



**Minutes of the Meeting  
April 27, 2021**

The Boston University Faculty Council convened on April 27, 2021 from 3:30-5:00. via Zoom. Eileen O'Keefe, Chair of the Faculty Council, presided over the meeting.

Officers and Committee Chairs								
X	O’Keefe, Eileen	Chair	Sargent	X	Furman, Jeff	Faculty Policies	QST	
X	Leone, Cataldo	Past Chair	GSDM	X	Howard, Kimberly A.S.	Graduate Programs	WCEHD	
		Secretary-Treasurer						
X	Barbone, Paul	Academic Freedom	ENG	X	Coleman, Fadie T.	Research	MED	
X	Will, Leslie	Administrative Policies	GSDM		Hughes, Jeffrey	Student Life and Policies	CAS	
X	Reed, Marnie	Awards	WCEHD	X	J. Robb Dixon	Sustainability	QST	
X	Williams, Mark T.	Compensation and Benefits	QST	X	Leone, Cataldo	Teaching Resources	GSDM	
X	Hallstein, Lynn	Credentials and By-laws	CGS		Andres, Andy	Undergraduate Programs	CGS	
X	Chang, Charles	Equity and Inclusion	SPH					
Representatives (R) and Alternates (A)								
X	Alosco, Michael (R)	MED		Iffland, James (A)	CAS	X	Myers, Samantha (R)	CAS
X	Ampountolas, Apostolos (R)	SHA		Jafarzadeh, S. Reza (R)	MED	X	Pani, Pinelopi (A)	GSDM
X	Austin, Judy (R)	COM		James, Breehan (A)	CFA		Park, Hee-Young (A)	MED
X	Barbone, Paul, (R)	ENG	X	Joyce, Kathleen (A)	LAW	X	Parla, Ayşe (R)	CAS
	Bigio, Irving (A)	ENG	X	Kanno, Yasuko (R)	WCEHD	X	Perls, Thomas (R)	MED
X	Brown, Shelley (R)	Sargent		Karra, Mahesh (A)	Pardee	X	Powers, Gina (R)	QST
	Byttebier, Stephanie (A)	CGS		Kealy, Sean (R)	LAW	X	Prince, Michael (A)	CAS
X	Coffman, Christopher (R)	CGS		Kinraide, Rebecca (R)	CAS		Quatromoni, Paula (A)	Sargent
X	Coleman, Fadie T. (R)	MED		Kirby Jones, Alison (A)	QST	X	Schon, Karin (R)	MED
	Coppock, Elizabeth (R)	CAS	X	Kong, Celeste (R)	GSDM		Semeter, Joshua (A)	ENG
			X	Lahkani, Afsheen (R)	GSDM		Seta, Francesca (R)	MED
	D’Amato, Laura (A)	LAW	X	Leahey, Kristin (R)	CFA		Shahbazian, Cameron (A)	GSDM
			X	Lee, Elaine (R)	MED	X	Slanetz, Priscilla (R)	MED
X	DeNatale, Doug (A)	MET	X	Legg, Mark (A)	SHA		Smith, Kevin (A)	CAS
	Desilets, Sean (A)	CAS		Leider, Christine (R)	WCEHD		Smith-Crowe, Kristin (A)	QST
	DeVoe, Ellen (A)	SSW	X	Lindsey, Kate (R)	CFA	X	Straub, John (R)	CAS
X	Dobbs, Christina (A)	WCEHD	X	Liu, Chunyu (A)	SPH	X	Sullivan-Soydan, Anne (A)	Sargent
X	Dutta-Koehler, Madhu (R)	MET		Loechler, Edward (A)	CAS	X	Tallman, Sean (R)	MED
X	Fabian, Patricia (A)	SPH	X	Lumpkin, Williams (R)	CFA	X	Tripodis, Yorghos (R)	SPH
X	Feng, Hui (R)	MED	X	Lunze, Karsten (R)	MED	X	Ünlü, Selim (R)	ENG
X	Field, Thomas (R)	MED	X	Lynch, Shawn (A)	CGS	X	Villegas-Reimers, Eleonora (A)	WCEHD
X	Fincke, Mary Elizabeth	CELOP		Mako, Shamiran (R)	Pardee	X	Volk, Robert (R)	LAW
X	Furman, Jeff (R)	QST	X	Manglos-Weber, Nicolette (A)	STH	X	Walsh, Joyce (A)	QST
X	Gavornik, Jeffrey (R)	CAS		McKeen, Bill (A)	COM		Watts, Stephanie (A)	QSR
X	Genovese, Salvatore (A)	CGS	X	Merzbacher, Charles (R)	COM	X	Webster, Kathryn (R)	Sargent
X	Gopalan, Srikanth (R)	ENG	X	Metheny, Karen (A)	MET		White, Roberta (A)	SPH
X	Griffin, Sue (R)	CAS		Miller, Margo (A)	CELOP	X	Will, Leslie (R)	GSDM
X	Hopper, Clay (A)	CFA		Mochida, Yoshikyuki (A)	GSDM	X	Williams, Mark T. (R)	QST
X	Huckle, Nicholas (A)	CAS	X	Muroff, Jordana (R)	SSW	X	Yang, Shi (R)	MED
	Hughes, Jeffrey (R)	CAS		Mustafa-Kutana, Suleiman (R)	MED	X	Zlatev, Vladimir (R)	MET

