

January 11, 2012

## Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 01/11/2012

Louis J. Kruger  
*Northeastern University*

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

TO: FACULTY SENATE  
FROM: LOUIS J. KRUGER, CHAIR, FACULTY SENATE AGENDA COMMITTEE  
SUBJECT: MINUTES, 2011-2012 FACULTY SENATE MEETING OF 11 JANUARY 2012

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Present: (Professors) Adams, Alper, Alshawabkeh, Aroian, Bannister, Barberis, Basagni, Daynard, Fitzgerald, Fox, Gaffney, Hanson, Herman, Kruger, Muftu, Poriss, Rappaport, Sherman, Strasser, Strauss, Todorov, Yang, Young, Waszczak, Zgarrick

(Administrators) Costa, Director, Gibson, Lane, Loeffelholz, Soyster, Van Den Abbeelee, Zoloth

Absent (Professors) Aslam, Bansil, Katula, Sandler, Sherwood,

(Administrators) Finkelstein, Spieler

Provost Director convened the meeting at 11:46 a.m.

- I. The minutes of 30 November 2011 were approved as written.
- II. Professor Kruger reported the following:

SAC met four times in regular session since the last Senate meeting, twice with the Provost and once with the Senior Leadership Team. Professor Kruger met three times with the Provost.

The following Senate committees have been staffed and charged. A full transcription of the charges may be found at the Senate website.

**Senate *Ad hoc* Committee to Assess the Role of Full-time, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty**

Assistant Academic Specialist Rick Arrowood, CPS  
Professor Javed Aslam, CCIS  
Professor Elizabeth Chilvers, CBA-Coop  
Senior Academic Specialist Melinda F. Drew, Law  
Professor Charles Fountain, CAMD-School of Journalism  
Professor Thomas R. Gilbert (Chair), COS-Chemistry and Chemical Biology  
Clinical Instructor Sonya L. Larrieux, BCHS-Physical Therapy  
Professor William F. Miles, CSSH-Political Science  
Associate Dean Peter H. Wiederspahn, CAMD  
Professor Ronald Willey, COE-Chemical Engineering

*Background to the Charge*

With the continually changing role of full-time non tenure-track faculty in the academic programs at Northeastern University, SAC feels the time is right to

examine their roles at NU, and their rights and responsibilities as members of the NU community at the department/program, college, and university levels.

*Committee Charge*

1. Provide an overview of the utilization of full-time, non-tenure-track faculty at NU over the past decade and how this utilization compares to NU's match-mate institutions. Also provide an analysis of how these faculties are used in the Colleges and individual units in which they are employed, including a description of their responsibilities in both academic and administrative realms;
2. Provide an overview of the longevity of full-time, non-tenure-track faculty on the Northeastern faculty with the aim of exploring policies (such as professional development) relevant to those faculty members;
3. Provide an overview of full-time, non-tenure-track faculty compensation, benefits, and titles and how they compare to similar positions at colleges and universities, particularly those in the greater Boston area;
4. Examine the rights and roles of full-time, non-tenure-track faculty in governance of the units (department/program/school and college) in which they are employed and in the University as a whole. Provide a comparison to their peers at NU's match-mate institutions.

**2012 Joint Senate and Provost's Office Committee to Assess the NU Core**

Senior Academic Specialist Susan F. Freeman, COE

Professor Laura M. Green, CSSH-English

Clinical Professor Mary Hickey, BCHS-Physical Therapy

Professor John Casey, CCIS

Professor Robert C. McOwen, COS-Mathematics

Associate Dean Coleen C. Pantalone, CBA-Undergraduate Studies

*Background to the Charge*

The NU Core, Northeastern University's institution-wide undergraduate general education requirement, was developed through a series of Senate Committee reports culminating in the report of the 2006-2007 ad hoc Senate Committee for Generation Education Implementation, "General Education at Northeastern University: Final Report and Recommendations, April 3, 2006." Implementation of the general education requirement began with the entering first-year class of September 2007. Subsequent NU Core Implementation committees in 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 developed draft learning outcomes and made initial recommendations for assessing the various components of the core. As of fall 2011, a significant cohort of the entering class of 2007 have completed their general education requirement, providing the University with substantial resources of data and experience on the basis of which to develop and implement a full assessment plan for the NU Core.

