges and Universities throughout the country were being sent "save the date" notices and that the date was fixed.

Professor Peterfreund expressed dismay that the Senate was asked for advice, seemingly after the fact, and that it was disregarded and irrelevant. He noted that the ability of faculty to teach, and the right of students to learn, should have been the most important considerations, given the fact that classes that meet on Mondays are already missing three meetings owing to Monday holidays. Several Senators agreed, but Registrar Allen noted that there had been no decision made to cancel Monday classes for the inauguration.

Provost Abdelal, upon being asked his own opinion, said that any day would be difficult on the academic schedule but that he did not feel strongly about it.

Registrar Allen then confirmed that the inauguration would be video-taped for viewing by anyone who could not attend.

III. **Provost's report.** The Provost, after noting that his office had been immersed in the budget process, opened the floor to questions.

IV. Professor Hall noted that today's Senate meeting had been scheduled during exam week and requested that this sort of conflict be avoided in the future. Professor Glod agreed to try to avoid future conflicts.

Provost Abdelal and Professor Glod confirmed that they are working on the composition of a committee to explore ideas for a venue or venues that will serve to reaffirm Northeastern University's commitment to diversity and opposition to discrimination of any type, as proposed by President Aoun. The committee will be convened sometime in January and will be limited to five or six members with student involvement.

Professor Willey asked the Provost if faculty will be included in the decision-making process concerning use of SGAs. Discussion ensued concerning the policy currently in place which is to generally assign TA's only from those departments which award the Ph.D.. Vice Provost Falcon confirmed that policy. The intention is to support the Ph.D. candidates. Provost Abdelal noted, however, that the policy is college and department specific, as evidenced by the need in the English Department where, in order to serve first year writing students, the TAs are graduate students. The Provost then assured Professor Willey that the Deans, Graduate Directors, and Chairs are aware of the policies and that decisions concerning these policies are the purview of the administrators although faculty input is welcome.

V. **2006-07 Financial Affairs Committee Report.** Professor Bruns offered the following motion and it was seconded.

Resolution #1

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate supports the recommendation of the Financial Affairs Committee for a merit raise pool of at least 5.6% for continuing faculty in fiscal year 2007-2008.

Resolution #2

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate supports the recommendation of the Financial Affairs Committee for an equity pool in fiscal year 2007-2008 that equals the total amount of the market/equity gap between the salaries of Northeastern University faculty and those of faculty at peer institutions, as determined by the forthcoming study conducted by the Provost's Office. At a minimum, the equity pool should be \$1 million.

Resolution #3

BE IT RESOLVED That the administration inform and seek the input of the Financial Affairs Committee as to the process and priorities used to distribute the equity pool.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That the process include the distribution of salary matchmate data to faculty by rank and field.

Professor Bruns thanked the members of Financial Affairs Committee — Professors Alper, Krishnamoorthy, Kruger and Levendis — and the Provost, with whom the Committee worked closely. She then explained each table in some depth. The transcript may be found in the Report.

Professor Hall wished to know what a comparison of the cost-of-living (COL) in Boston to other urban areas would produce and Professor Bruns pointed out that figure on Table #1 under Average Urban Consumer Price Index (CPI). It is 2.33% or above average for urban areas. Professor Bruns also said that the numbers were obtained from the Office of Planning and Research and are indexed in order to normalize them to their 1997 worth. (is this correct?)

Professor Fox suggested a friendly amendment whereby a portion of the raise pool equal to the change in CPI would be distributed across-the-board and any additional monies be distributed based on merit. It was seconded. However, Professor Bruns declined to accept the amendment, pointing out that the FAC had discussed this issue and had expressed strong arguments that those who do not perform should not automatically receive an increase. Professor Fox then offered a formal amendment, and it was seconded. Discussion turned to the COL and keeping pace, and the various effective and not-so-effective procedures across departments. It was agreed, however, that each merit plan is approved by the Deans and, ultimately, by the Provost. The amendment asks the Senate to mandate a proposal that countermands what is already enforced by reason of close scrutiny and prior approval. Professor Peterfreund suggested that the concerns are local and unique to each College and that a University-wide policy would not serve those concerns.

Professor Fox explained that, at some point, those people who perform well and are here a long time should be able to keep pace but that he is supportive of some basic level of performance. He withdrew his amendment and the seconder agreed.

Provost Abdelal then proposed that the departments review their manuals, make any needed changes, and submit them for review by their Dean and the Provost, thereby assuring that the manuals reflect what departmental faculty wish to support and, at the same time, contain a certain commonality as regards the issue of increases. Professor Herman reminded the Senate that the Faculty Handbook contains an admonition concerning strictly COL-based increases based on much discussion.

Professor Peterfreund pointed out that there are so many ways of disbursing increases because resources are so inadequate. He suggested having the units examine their policies under various assumptions, i.e. if the annual raise pool were adequate, marginal or inadequate. He noted that the greatest impact is on senior faculty, especially given that there are two promotional advances and those who have received those advances, particularly since 1997, have fared better than those who have not.

Discussion continued, then, and included workload policy, the uniformity of promotional advancement, and research-versus teaching-active faculty.

Professor Wallin pointed out that Table #2 compares very different factors and asked if the FAC had considered the percentage of increase in operating budget over the years as compared to the percentage of increase in faculty salaries over those same years and suggested that the two should tie together. Professor Bruns explained that FAC had looked at tuition increases but not specifically at increases in the operating budget but conceded that the point was valid. Professor Alper clarified that the measures of productivity in Table 2 indicate that faculty are not being compensated at the same rate as University growth.

Professor Bruns, talking on the subject of equity, reported that the FAC is generally satisfied with the matchmate procedure prepared by the Provost's office. Provost Abdelal added that all departments had been asked, via the Deans, to propose changes to their matchmates. Those proposals were accepted and the data has been updated.

Professor Daynard motioned to vote the question and there were no objections.

Vote to accept the Senate Financial Affairs Committee Report and Resolutions #1, 2, and 3:
PASSED, 31-0-0.

Adjourned at 1:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart S. Peterfreund, Secretary
Faculty Senate