Guests: University Provost Jean Morrison; Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs Maureen O'Rourke

## I. Chair's Report

Chair O'Keefe announced the last scheduled meeting of the Faculty Council for the 2021-2022 session will be on May 4. Andy Andres, Chair of the Nominating Committee, will report the outcome of the election for Faculty Council Officers. He will also present the candidates for Committee Chairs for the Faculty Council vote. Charles Chang, Chair of the Equity and Inclusion Committee, will also give a report. The Council received four nominations for the Dean Search Advisory Committee for the Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine. Per the Faculty Handbook, the Council elects two faculty who hold an appointment external to the school subject to the search to serve on the dean search advisory committee. All Council members will receive information about the candidates. The voting members of Faculty Council (officers, committee chairs, and representatives) will receive a Qualtrics poll to cast their vote. Per the By-laws, the Council employs rank-order voting for dean search committees. The outcome of the vote will be published on the Faculty Council website and the Director will notify the Council via email, too.

Chair O'Keefe reported on upcoming agenda items of note at University Council. On May 11, the UC will hear the annual report about the BU Hub. On June 15, it will hear the annual report of the University Grievance Committee.

### Agenda items for 2021-2022

Prior to the meeting, the Faculty Council were asked to provide suggestions for agenda items for the 2021-2022 session. Chair O'Keefe reported that faculty on the MED campus would like more focus and discussion on research administration. Also, MED faculty would like to know more about efforts to support research and improve diversity, equity and inclusion for junior faculty, post docs, and graduate students. Chair O'Keefe will invite Associate Provost for Research Gloria Waters to a Council meeting.

Council members raised concerns that the University might discontinue BU Google drive and apps and adopt another platform. The faculty members said this would impact both data storage and the collaborative learning environment and asked that IS&T consult the faculty before making a decision. Chair O'Keefe contacted Vice President of IS&T Tracy Schroeder. VP Schroeder said there are no plans for any changes in 2021. Changes to Google Services have been extended to the end of 2022 for BU and other research institutions that have pushed back at Google. This allows time for Ed Tech and Research Computing to consult and wait for new tools from Google to better understand the University's storage use and options for moving stored items to other platforms. VP Schroeder said there is no timeline yet for making a decision, as this is an evolving issue. IS&T might send faculty a survey in fall 2021. She has also offered to attend a Faculty Council meeting to discuss this issue. Chair O'Keefe said she will also ask VP Schroeder to provide an update about changes to the Student Information System.

Council members noted that the Administration has recognized the impact of the pandemic on tenure-track faculty, but the pandemic has impacted the professional development and scholarship of non-tenure track faculty, too. The effect of the pandemic will most likely last longer than anyone initially

thought. There should be discussion about what steps to take to recognize the loss of scholarly activities for non-tenure track faculty as they come up for annual review.

Chair O'Keefe received questions about study abroad programs and the BU Hub with respect to STEM fields. When the new Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs is named, the Council can invite them to discuss the representation of STEM in the Hub requirements. The Executive Committee met with Vice President Willis Wang and Gareth McFeely of the Office of Global Programs in February to discuss closed programs. Global Programs is in transition due to the pandemic and the BU2030 plan. The University does not know when students will be able to study abroad, or what countries will permit them entry. VP Wang would like to engage with some STEM faculty to plan new programs.

A Council member said a group of faculty and graduate students recently formed a chapter of the AAUP at Boston University. They might be invited to discuss their activities and goals and get input from the Faculty Council. Chair O'Keefe said no one from the chapter had contacted her as of yet. The Council member said the AAUP chapter is interested in shared governance and it seemed relevant to involve Faculty Council in the dialogue to create a productive collaboration, or line of communication. Chair O'Keefe said Faculty Council is the representative body for faculty at the University. She will consult with the Executive Committee, if the AAUP contacts her.