*Committee Charge*

1. Review the learning outcomes drafted by the 2007-2008 Faculty Senate NU Core Implementation Committee, in consultation with the faculty and

academic leadership of the undergraduate colleges, and recommend any revisions called for;

2. Review existing assessment efforts in the NU Core and recommend a process for assessing all components of the NU Core, with the aim of implementing assessment across the whole of the Core in academic year 2012-13;
3. Develop a strategy by which the information obtained through the assessment process is utilized to further develop and improve the NU Core;
4. Submit a written report on the Committee's findings with recommendations and possible draft resolutions no later than March 15, 2012.

### **Chair Search Committee Department of Earth & Environmental Sciences**

#### *Elected Department Members*

Professor Gwilym Jones  
Professor Jonathan Grabowski  
Professor Steven Vollmer

#### *Appointed Members*

Professor Donald Heiman (COS-Physics)  
Professor April Gu (COE-Civil & Environmental Engineering)

### **Excellence in Teaching Award Selection Committee**

Professor Brook Baker, Law  
Professor Dennis Bernal, COE  
Professor Murray Forman, CAMD  
Professor Denise Jackson, COS  
Vice Provost Mary Loeffelholz, Provost's Representative and Chair  
Professor Guervara Noubir, CCIS  
Professor Peggy O'Kelly, CBA  
Professor Carmen Sceppa, BCHS  
Mr. Jeff Coots, Graduate Student Representative  
Vice President Jack Moynihan, NU Alumnus Representative  
TBA – SGA Representative

Professor Kruger noted that an email had been sent to all faculty members last week containing links to the current merit review procedures both in the Faculty Handbook and legislation passed at a later time.

Recently, the University community was given the sad news of the passing of Bruce Wallin, an Associate Professor of Political Science. Professor Wallin taught in the areas of politics, public finance and budgeting, and was one of the University's finest teachers, having twice earned the University's prestigious Excellence in Teaching Award. His 1998 book on federal revenue sharing won the American Political Science Association's award for the best book on urban politics. He was also an engaged citizen of the university, his community and the world. He served on the Faculty Senate as well as the Senate's Financial Affairs and Athletics Committees. He was the co-founder and leader of the West Roxbury Courthouse Neighborhood Association. He was a Fulbright Scholar in the Czech Republic, and a visiting professor in Tokyo and Bangkok. A memorial service for Professor Wallin will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 24 at 3:30 p.m. in the Curry Student Center Ballroom.

- III. Provost Director reported having received positive reports from around the country in response to the *New York Times* front page story on NU's launch into regional campuses. Dean Fulmer added that an article may also be found in *Time Magazine*. *Worth Magazine* (which focuses on topics related to both wealth creation and wealth management, including philanthropy) has listed Northeastern as the tenth most fiscally responsible non-profit which is important information for donors. Professor John LaBrie has been confirmed as Dean of the College of Professional Studies.

The move to approximately 100,000 square feet of space at 140 The Fenway will begin on 30 March. In addition, seven new high-quality classrooms at the YMCA are now in service. As a result of suggestions concerning enhancement of the afternoon ceremony for graduate students on graduation day, Vice Provost Bernstein announced that a ceremony will now be scheduled on Thursday evening prior to graduation. This will include a reception; more details will follow.

Professor Alper motioned to reorder the agenda so that item V is now item IV. As there were no objections, it became so.

- IV. Professor Daynard read the following and it was seconded. The floor was then yielded to Professor Harris, Chair of the Research Policy and Oversight Committee (RPOC):

**WHEREAS the University is moving on a strong upward trajectory of research, and therefore the infrastructure for encouraging, attracting and managing extramural funding should be continuously strengthened,**

**BE IT RESOLVED** That the following recommendations be implemented:

**Improve the Banner System via a dashboard or other suitable interface so that principal investigators can more easily obtain and understand the budget information pertaining to their grants;**

**Develop a 'frequently asked questions (FAQs)' link on the Office of Research Administration and Finance (ORAF) support website addressing issues related to proposal preparation and submission, and post-award management functions;**

**Strengthen the ORAF training initiatives for principal investigators;**

**Review the pre-award and post-award roles of the principal investigator, college administration, and ORAF for the purposes of clarifying these roles and improving coordination and communication of roles and responsibilities to the principal investigators.**

**Increase support at the College and/or departmental level for the purpose of reducing the burden of grant and personnel management on the principal investigators, addressing budget and accounting errors in a timelier manner, and improving the processing of purchase orders;**

