

April 21, 2010

## Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 04/21/2010

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*Northeastern University*

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**Northeastern University**  
*Office of the Faculty Senate*

**TO: FACULTY SENATE**  
**FROM: STEPHEN W. MCKNIGHT, SECRETARY, FACULTY SENATE**  
**RE: MINUTES, 2009-10 FACULTY SENATE, 21 APRIL 2010**

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Present: (Professors) Alshawbkeh, Alverson, Board, Chilvers, Daynard, De Ritis, Gaffney, Gatley, Goodale, Hafner, Herman, Karma, Kruger, Lifter, McKnight, Mierelles, Morrison, Mourant, Muftu, Podlaha-Murphy, Portz, Rosengaus, Ross, D. Sherman, T. Sherman, Sherwood, Thrush, Waszczak, Young

(Administrators) Director, Falcon, Finkelstein, Loeffelholz, Moore, Powers-Lee, Ronkin, Spieler, Zoloth

Absent (Professors) Born, Price

(Administrators) Luzzi

Provost Director convened the meeting at 11:48 AM

- I. The minutes 30 March of were approved as written.
- II. SAC Report. Professor Morrison reported that SAC had met twice in regular session since the last Senate meeting. At that 30 March meeting SAC announced the anticipated formation of an ad hoc committee to review various aspects of the Faculty Handbook and the draft Faculty Handbook due to confusion as to what is written, language regarding economic security, and other issues. Professor Cokely has agreed to chair that committee; the charge is as follows:
  1. Review the status of the draft Faculty Handbook approved by the Faculty Senate in 2005 to determine which parts have been approved by the Board of Trustees and which parts are still waiting approval, and determine which parts of the 2000-2001 Handbook thus remain in effect. Engage in a discussion with the Provost's Office concerning impediments to implementation of the full 2005 draft Faculty Handbook. Review any handbook resolutions passed by the Senate and approved by the Board of Trustees that are not incorporated in the 2000-01 Faculty Handbook or the 2005 draft Faculty Handbook.
  2. Survey the Faculty Handbook language at peer and aspirant universities with respect to the AAUP *1940 Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, particularly to the purpose of tenure to provide "a sufficient degree of economic security to make the profession attractive to men and women of ability." Report to the Senate Agenda Committee (SAC) and the Faculty Senate on findings and recommendations to affirm the principle of tenure and the primacy of the 1940 AAUP statement at Northeastern. Engage in discussion with the Provost's Office concerning possible modification of Faculty Handbook language to allow the University to dispense with the collection of annual contracts from faculty with tenure.
  3. The Committee is respectfully requested to provide a report and recommendations to SAC and to the Senate by the end of the 2010 fall semester, in order that any resulting resolutions may be considered by the Senate before the end of the 2010-2011 academic year. The Committee shall make interim periodic progress reports to SAC and to the Senate as necessary.

III. Provost's report. Provost Director reported that the Dean searches are moving forward swiftly with many high quality candidates visiting campus. It is hoped that the process will yield results soon.

IV. Questions and discussion

Professor Gaffney asked if there is intention to fix the number of undergraduate students. Provost Director responded that the number of incoming freshman remains at 2,800 with variables but that undergraduate enrollment is increasing due to higher retention rates. There is no intention to increase the number of incoming freshman. Professor Gaffney noted that new undergraduate programs will gain students by shifting them away from other programs and the Provost suggested that such discussions should take place within the Colleges.

Professor Gaffney inquired why the Provost cannot present the economic security language to the Board of Trustees as noted in the minutes. The Provost recalled that there were many unsigned resolutions from several years residing in the President's Office when he arrived at NU. There were questions at that time about how to present the Faculty Handbook to the Board for approval, and it was decided to do so in sections. It was recognized that the issue of "economic security" would require additional discussion.. Some resolutions were moved through the process but the Provost did not recall details about this particular legislation.

Professor Rosengaus recognized Professor Kim Lewis (Biology) who suggests that those responsible for the error surrounding the faculty contracts issue apologize for the tension created among faculty members. The Provost did so noting that when it was called to his attention he resolved the mistake.

