

April 11, 2007

## Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 04/11/2007

Stuart S. Peterfreund  
*Northeastern University*

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TO: FACULTY SENATE  
FROM: STUART S. PETERFREUND, SECRETARY, FACULTY SENATE  
RE: MINUTES, 2006-07 FACULTY SENATE MEETING, 11 APRIL

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Present: (Professors) Alper, Bruns, Bosso, Daynard, Fox, Gilbert, Glod, Hafner, Hall, Hansberry, Hill, Janikian, Kane, Krishnamoorthy, McKnight, Peterfreund, Reynolds, Robinson-Wood, Reucroft, Sherman, Starr, Strauss, Touran, Wallin, Welch, Willey, Zaremba  
(Administrators) Abdelal, Falcon, Hopey, Moore, Powers-Lee, Putnam, Stellar, Zoloth

Absent: (Professors) Cokely, Herman, Meador, Sanchez  
(Administrators) Finkelstein, Metghalchi

Provost Abdelal convened the meeting at 11:56 AM.

I. The minutes of 28 March were accepted as posted.

II. SAC report. Professor Glod reported the following.

- a. Meetings. The Senate Agenda Committee met twice in regular session since the last Senate meeting.
- b. The 18 April Senate meeting is cancelled. The next Senate meeting is April 25 at 10-11 AM for the 2007-08 Senate and at 11 AM – 4 PM for the 2006-07 Senate.
- c. Announcements.
  - Proposed Senate Bylaw changes. Reminder that the ballot is due April 20<sup>th</sup>.
  - The Chair for the Department of Physics is Professor Sri Sridhar.
  - The Dean for School of Social Sciences, Urban Affairs & Public Policy is Professor Barry Bluestone.
  - 2007-08 Faculty Senate election results are as follows:
    - Professor Sharon Bruns, CBA
    - Professor Elizabeth Chilvers, CBA
    - Professor Ann Galligan, CAS
    - Professor Carole Hafner, CCIS
    - Professor Robert Hall, CAS
    - Professor Stephen Kane, COE
    - Professor Laura Lewis, COE
    - Professor David Massey, CAS
    - Professor Steven Morrison, CAS
    - Professor John Portz, CAS
    - Professor Stephen Reucroft, CAS
    - Professor William Sanchez, Bouvé
    - Professor Michael Tolley, CAS
  - 2006-07 Ad Hoc Senate Committee to Review Student Handbooks
    - Proposed integration of student handbooks. The Handbook Committee report was reviewed by the SAC and discussion was postponed until next fall in order to evaluate the complex issues involved.
- d. 2006-07 Senate resolutions approved:
  - #3 2005-06 Senate *Ad Hoc* Committee on Library Policies & Operations resolution #1 regarding NU Library inclusion in academic initiatives
  - #6 Elimination of the Community Health MS specialization in the School of Nursing

- #7 Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in Psychology, Education & the Community in the Department of Counseling and Applied Educational Psychology
- #9 Elimination of the BS in English
- #15 Suspension of the French major
- #17 2006-07 Special Senate Committee for Faculty Development report on Teaching Course Evaluation: resolution #1 to accept the Teacher Rating And Course Evaluation tool (TRACE).
- #18 2006-07 Special Senate Committee for Faculty Development report on Teaching Course Evaluations: resolution #2 to implement TRACE online.
- #19 2006-07 Special Senate Committee for Faculty Development report on Teaching Course Evaluations: resolution #3 to appoint an implementation committee for online TRACE.

2006-07 Senate resolutions returned "Informational, no action required":

- #1 2005-06 Information Technology Policy Committee Resolutions #1, 2, & 3 concerning faculty input on issues of classroom technology.
- #2 2005-06 Senate Standing Committee on Financial Affairs resolution regarding faculty participation in the budget process.
- #4 2005-06 Senate *Ad Hoc* Committee on Library Policies & Operations resolution #2 concerning open access in scholarly publication.
- #8 Faculty Senate response to racism and acts of bigotry at NU.
- #12 2006-07 Senate Committee for Financial Affairs resolutions #1, 2, & 3 regarding merit increase, equity pool, Committee input on equity pool, and the distribution of matchmate data.

e. The 2007 Special Senate Committee for Faculty Development has been staffed and charged as follows:

Members:

Professor Thomas Sherman, Chair (Mathematics)  
Professor Thomas R. Gilbert (Chemistry & Chemical Biology)  
Professor James Fox (Criminal Justice)  
Professor Steven A. Morrison (Economics)  
Professor Louis Kruger (Counseling & Applied Psychology)  
Professor Shiawee Yang (CBA)  
Dean Thomas Moore (CBA)

Charge\*:

The Senate Agenda Committee (SAC), in consultation with the Provost, has acknowledged that the current process for merit distribution is flawed in many respects, and is need of review and revision. We request that the committee review the current language and procedures concerning merit, review outstanding resolutions passed by the Faculty Senate on 12/02/2002 (Salary Adjustments), and consider alternate models for distribution of merit.

