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Faculty Senate meeting minutes: 04/13/2011

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Northeastern University
Office of the Faculty Senate

TO: FACULTY SENATE
FROM: STEPHEN W. MCKNIGHT, SECRETARY, FACULTY SENATE
RE: MINUTES, 2010-2011 FACULTY SENATE, 13 APRIL 2011

Present: (Professors) Adams, Alper, Bansil, Barberis, Basagni, Board, Bruns, Chilvers, Daynard, Fox, Gaffney, Hafner, Hanson, Herman, Kruger, Lifter, McKnight, Morrison, Muftu, Poriss, Portz, Sherman, Sherwood, Strauss, Suciu, Thrush, Waszczak, Young

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

Absent (Professors) Alshawabkeh, De Ritis

(Administrators) Luzzi

Provost Director convened the meeting at 11:50 AM

- I. The minutes of 16 March were approved as written.
- II. Professor Kruger reported that the Senate Agenda Committee met four times in regular session since the last Senate meeting. SAC met with the Provost once and Professor Kruger met twice with the Provost.

The following faculty members have been elected to the 2011-2012 Senate. A listing of all faculty senators may be found at the Senate website along with dates for next year's senate meetings.

College of Art, Media & Design: Professor Richard Katula (Communication Studies)
Professor Richard Strasser (Music)

College of Engineering: Professor Akram Alshawabkeh (Civil & Environmental Eng)
Professor Sinan Muftu (Mechanical & Industrial Eng)
Professor Carey Rappaport (Electrical & Computer Eng)

College of Social Sciences & Humanities:
Professor Joan Fitzgerald (Law & Public Policy)
Professor Gerald Herman (History)
Professor Ronald Sandler (Philosophy & Religion)

The Academic Unit Review Committee has been established in accordance with the Faculty Senate resolution passed in early December.

Members:

Professor Harriet Fell
Professor Ralph Loring
Professor Susan Setta
Professor George Thrush

The Senate Agenda Committee is scheduled to meet with the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees on May 5th.

On Monday, the Senate Office, on behalf of the Academic Policy Committee, sent an e-mail survey concerning the Long Range Plan. Professor Kruger urged senate members to complete this survey and to encourage their colleagues to do so. He reminded the Senate that the LRP is the document that will guide the implementation of the academic plan and feedback is important.

The Klein Lecture is tomorrow (14 April). The winner of this year's award is Professor Vincent G. Harris, Electrical and Computing Engineering, and his topic is *Our Magnetic Society: From the I-Pod to Cancer Diagnostics and Remediation Therapies*. The lecture is at 3:00 PM in Raytheon Amphitheater followed by a reception at 4:00 PM.

Matchmate date for equity requests were sent to the Deans' Offices on 31 March. SAC has learned, however, that not all faculty have received the information and as a result has informed the Provost of the situation.

Update on the Faculty Handbook (FHB):

- A. The FHB process this spring relates only to reorganizing and updating the 2000 Handbook with the resolutions that have been approved all levels since publication of that edition.
 - B. On 24 March, Vice Provost Loeffelholz provided SAC with the link to the draft modular FHB.
 - C. Shortly thereafter, SAC and the Senate's FHB Committee realized some resolutions we expected would be included in the modular FHB were omitted from the draft modular FHB created by the Provost's Office.
 - D. Presently, the FHB Committee and SAC are working with the Provost's office to try to resolve the issue of the omitted resolutions
- III. Provost Director reported that a good number of students received external recognitions: a Truman Scholarship; three NSF Fellowships; two Fulbright Scholarships with two pending; and one Goldwater Award.

33.4% of the 43,248 applicants have been admitted. The SAT scores of admitted students are 1352 as compared to 1327 last year; high school grade point average is 3.9 as compared to 3.86 last year; and 44% were admitted from outside New England. There was also an increase in the number of students of color as well as of those graduating at the top of their high school class.

IV. Questions and Discussion

Professor Strauss noted that she would like to see an increase in the yield of admitted students who enroll which is still less than one in five. Yield is a key measure of desirability. The Provost explained that the higher quality of students admitted at NU also creates more options open to them. The Provost will provide more comprehensive figures but noted, too, that applications are likely to decrease as Northeastern becomes a "stretch" school.

Motion was made by Vice Provost Falcon that the agenda be reordered to present the three new programs first. Professor Kruger objected explaining there were faculty visitors who were present due to interest in the first item on the agenda and that SAC had considered the order carefully with

the knowledge that there are two additional Senate meetings prior to the next meeting of the Board of Trustees when academic proposals will be considered.

Vote to reorder the agenda: FAILED, 12-17-3.

- V. Motion to accept the Report of the *Ad hoc* Committee for the Senate Role in University Governance was made by Professor Kruger and seconded.