**Develop a plan for the more prompt processing of salary charges on grants by means of a collaborative effort between the Colleges and the Office of Human Resources.**

Professor Harris made a presentation designed to review the methodologies and findings of the RPOC review of ORAF. (The RPOC report may be found at [http://www.facultysenate.neu.edu/committees/20112012/research\\_policy/documents/RPOC\\_survey\\_results\\_RAF\\_2011.pdf](http://www.facultysenate.neu.edu/committees/20112012/research_policy/documents/RPOC_survey_results_RAF_2011.pdf) ). The survey was composed of nine questions in order to produce timely responses from faculty. The RPOC also interviewed ORAF staff, faculty members, and college-level grant specialists who interact with PIs. One hundred and twenty-three faculty members participated including faculty researchers who interacted four or more times per year with ORAF.

Professor Harris reviewed the questions and outcomes as they affect ORAF noting that the only area of notable dissatisfaction is that of post-award activities. Regarding grant training and guidance, those in need of assistance were more likely to garner aid from a mentor or another PI. Since the survey, ORAF has developed a new and improved website which has generated positive feedback.

In regard to Banner, an unambiguous message of dissatisfaction was apparent. The information afforded by Banner is unintelligible. RPOC proposes a user interface to enable distillation and communication of information in a more user-friendly manner.

It was noted that ORAF has reacted quickly to the report and their focus groups have revealed similar faculty sentiment. Their newly offered brown-bag seminars are well attended and useful. ORAF has also updated its website and faculty users have now suggested a FAQ section.

The floor was opened to questions and debate.

Professor Fox noted the wide variability in grants being submitted and posited that results may vary as function of how often someone has contact with ORAF. Professor Harris agreed and added that the survey was intentionally simple for high yield but that certain issues may be hidden within the data as a result. Professor Fox suggested a table of results for individuals with five or more grant submissions and another table for those with only one or two submissions. Professor Harris agreed to produce such a table.

Professor Strauss noted that interview results might not be representative of all faculty because there seemed to be an emphasis on interviewing faculty who have large grants, whereas other faculty without such grants might have different needs.

In response to Dean Gibson, Professor Harris noted that the RPOC had taken up the matter of the five-day notification period required by ORAF and determined that it was comparable to other institutions. The Senate undertook discussion of the five-day notification requirement noting that ORAF might not be able to help faculty improve the quality of the grant application without receipt prior to that time period, and that newer faculty members might require more guidance during that five-day period whereas senior research-active faculty might not feel as though they need the five-day period. Provost Director noted that the five day period also provides time to obtain the necessary signatures.

Professor Waszczak noted that faculty who responded “not applicable” to the post-award services question on the survey might have submitted grants that were not funded.

Dean Van Den Abbeele added that low scores on the level of support offered at Colleges might not accurately reflect current levels of support. Since last year when the survey was conducted, the College of Social Sciences and Humanities has made significant strides in offering grant support. Professor Harris responded that the data are four to five months old; that some Colleges were adequately staffed while others were under-staffed; and that transition to the hybrid budget model has produced a different model of support altogether. The RPOC has reported the data in aggregate, but experiences in colleges may differ

Professor Gaffney asked how the proposed resolution will improve post award activities. Professor Harris responded that a ‘dash-board’ information interface from Banner will be a step in the right direction.

Professors Gaffney and Waszczak expressed concern about the management of sub-contractors and timeliness. Professor Harris agreed that the flow of and efficiency of information is of prime concern. Professor Harris also presented a Matrix of Roles which provides information on whom to contact at each stage of the grant proposal. (This may be found in the RPOC report at [http://www.facultysenate.neu.edu/committees/20112012/research\\_policy/documents/RPOC\\_survey\\_results\\_RAF\\_2011.pdf](http://www.facultysenate.neu.edu/committees/20112012/research_policy/documents/RPOC_survey_results_RAF_2011.pdf) )

ORAF Director Harris reported that ideas for procuring data from Banner in usable formats are being addressed with other research reporting issues. While there is no one answer, short-term needs are being addressed at this time.

Professor Kruger read a statement from Professor Bansil, SAC member and liaison to the RPOC, in support of the report and recommendations. Professor Bansil thanked the membership and noted recent improvements by ORAF.

A call for cloture was seconded and unopposed.