We also ask that the Committee consider the following:

- The role of faculty in the merit process and the final determination of merit;
- Ways to address guidance and faculty development through the process;
- Meaningful differentiation of faculty based on scholarship, teaching, and service through the department-based merit process;
- How changes would enhance transparency in the process;
- The effect on various Colleges, including small Colleges that do not have Department Chairs;

- Specific procedures to evaluate teaching, scholarship/research, and service (including service to College and University);
- The need for a University-wide process for evaluation and merit distribution; The need for a detailed set of criteria and considerations, including outcome measures such as scholarly publications, etc.

A report is to be submitted to the SAC no later than December 1, 2007.

\*The entire charge is available at the Faculty Senate website.

In response to Professor Alper's question concerning the process undertaken for the School of Social Sciences, Urban Affairs & Public Policy dean search, Professor Glod will investigate.

The Provost noted, in response to Professor Hall, that Professor Sridhar will continue to assist in various projects in the Provost's office but that the vacancy for Vice Provost of Research will be filled.

Professor Wallin proposed that a Senate Committee reopen the issue of reciprocal tuition agreements and Professor Glod agreed to consider with the Senate Agenda Committee.

IV. The Provost, having no formal report, opened the floor to questions.

Professor Peterfreund suggested that the online directory at the NU homepage site indicate "Faculty & Staff Directory" rather than "Employee Directory" and that the catering service at Northeastern be more cognizant of cultural and religious constraints during certain times of the year.

V. Proposed Dual Major in Jewish Studies and Religion. Professor Peterfreund moved the following resolution, and it was seconded.

**BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the Dual Major in Jewish Studies and Religion in the College of Arts and Sciences as approved by the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in February 2007.**

Professor Peterfreund yielded the floor to Professor Setta who indicated that this proposal has been in process for a very long time, during which the interests of those hired allowed for a gradual increase in the number of courses offered. A recent influx of donor gifts has enabled the hiring of a full-time, tenured faculty member to round out the curriculum in Jewish studies, which is typically an interdisciplinary program and a dual major elsewhere.

Discussion followed as to whether or not a stand-alone Jewish Studies major is being recommended in this proposal, whether there is sufficient distinction between the two areas of the dual major to warrant a dual major, and whether it is appropriate to offer a major focused around a single religious or ethnic group. Professor Ross, Director of the Jewish Studies Program, clarified the point that the language was not meant to propose a Jewish Studies major, but he added that the newly hired faculty member would be examining that issue.

In response to Professor Hall's caution that curriculum decisions should be driven by need and merit rather than the availability of external monies, Professor Setta agreed and explained that student demand has driven this proposal and outside funding will not be forthcoming until the program is in place. Both Dean Stellar and Provost Abdelal confirmed this point, adding that the donor had made an offer in an area that was already being pursued and that faculty and student interest drive the pursuit of gifts.

Further discussion concerned the challenging intellectual interests of incoming students who wish to cross disciplines and the University's ability to connect with the cultural heritages of students who enroll at NU.

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

VOTE to approve the Dual Major in Jewish Studies and Religion: PASSED, 32-0-0.

VI. Tuition Waiver (Employee Benefits) for Online Courses. Professor Bruns moved the following resolution, and it was seconded.

**BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate recommend that the Northeastern University Tuition Waiver Program (under Employee Benefits) include Northeastern-based online courses.**

Professor Bruns reminded the Senate that this resolution was previously presented by the 2004-05 Faculty Development Committee, then chaired by Professor Wertheim, and passed by a vote of 28-1-1. President Freeland did not approve it at the time but the Senate Agenda Committee agreed that it is important enough to resubmit. Presently, faculty and staff and their dependents have tuition remission with this exception. The rationale for not accepting the resolution was twofold: 1) that space should not be taken up by faculty & staff (Professor Bruns noted that there is no difference in space constraints between courses taken in the classroom and online courses); and 2), that faculty and staff should not use computers at work for online courses during the workday. Neither reason is compelling.

Professor Peterfreund added that most employees use tuition benefits through SPCS, which now offers 40% of its courses online. Many NU employees have been disconcerted because courses they need to complete their major are only offered online. Dean Hopey added that many staff members choose employment at NU in order to earn a degree, and if they are not allowed to take courses online, earning that degree could take fifteen years as the physical course may not be offered on ground regularly. The Dean has seen more than 100 students whose studies are affected by the current ruling. The Dean also noted that other universities offer this benefit.

VOTE to include Northeastern-based online courses in the tuition waiver program: PASSED, 31-0-0

VII. Report of the 2006-07 Senate Committee for Enrollment and Admissions Policy. Professor McKnight moved the following resolution and it was seconded.

**BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate accept the report of the 2006-07 Enrollment and Admissions Policy Committee.**

Professor McKnight yielded the floor to Professor Matthews who distributed an amended version of the original report, which incorporates a previously missing survey from Criminal Justice.