Vote to accept the Report of the *Ad hoc* Committee for Governance: PASSED, 34-0-0

- VI. Professor Kruger read the following and it was seconded by Professor Strauss.

WHEREAS Northeastern University has a long tradition of shared governance; and

WHEREAS the recent survey on the faculty's role in university governance revealed a high level of dissatisfaction across all faculty ranks; and

WHEREAS failure to resolve the serious issues identified in the report will significantly impede the upward trajectory of the University; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate is deeply concerned about the lack of faculty input into University decision making and considers it imperative that the University's administration recommit itself to shared governance.

The floor was yielded to Professor Gatley, chair of the Committee, who presented a visual synopsis of the report outlining the charge, the methodology and some of the results. The Committee constructed and distributed a survey on faculty satisfaction with the state of shared governance at the University. A large number of faculty responded to the survey and indicated increasing dissatisfaction with the faculty input into governance as they considered the department level (34% dissatisfied), the college level (47% dissatisfied) and the university level (67% dissatisfied). He noted that 90 of 289 respondents provided open-ended comments where the dominant theme was that decision-making in the last several years has moved away from the faculty and become concentrated in the upper level administration. The Committee concluded that the lack of collaboration which has been traditional at Northeastern is of concern to the faculty.

Professor Daynard commended the Committee on the survey. He suggested that its validity was emphasized by two sub groups: faculty member who served on the Faculty Senate and are familiar with University governance expressed a higher level of dissatisfaction and those faculty who have had experience at other universities were just as dissatisfied as other faculty, suggesting that the faculty concern is not just a result of a "Northeastern psyche." Professor Daynard called for two steps: One, that the administration understand that there is a problem; and two, that steps be taken to address and resolve the problem. He supported the resolution as modest and appropriate.

Professor Kruger agreed. He noted the interesting fact that 164 individuals who have been on faculties at other universalities were one of least satisfied groups, supporting the notion that dissatisfaction is not to be found merely among those on the Senate or long-time faculty. Rather, the issue is one of a feeling of disenfranchisement which could have a corrosive effect

on faculty morale and which could ultimately interfere with the upward trajectory of the University. He noted that Northeastern has leveraged its strengths and has recognized external threats but is less adept at recognizing internal problems such as the disenfranchisement of faculty. Great organizations move ahead by recognizing and addressing problems and not by ignoring them.

Professor Fox added that while it is natural for faculty to feel less satisfaction with their voice at the university level than at the department level, we need to get broader faculty influence at the university level. He also urged that a benchmark for faculty attitudes be found.

Professor Strauss suggested that this report is similar to the Academic Policy Committee report that will be presented next week. The APC has recently sent a survey concerning the long-range plan and has found very little faculty ownership or buy-in to the plan.

Professor Thrush questioned whether there is truly general dissatisfaction among many people as he does not have that sense when talking to faculty in general. He asked how a collective body like the Senate can improve satisfaction.

Professor Poriss read a statement from Professor De Ritis, who was absent, which expressed concern that the spirit of the resolution, which presumes to represent the voice of all faculty, suggests that dissatisfaction is caused by the current administration, which he believes is not true and, as such, perpetuates a divisive attitude.

Professors Gaffney and Waszczak spoke for the resolution noting that it can generate positive effects by creatively seeking new avenues of collaboration and expressed concern about the possible corrosive effect of poor faculty morale on the University's interaction with the public, students, parents of prospective students, and faculty candidates.

Professor Fox responded to Professor Bansil's question about possible ways to benchmark the survey that the Higher Educational Research Institute (HERI) surveys, which are completed every three years, provide some frame of reference. He is reviewing results of the most recent survey and noted that an important question is whether or not opinion is improving with regard to governance matters.

Professor Morrison yielded the floor to Professor Bluestone who stated that the misgivings indicated by the survey and by the evaluation of the Provost are generally shared among faculty colleagues and various administrators and Deans to whom he has spoken. While Northeastern's trajectory has been stellar, he personally has never experienced such a decline in the level of morale. This causes great concern in his attempts to bring about relationships with outside constituencies.

Prof. Hanson spoke as chair of the Senate Administrator Evaluation Oversight Committee that it is important that the faculty voice is heard. The AEOC-appointed evaluation committees have generated reports that have been forwarded to the administration but are in some cases still waiting for a response. The question is, when faculty governance speaks does anyone listen?

Dean Zoloth reported that disenfranchisement is high among non-tenure-track faculty at Bouvé and called for reexamination of the Senate Bylaws to include this group in the Faculty Senate.