A Council member reported that colleagues in his school are upset about the recent news about the TIAA-CREF retirement benefits. TIAA will no longer be offered as an option for new employees. It will not be available for new contributions or transfers. Fidelity will be the sole service provider for the retirement savings program. Chair O'Keefe said the Council will hear a report from the Compensation and Benefits Committee that will address this change. Another Council member said faculty in her school have asked if the University intends to increase the retirement contribution in FY2022 to try to make up for the loss of the contribution in FY2021.

A Council member asked if there will be any follow-up from the discussion about the Discontinuation Policy for Departments and Programs. The University Council Graduate Academic Programs and Policies Committee recommended a review of the policy as currently described in the Faculty Handbook to clarify ambiguities about adequate consultation. Chair O'Keefe said the University Council Faculty Policies Committee is the appropriate body to take up this question and she will follow up with them,

## II. Awards Committee

Marnie Reed, Chair of the Awards Committee, presented the report of the Awards Committee. The Committee is charged with reviewing and recommending the recipients of the 2021 John S. Perkins Award for Distinguished Service. The award was endowed by John S. Perkins, a former trustee and employee of the University. The award is given annually to non-faculty members of the University community in recognition of excellent service.

The members are: Gisela Hoecherl-Alden (CAS), Afsheen Lakhani (GSDM), Margo Miller (Global Programs: Center for English Language & Orientation Programs), Marnie Reed (WED), Yang Shi (MED). This year, the Committee received 14 nominations for staff on MED and CRC who represented a broad range of disciplines and functions. Of this year's nominees, one person had been nominated before. Committee Chair Reed reported the timeline for the call for nominations, collecting the dossiers, and committee review. The Committee reviewed 76 letters, many of them with multiple signatories. The Committee received the dossiers in early March and met via Zoom on March 25. Committee Chair Reed was prepared to deliver the report to the Faculty Council on April 6, but due to unavoidable changes to the agenda, the report had to be postponed.

The winners of the 2021 John S. Perkins Award are:

Ridiane Denis  
Director of Clinical Research and Operations  
General Clinical Research Institute  
BU Clinical and Translational Science Institute

Aline Hillman  
Department Administrator  
Pulmonary Center  
Boston University School of Medicine

Lena Landaverde  
Assistant Director  
BU Precision Diagnostics Center  
Boston University College of Engineering

Committee Chair Reed described their respective roles and shared excerpts from the letters of recommendation for each candidate. Chair O'Keefe thanked the Committee for their work. She acknowledged that it must have been difficult to select only three as many of them sound deserving of the award. A Council member asked if the nominees know they have been put forward for the Perkins. Director Khosla said sometimes the faculty who nominate the person tell them they are up for the award, but Faculty Council does not send the nominee any notification at all. Director Khosla only corresponds with the faculty member who nominates the candidates during the review process.

The Faculty Council unanimously endorsed the Committee's selections for the 2021 John S. Perkins Award via a Qualtrics poll sent after the meeting. The Faculty Council will host an award ceremony and reception for the 2020 and the 2021 winners in the next academic year, when University protocols permit social gatherings.

### III. Task Force on the Future of Staff Work

Natalie McKnight, Dean of the College of General Studies, joined the meeting and thanked the Council for the inclusion of this topic on the agenda. She co-chairs the Task Force on the Future of Staff Work with Ken Freeman, Interim VP of Human Resources. The University is conducting a survey to get feedback about how staff felt about remote work during the pandemic and what they want to do in the future. In response to a BU Today article, many readers commented that the staff are not represented on the Task Force. The survey is an opportunity for the community to provide its input. Dean McKnight asked faculty to encourage staff to complete the survey. The Task Force has been charged to develop a University-wide policy for remote work, utilizing what we have learned from the pandemic. The Task Force is also looking at what remote work arrangements the University and peer institutions had prior to the pandemic. Remote work is common in many industries. The Task Force is trying to get a sense of the impact of remote work on the culture of the University.