Professor Alper requested clarification of the bullet recommending an increase to the NUTA and Dean's Scholarships for MS students. Noting that the MS was not meant to be an exclusive term but includes all master's students, Professor Matthews added that the committee had submitted a report of the results of their survey and had made no resolutions. There was some debate over the economics of increasing the tuition discount versus the revenue enhancement strategy of providing competitive discounts.

Professor Strauss expressed concern about placing an emphasis for expanded support to international students. Noting the importance of international graduate students, she suggested that more effort be placed in recruiting qualified students rather than possibly diverting resources to focus on international students. Professor Matthews again noted that the report is based on a survey and the academic deans had noted this and an area of their concern.

An inquiry from Professor Fox initiated a discussion of the efficacy of GRE locator services and whether they should be offered University-wide. Presently, the Colleges purchase whatever service they wish to use and there has been no request made to provide University-wide access. Results from these services vary widely in terms of producing more and higher-quality graduate students as a competitive package must be offered as well. Several senators opined that potential students look first at the quality and prestige of the programs offered and then at the benefits package available, and that Northeastern University under-invests in marketing and recruitment. They agreed that a superior benefits package must be offered.

Professor McKnight commended the Committee on their report and questioned whether a resolution should be submitted that the NU chief financial officer (CFO) generate report of the resources and costs devoted to graduate student recruiting and admissions. Several senators agreed.

At this juncture, Provost Abdelal noted that his office and the college deans determine how the funds made available are expended and not the CFO. It is a complex issue that could benefit from much discussion. For instance, there are two categories of programs: one is the professional masters programs where students generally pay tuition and revenue is generated; the other is the doctoral programs which are non revenue producing but important for research and national recognition. We need to determine the areas of concern and how to use existing resources. It is a collaborative process among college deans, the Provost's office, key people in faculty leadership, and chairs and administrators. The Provost's office is able to provide the data and a discussion is warranted.

Professor Strauss suggested that the Graduate School pick up 50% of costs associated with recruiting weekends which have been very successful in biology- and biochemistry-related programs and should be mandated. Vice Provost Falcon responded that 80% of NU's Ph.D. programs have open houses and the Provost's Office has subsidized a significant amount of the associated costs.

In response to a question from Professor Sherman, several Senators confirmed that there are, indeed, interdisciplinary masters programs and a listing of those that responded to the survey is included in the appendix of the EAPC report. Vice Provost Falcon added that all Ph.D. programs have the option of interdisciplinary work. He expressed concern that the decentralized nature of graduate programs has complicated communications and resulted in a lack of awareness in what is happening. For instance, many may not be aware that University-wide graduate applications are at 7,200 this year as compared to 4,000 four years ago. There are many sides to marketing, advertising, recruiting, and prestige and name recognition. The issue is not as simple as supplying more financial support—financial support must be more strategic and focused on programs that we know can grow.

Provost Abdelal suggested that Vice Provost Falcon make a presentation to the Senate concerning graduate education. He also noted that 50 University Graduate Fellowships have been funded whereby programs are able to nominate their top students to receive them. Another major initiative is to use a similar model to that of the University of California where a university-wide graduate group consisting of Ph.D. level instructors with appropriate expertise would contribute to each degree program in terms of mentorship and dissertation committees. The Provost held that there is much movement on the interdisciplinary and collaborative front that is not at the point of being presented yet and that a presentation in the fall would be worthwhile.

Professor Robinson-Woods asked whether the issue of emphasis on the recruitment of underrepresented groups had been considered and Professor Matthews reported that the Committee did not think to address this but that it is an important consideration.

Professor Peterfreund, addressing the interdisciplinary topic, noted that dissertation committees in the College of Arts and Sciences routinely draw readers from outside the University and outside the discipline. There are also a number of certificate programs that routinely conjoin with one's major course of study so that, for example, a doctoral student in post-modern literature may take a certificate in cinema studies. There is also a provision to take courses outside of the department with the consent of the department. And, while the University Graduate Fellowships are a positive step, there is a lack, in the social sciences and humanities, of any unencumbered support that would allow an advanced doctoral student to work on his/her dissertation for a year. This would be a welcomed next step.

In response to a concern from the floor on how to address issues raised today, Professor Peterfreund explained that the report is not amendable from the floor and asked the makers if they would consent to revise their report. Professor Matthews agreed.

Professor Glod noted that the Enrollment and Admissions Policy Committee (EAPC) has traditionally focused on undergraduate issues and this is the first effort to look at graduate issues. The Senate Financial Affairs Committee has discussed concerns related to graduate health insurance benefits, which are now fully funded. Everything mentioned today may be viewed as a very good starting point to parcel out to various committees and build upon. She commended the EAPC on their work.

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

VOTE to accept the final report of the 2006-07 Senate Committee on Enrollment and Admissions Policy: PASSED, 26-2-3.

The Senate adjourned 1:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart S. Peterfreund, Secretary  
Faculty Senate