VOTE on recommendations made by the RPOC: PASSED, 33-0-0.

V. New England Press. Vice Provost Loeffelholz read the following and it was seconded:

***BE IT RESOLVED* That the Northeastern University Press pursue a phased withdrawal from its agreement with the University Press of New England.**

The Vice Provost presented the history of NU Press as follows: NU Press was founded in 1977 and by 2000 was publishing 30-40 volumes per year as well as incurring operational losses. 2002-2003 saw the highest operational loss at \$600,000-plus. In November 2004 NU joined University Press of New England (UPNE) as one of six members. The original five-year commitment has expired and now allows for reevaluation of the relationship. Members split the revenue (50-50) and the general overhead and pay a pro-rated share of profits/losses (always losses) and an annual membership fee. Membership is now \$125,000/year because two members have recently left UPNE. Total costs for next year will be approximately \$200,000 and will increase in the future. In terms of return-on-investment, NU’s overhead contribution has

broken even while other member presses have together lost \$1,200,000 of which NU pays a quarter. NU books have lost \$15.00 per book, while other members have experienced much higher losses per book published. NU's contributions help cover these losses. Vice Provost Loeffelholz concluded that the relationship is not in NU's best interest in terms of cost and prestige. In addition, the consortium structure performs poorly in promoting NU interests.

Scholarly publishing is changing rapidly while the terms of the consortium agreement commit NU to moving slowly. The present agreement calls for a three-year phased withdrawal.

The floor was yielded to Professor Peterfreund who has served as representative to the editorial board for several years. Professor Peterfreund voiced support of the Vice Provost's rationale for severing ties. NU concerns were expressed at a joint meeting of the UPNE editorial boards in 2009 and, while steps were taken, there was no meaningful action.

Professor Waszczak asked whether an NU Press would continue to exist if the relationship with UPNE is discontinued. The Vice Provost responded that there is presently no structure in place to select books, another publication mode must be explored by faculty, and return-on-investment should be considered. Professor Peterfreund clarified that NU Press has an editorial board to review manuscripts but no structure to produce a book. Vice Provost Loeffelholz added that books are not the only mode of scholarly communication in humanities and arts. Digital communication is the leading edge.

Dean Van Den Abbeele offered support noting the reputational loss which has been experienced.

Professor Herman suggested establishment of a structure to begin pursuing alternatives as part of the resolution which would include a broad discussion beyond those who publish most.

Dean Soyster asked whether leverage may be gained in obtaining a better agreement with UPNE by threatening to withdraw, and the Vice Provost responded that there had been little reaction to the prior two withdrawals other than reallocation of costs.

Professor Fountain spoke against withdrawal noting that the suggestion seems to be a prelude to the NU Press imprint going dark, and asked if there was no room for negotiation and what universities spent on similar publishing efforts. Vice Provost Loeffelholz responded that the number for medium to large budgets is approximately \$2,500,000.

A call for cloture was seconded and no objections were made.

VOTE to pursue a phased withdrawal from University Press of New England: PASSED, 28-2-1

- VI. Vice Provost Loeffelholz reported that the rental of space at 140 The Fenway is to accommodate growth in faculty, research and academic programs. It will accommodate the School of Pharmacy, the existing animal facility, the Barnett Institute, the collaborator

center, and shared conference/meeting space leaving vacated space on campus and, due to some expiring leases, in Renaissance Park. This vacated space was reviewed in terms of projections for growth and needs of the faculty for office space, dry and wet labs, and specialized instructional space. A final report was submitted in September 2011 and, as a result, the presence of the College of Science will grow in Mugar and Hurtig; the College of Social Sciences and Humanities will gain high quality office space in Renaissance Park to accommodate faculty growth; and the College of Art, Media and Design will grow in and around Ryder Hall. The Provost's Office and the Senate Agenda Committee also discussed possible new Senate space in the center of campus.

Professor Waszczak expressed concern as to the lease at 140 The Fenway (formerly Forsyth) noting that the Museum of Fine Arts has indicated its own plans to use space in Forsyth that is currently leased [presumably to NU]. Provost Director responded that it is a ten year lease and, because of delayed occupation, the University is negotiating to extend that lease.

A motion to postpone further discussion to time certain (the 25 January Senate meeting) was made and seconded. There were no objections.

The Senate adjourned at 1:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Louis J. Kruger, Chair,  
Senate Agenda Committee