Professor Karma, referring to the issue of economic security language in the draft Handbook, stated that the tradition of governance at Northeastern is that the Senate approves anything of substance prior to submission to the Board. The 2005 final revised draft Faculty Handbook was approved by the Senate in April 2005. President Freeland did not recommend it for approval by the Board and it entered a period of consultation. The 2008-2009 SAC removed the statement of economic security without Senate approval. Professor Karma inquired of the Provost whether the Board was aware that the Senate had not approved the revision. The Provost did not know. Vice Provost Loeffelholz clarified that that particular section was submitted to the Board in May of 2009.

Professor Mourant inquired whether new faculty members were receiving an eight- or a nine-month contract. Provost Director responded that contracts have reverted to the original language which does not specify months but uses the term 'academic year'. Professor Daynard, referring to Board-approved language that presently is not located in either the current or the draft Handbook which specifies faculty obligation as one week prior to classes through Commencement, asked the Provost to verify that, unless and until the Senate and the Board of Trustees approves a change to that language, it will be abided by. The Provost agreed.

Professor Herman requested clarification on the end result of the ad hoc Handbook Review Committee. He noted that the 2005 draft is now five years old and that any Handbook needs to accurately reflect the current state of the University. Professor Morrison responded that the first step is to map the 2005 draft Handbook against the current (2000-2001) Handbook. He explained that the attempt to modularize the Handbook presented uncertainties and areas of confusion between the two versions, which was the original concern of the Board in 2005. Once the mapping has commenced, the next step will become evident. Professor Herman noted that

traditionally the entire Handbook was never submitted to the Board for approval. Rather, only those sections which are contractual in nature. He suggested that part of the discussion of the Committee should be to review what needs to be presented to the Board and what does not.

In response to a question concerning staffing of the Committee, Professor Morrison explained that SAC has identified and contacted several faculty members to serve. The intent is to begin work quickly. Should the 2010-2011 SAC wish to change membership they may do so.

Professor Board noted that junior faculty apprised her of the Provost's promotion and tenure advisory committee. She questioned its purpose outside of the current process; the process by which it was created; and where it is formally documented. Provost Director responded that the committee provides him with various viewpoints, allows discussion of the differences in criteria between departments and Colleges, allows discussion of the Deans' reports, and assists him in decision-making. It consists of Deans plus four faculty members, two of whom are selected from recommendations provided by SAC. Participants on the committee have provided positive feedback. The committee is not official but is strictly advisory in nature.

Professor Board suggested that the Provost's advisory committee appears to add another layer to the process and candidates do not have information on its composition. The Provost explained that he is responsible for making recommendations to the Board and reading the dossiers without context does not enable a fair and rounded viewpoint. Information gathered at the meetings is not reported outside of the Provost's Office. The Board of Trustees is presented only with College votes, Deans' recommendations, and the Provost's recommendation. Votes by committee members are submitted directly to the Provost with no tally or report of the outcome.

Handbook Committee reprised: Professor Gaffney suggested that conversations with the Board of Trustees for information purposes be included in the charge. Professor Morrison noted that it is not for the Senate, the faculty, or the SAC to mandate interface with the Board. Rather, should the Committee deem it prudent, they may arrange such a meeting through the Provost and President.

Professor Karma requested that hard copy of any Handbook-related resolutions passed by the Board since 2005 be made available and Professor Morrison agreed.

Promotion and Tenure Advisory Board reprised: Professor Board reiterated that the presence of the Provost's advisory committee for promotion and tenure has an impact on junior faculty and they should know what it does and who comprises it. The Provost responded that while University-wide promotion and tenure committees are used at many universities, that is not the intent of this advisory committee which can be considered to be part of the informal decision-making process of the Provost. Professor Morrison noted that past Provosts reviewed and discussed cases with various entities for advisory purposes, and Professor Herman confirmed that seeking such advice is provided for in the Faculty Handbook guidelines where it states that the Provost is responsible for fairness in outcome. An advisory body that spans the disciplines is a fair manner of proceeding. Professor Waszczak suggested that fairness is provided for in the entire process, but the Provost's advisory committee opens the potential for bias based on the Provost's choice of members. The Provost disagreed noting that one could always find ways to see bias in any process, but that the advisory committee provides a way for him to garner information.