A Council member asked how a University-wide policy is possible, given the high variation of staff work in different units. He also asked whether local managers will have some control over staff schedules. Dean McKnight said the Task Force is considering a process that would allow an employee to apply to work remotely. Local managers may be provided with criteria to evaluate the requests. Whether a staff person can work remotely will depend on the nature of their role. Many units had flexible/remote work arrangements with staff prior to the pandemic. The Task Force has discussed ways to formalize these arrangements. Chair O'Keefe asked if the Task Force is focusing only at staff work, or are they looking at faculty, too. Dean McKnight said their purview is staff only, but faculty will be polled because they often supervise staff. She said the plan to re-open the campus is separate from the Task Force's charge, which is looking to establish a permanent process or policy for remote staff work. It has discussed issues of work/life balance, child care and elder care issues, the impact of commuting on employees' health and finances, and on the environment. Dean McKnight said a policy is needed to recruit and retain staff, now that everyone has had the experience of remote work.

Dean McKnight invited Council members to contact her with their additional questions and comments.

#### IV. New business

The discussion was opened to new business. A Council member reported that the SPH Faculty Senate would like to study the timeline for promotion for faculty of color. Chair O'Keefe asked if SPH wants to focus on non-tenure track faculty and the Council member said that it does.

A Council member asked if there is any data, either internal or external, about staff productivity with remote work. He also asked if the University plans to conduct a review of space management, in tandem with the development of the remote work policy. Chair O'Keefe said Dean McKnight is the appropriate person to follow up on with that question. A Council member said there is some data to suggest that productivity increases with remote work, and another said there are also studies that productivity increases, but creativity decreases. A Council member said it has been harder to build personal connections within a team during the pandemic, particularly with newly-hired staff. Chair O'Keefe noted that faculty have always had more flexibility with their schedules than staff.

A Council member asked if the Faculty Council is scheduled to meet during the summer. She asked if the Council will resume in-person meetings in the 2021-2022 session, or remain virtual. The benefit of virtual meetings is that it is easier for people to join and participate in discussion. Chair O'Keefe said there are no meetings scheduled for the Council during the summer. The Council has met continuously since Spring 2020 and people need a break. Chair O'Keefe said no decision has been made yet about in-person or virtual meetings for 2021-2022. She favors offering a zoom option for meetings, which would be especially helpful for MED campus faculty. She said that faculty participation on CRC and MED has been consistently high throughout the pandemic and the continued input of faculty from both campuses is valuable. Another Council member agreed that faculty should have the option to join remotely, but hoped that there would be an in-person option, too. Faculty Council provides a chance to talk to faculty from other schools and colleges that one would not otherwise meet. In-person meetings allow for informal discussions that don't happen online. A Council member said attendance at Faculty Assembly has been much better with remote meetings than in-person and asked if there are plans to continue meeting remotely. Director Khosla said President Brown will make that decision, but there will continue to be some form of video-participation available on the MED campus.

Chair O'Keefe said that Council members were sharing their perspectives on LfA and said their students are eager to return to in-person classes. A Council member agreed that faculty want to be back in the classroom, too. He said he intends to continue to hold office hours online because the meetings with students are more productive and easier to schedule. Council members discussed paper exams versus online exams and agreed that online exams are more convenient, but have higher incidences of cheating.

#### V. Tenure clock extension for faculty hired Fall 2020

Provost Jean Morrison and Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs Maureen O'Rourke joined the meeting to bring forward a proposed change to the Faculty Handbook before the Council, as part of the formal consultation process.

In April 2020, the Faculty Handbook was amended to include an automatic, one year "opt out" blanket extension to the tenure clock for current probationary faculty, to allow for disruptions caused by the pandemic. Any faculty member who did not wish to use the extension could opt out of it. The amendment applied only to faculty in the 2019-2020 probationary year. It did not include faculty hired on the tenure-track who started in Fall 2020. Provost Morrison said, in recognition of the ongoing impact of the pandemic, she proposes to extend the amendment to include faculty hired Fall 2020. Faculty hired on the tenure-track in January 2021 are not included because their tenure clock does not start until Fall 2021.

Provost Morrison presented the language of the proposed amendment (new language in red):

The following Covid-19 extension provision shall remain in effect until the end of academic year 2029-2030, at which time, it shall be removed from the Faculty Handbook without any further action required by any deliberative body: Every faculty member in the probationary period in academic year 2019-20 who

will not have received a tenure decision by May 15, 2020, and every faculty member whose employment began between July 1, 2020 and December 21, 2020, shall have their tenure review deadline postponed for one year due to the extraordinary circumstances associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. This one-year Covid-19 extension will be in addition to the maximum total 2-year extension references above. The faculty member retains the right, after consultation with his or her chair and/or dean, to request review at the originally specified time rather than postponing review under this provision.