Vice Provost Loeffelholz acceded that HERI results are still incomplete as there is yet no peer group information. However, among NU undergraduate faculty respondents to a recent survey

as to whether faculty are involved in campus decision-making, 47% agreed strongly or somewhat strongly which appears to be about average. This year's data for the same question is tracking at 48.5% at the moment, which does not seem to indicate a surge in dissatisfaction.

Several additional faculty members spoke in favor of the resolution noting the seeming lack of shared governance around hybrid management and the four-year two Co-op program. Several Deans agreed with Professor De Ritis that the language of the resolution is excessively negative and may not promote a collaborative environment. Dean Spieler suggested that the trends be followed over time and would like a continuing committee on governance issues.

Professor Kruger yielded the floor to Professor Greenwald who urged that the Senate not miss the opportunity to address this problem.

Dean Lane, who reminded the Senate that he would speak his mind and does not have an agenda, said that CBA faculty members were polled and they are not dissatisfied with the transparent procedures and policies at the College. He opined that the resolution is general and suggested that Senate sessions are collaborative engagement. He agreed with Professor De Ritis's statement.

Professor Hafner submitted a friendly amendment to replace the phrase "University administration recommit itself" with "University community recommit itself" which was accepted by Professor Kruger and the seconder, Professor Strauss.

Professor Kruger noted that approximately one-third of faculty members polled are not dissatisfied which is somewhat reflective of the current debate at the Senate. However, it does not negate the two-thirds of faculty who do identify a problem. He added that the 90 open-ended comments, which is a very substantial number, add a qualitative aspect to the numbers.

Motion for cloture was made by Professor Herman and, there being no objection, the Senate turned to the vote.

The resolution, as amended, is as follows:

WHEREAS Northeastern University has a long tradition of shared governance; and

WHEREAS the recent survey on the faculty's role in university governance revealed a high level of dissatisfaction across all faculty ranks; and

WHEREAS failure to resolve the serious issues identified in the report will significantly impede the upward trajectory of the University; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED That the Faculty Senate is deeply concerned about the lack of faculty input into University decision making and considers it imperative that the University community recommit itself to shared governance.

Vote to recommit to shared governance: PASSED, 34-0-1.

Provost Director, indicated that he supported the motion as moved and as amended. He added that all must work to raise awareness that shared governance is a core value of Northeastern

with better communication and better involvement at all levels. He commented on the quality of the debate and noted that the passion of the discussion is a reflection of a shared commitment to the institution.

Professor Gatley confirmed that the Ad Hoc Committee for Governance is continuing to work on its remaining charge.

The Senate agreed to consider the BS in Marine Biology next due to time constraints.

VII. Professor Strauss read the following and it was seconded.

***BE IT RESOLVED* That the University establish the Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology in the College of Science as approved by the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee on 13 January 2011.**

The floor was yielded to Professor Trussell who introduced his collaborators Professor Bracken and Director Genovese of the Three Seas Program. The goal of the program is as a cornerstone of a larger effort to enhance research and more fully utilize the Marine Science Center in Nahant. It will introduce an undergraduate program and attract high-quality undergraduate students by accessing a unique niche.

Vote to establish the BS in Marine Biology: PASSED, 35-0-0.

The Provost encouraged all to visit the Nahant Marine Science Center.

VIII. Vice Provost Falcon read the following and it was seconded:

***BE IT RESOLVED* That the University establish the Master of Science in Hospitality Administration in the College of Professional Studies as approved by the Graduate Council on 3 March 2011.**

The body recognized Dean LaBrie of the College of Professional Studies who explained that the proposal addresses a national need at the business sector of hospitality management which has grown in size and complexity. It is designed as on-line degree for those working in the industry.

Responding to Professor Young's concerns, Dean LaBrie explained that the competitive advantage is that there are few such programs offered; that some courses already exist; and that the proposal includes the hiring of a full-time faculty member with specialization in the field as well as highly qualified adjuncts. Professor Young expressed concern that those skilled in the industry would not necessarily be adept at teaching on line, which is complex and difficult. Dean LaBrie responded that training would be provided and realization of an upgrade to NU On Line will benefit all on-line degree programs.

Professor Gaffney questioned whether CBA was consulted to which the Dean replied that it was although not in regard to the final design. Dean Lane explained the consultation with the AACSB confirmed that such a program was not included in accreditation.

Dean Van Den Abbeele questioned the absence of a connection to Boston's unique cultural tourism industry and emphasized its importance. Dean LaBrie explained the decision had been made to reach beyond the local market.

Motion was made by Professor Kruger for cloture and, as there was no objection, the vote ensued.

Vote to establish the MS of Hospitality Administration in CPS: PASSED, 25-4-5.

The Senate adjourned 1:24 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen W. McKnight, Secretary
Faculty Senate