V. Professor Thrush read the following and it was seconded.

**BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the Bachelor of Landscape Design in the College of Arts and Sciences as approved by the UCC on 10 April 2010.**

Professor Thrush explained that this new undergraduate program is an effort to build on NU's strength in urban architecture by focusing on urban landscaping issues and provides much interaction with other units. It will be one of a small number of such programs located in a major city. Several senators spoke in favor of the program noting President Aoun's recent point that innovative programs are essential to attracting the caliber of students NU desires. The Provost noted that new programs are now vetted by the Provost's Office prior to presentation to the Senate.

Professor Gaffney asked how the programs will impact resources and from where the students will come. Dean Ronkin noted that, within CAS, some programs are oversubscribed and others are at opposite end. The supply of students is not simply a matter of diminishing some programs but also of having the right size programs.

VOTE to approve the Bachelor of Landscape Design: PASSED, 32-0-0

VI. Professor Hafner read the following and it was seconded.

**BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate approve the Ph.D. in Information Assurance in the College of Computer and Information Science as approved by the Graduate Council on 12 April 2010.**

Professor Hafner yielded the floor to Associate Dean Chan (College of Computer and Information Science) who explained that this is an interdisciplinary program with the College of Engineering and the College of Social Sciences and Humanities with the College of Computer Science as the lead. It will draw from government and industry and will provide policy advisors as well as professors. The programs' strengths are in its interdisciplinary nature, its foundation in the Profession Masters Degree in Information Assurance, and its curriculum which includes three core technical courses, a risk management course, and a policy course. Following the core students may choose three tracks of specialization.

Dean Chan expects five students the first year with funding provided from the Provost's Office and research grants within the area of Information Assurance. There are no teaching assistant lines at this time but that will depend upon need. Ultimately the program could have fifteen to twenty students. .

It was not immediately known if this program was approved by College of Engineering faculty although it was signed off by the Dean of Engineering. .

Professor Portz suggested to Dean Chan that she contact Political Science, the LPS program and Social Sciences about relevant courses.

Senators discussed the technology and the policy areas, the focus, and the interest from criminology students.

VOTE to approved the Ph.D. in Information Assurance: PASSED, 32-0-2

Professor Karma motioned to change the order of the agenda to introduce new business and was seconded.

VOTE to change the order of the agenda: PASSED, 30-0-2

Professor Karma then motioned to add the issue of economic security and the Handbook to the next Senate Agenda (28 April) and it was seconded. He explained that the 2005 draft of the Faculty Handbook which was approved by the Senate in April 2005 contains explicit language linking tenure and economic security. The Senate Agenda Committee deleted the language last year upon request of the Provost's Office. The new section was approved by the Board of Trustees, however the Senate never voted on that change of wording. Professor Karma offered a resolution, as follows, for consideration on 28 April which would reinstate the lost economic security language.

*WHEREAS* at its April 30, 2005 meeting the Faculty Senate unanimously approved for insertion into the final draft of the Faculty Handbook the following statement on tenure derived from the 1940 statement on tenure of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP),

*“Tenure is established as a means (1) to maintain freedom of teaching, research and extramural activities, and (2) to provide a sufficient degree of economic security that the University can attract and retain excellent faculty members to meet this mission.”*

And, *WHEREAS* the 2008-2009 Senate Agenda Committee, upon request of Provost Director and without consultation with the Faculty Senate, agreed to remove item (2) from that section of the Handbook, which was subsequently submitted to and approved by the Board of Trustees:

*BE IT RESOLVED* That it is the sense of the Faculty Senate that the 2008-2009 Senate Agenda Committee inadvertently exceeded its authority by removing item (2). Since item (2) is an inseparable part of the standard AAUP stated goals of tenure, and since its removal from the proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook was not approved by the Faculty Senate, *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED* that item (2) be included in the Faculty Handbook.

Professor Daynard, who served on the 2008-09 SAC, supported the motion and elaborated that it was not SAC's impression at the time that the proposed language was to be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval. Several senators expressed support for the motion.

VOTE to add the resolution and a discussion of economic security language in the Faculty Handbook: PASSED, 34-0-0.

Item V. on today's agenda (a presentation from Vice Provost Powers-Lee) was unanimously deferred to 28 April.

A motion to adjourn was seconded and the Senate adjourned at 1:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen W. McKnight, Secretary  
Faculty Senate