Chair O'Keefe thanked Provost Morrison for her presentation and opened the floor to questions. A Council member asked who initiated this amendment. Provost Morrison said the Council of Deans raised this issue. When the amendment was approved in April 2020, it was not yet clear how far-reaching the disruptions of the pandemic would be.

A Council member said the policy seemed clear and reasonable and asked if there are provisions for faculty to ask for additional time beyond one year, if needed. Provost Morrison said the one-year blanket extension is in addition to the already existing policy that allows for an extension of up to two years. There has been a lot of national discussion about the differential negative impact of the pandemic on women in higher education. There is emerging data about women in STEM fields. Provost Morrison is discussing how to mitigate this impact with colleagues at other institutions, too.

Chair O'Keefe shared a question from the zoom chat that asked how this policy will affect MED campus faculty. Provost Morrison said this provision applies to tenure-track faculty on the CRC. Chair O'Keefe said the non-tenure track (NTT) faculty who have a three, or five, year contract may have been negatively impacted as well. Could the NTT faculty be granted an extension before coming up for renewal? Provost Morrison agreed and said faculty need to bring that concern to the dean of their school or college first, as the dean manages those contracts. A Council member asked about MED campus faculty that have lost grant funding during the pandemic and how that will affect their probationary period for renewal. The person seemed to have a technical issue with their connection and dropped from the call. Provost Morrison said there is a wide variety of contracts, terms, and sources of funding. Faculty who lost funding from an outside source need to bring this question to their dean, who is aware of the funding agencies. If there are broader issues, the discussion will be elevated to the next level, but the first discussion should be with the dean.

A Council member said NTT faculty on CRC also have a strict timeline with respect to contract renewal. He asked if the Provost would provide guidelines to the deans about how to assess the impact of Covid on them, too. Provost Morrison said this conversation needs to begin with the NTT faculty and their dean first. She said she will raise the question for guidelines for review with the Council of Deans.

Based on the discussion, the Council members favored the amendment to the Faculty Handbook. Chair O'Keefe asked faculty who thought otherwise to share their thoughts. There were no objections. Chair O'Keefe thanked the Provost for her presentation and for the discussion about the concerns of the NTT faculty contract renewal.

Provost Morrison and Associate Provost O'Rourke thanked the Council for their input and left the meeting.

#### VI. Report of the Compensation and Benefits Committee

Committee Chair Mark T. Williams said the faculty received a notice from Human Resources about the transition from TIAA-CREF to Fidelity as the University's sole recordkeeper. Earlier this semester, Senior Vice President of Finance Marty Howard asked for the Compensation and Benefits Committee's input. Two recordkeepers create a potential liability for the University because of the cost to employees in annual fees. TIAA's fees are double to triple in cost compared to Fidelity. Also, TIAA's funds underperform compared to Fidelity.

The Committee was concerned that in the long term, TIAA's higher fees and lower performance negatively impact an employee's investment return. The Committee learned that the majority of new faculty elect Fidelity for their retirement investment. The Committee endorsed the plan to discontinue offering TIAA-CREF as an option. As of July 1, all new investments will be made through Fidelity. TIAA will not be available for new contributions or incoming transfers. Committee Chair Williams said Human Resources will contact employees who have retirement investments with TIAA-CREF.

Committee Chair Williams said the University will resume the matching contribution on July 1, which was also a concern of the Committee. The match will resume as it was before the pandemic. Chair O'Keefe said a number of faculty have asked whether the matching contribution could be increased in FY2022, to try to make up for what employees lost in FY 2021. Committee Chair Williams said he had not heard any discussion about that.

A Council member said a number of colleagues in his school contacted him when the announcement to discontinue TIAA was made. Older faculty are upset that they will not be able to contribute to TIAA in the future. Committee Chair Williams said the Committee anticipated that this would upset some faculty. Based on their analysis, discontinuing TIAA is the right decision for the University. Fidelity charges lower fees, has better return, and offers more products.

Chair O'Keefe read a question from the zoom chat: do prior investments get moved to Fidelity? For faculty who are no longer employed at the University, how will the status of their accounts change. Committee Chair Williams said for those who have TIAA, employees can move their account to Fidelity, if they want to. There will be Fidelity account executives to assist employees. They can keep their TIAA account, but there will be no new contributions to the fund.

Chair O'Keefe thanked Committee Chair Williams for his report and for the Committee's work.

## VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Khosla, Director