



**Minutes of the Meeting  
December 1, 2020**

The Boston University Faculty Council convened on December 1, 2020 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				Media/Communication		
X	Decosimo, David	Academic Freedom	STH	X	Coleman, Fadie T.	Research	MED	
X	Will, Leslie	Administrative Policies	GSDM	X	Hughes, Jeffrey	Student Life and Policies	CAS	
X	Reed, Marnie	Awards	WCEHD	X	J. Robb Dixon	Sustainability	QST	
	Williams, Mark T.	Compensation and Benefits	QST	X	Leone, Cataldo	Teaching Resources	GSDM	
X	Hallstein, Lynn	Credentials and By-laws	CGS	X	Andres, Andy	Undergraduate Programs	CGS	
	Chang, Charles	Equity and Inclusion	CAS					
Representatives (R) and Alternates (A)								
X	Alosco, Michael (R)	MED		Iffland, James (A)	CAS		Myers, Samantha (R)	CAS
X	Ampountolas, Apostolos (R)	SHA		Jafarzadeh, S. Reza (R)	MED		Pani, Pinelopi (A)	GSDM
X	Austin, Judy (R)	COM		James, Breehan (A)	CFA	X	Park, Hee-Young (A)	MED
X	Barbone, Paul, (R)	ENG	X	Joyce, Kathleen (A)	LAW	X	Parla, Ayse (R)	CAS
	Bigio, Irving (A)	ENG	X	Kanno, Yasuko (R)	WCEHD		Perls, Thomas (R)	MED
X	Brown, Shelley (R)	Sargent		Karra, Mahesh (A)	Pardee	X	Powers, Gina (R)	QST
X	Byttebier, Stephanie (R)	CGS	X	Kealy, Sean (R)	LAW	X	Prince, Michael (A)	CAS
X	Coffman, Christopher (R)	CGS	X	Kinraide, Rebecca (R)	CAS		Quatromoni, Paula (A)	Sargent
X	Coleman, Fadie T. (R)	MED	X	Kirby Jones, Alison (A)	QST	X	Schon, Karin (R)	MED
	Coppock, Elizabeth (R)	CAS	X	Kong, Celeste (R)	GSDM		Semeter, Joshua (A)	ENG
X	Cozier, Yvette (R)	SPH	X	Lahkani, Afsheen (R)	GSDM	X	Seta, Francesca (R)	MED
	D’Amato, Laura (A)	LAW	X	Leahey, Kristin (R)	CFA		Shahbazian, Cameron (A)	GSDM
X	Decosimo, David (R)	STH	X	Lee, Elaine (R)	MED	X	Slanetz, Priscilla (R)	MED
X	DeNatale, Doug (A)	MET	X	Legg, Mark (A)	SHA		Smith, Kevin (A)	CAS
X	Desilets, Sean (A)	CAS	X	Leider, Christine (R)	WCEHD		Smith-Crowe, Kristin (A)	QST
X	DeVoe, Ellen (A)	SSW	X	Lindsey, Kate (R)	CFA	X	Straub, John (R)	CAS
	Dobbs, Christina (A)	WCEHD		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		Tripodis, Yorghos (R)	SPH
X	Feng, Hui (R)	MED		Lunze, Karsten (R)	MED	X	Ünlü, Selim (R)	ENG
X	Field, Thomas (R)	MED		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		Manglos-Weber, Nicolette (A)	STH		Watts, Stephanie (A)	QST
X	Gavornik, Jeffrey (R)	CAS	X	McKeen, Bill (A)	COM	X	Webster, Kathryn (R)	Sargent
X	Genovese, Salvatore (A)	CGS		Merzbacher, Charles (R)	COM	X	White, Roberta (A)	SPH
X	Gopalan, Srikanth (R)	ENG	X	Metheny, Karen (A)	MET	X	Will, Leslie (R)	GSDM
X	Griffin, Sue (R)	CAS	X	Miller, Margo (A)	CELOP		Williams, Mark (R)	QST
X	Hopper, Clay (A)	CFA	X	Mochida, Yoshikyuki (A)	GSDM	X	Yang, Shi (R)	MED
X	Huckle, Nicholas (A)	CAS	X	Muroff, Jordana (R)	SSW		Zlatev, Vladimir (R)	MET
X	Hughes, Jeffrey (R)	CAS		Mustafa-Kutana, Suleiman (R)	MED			

Guests: Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs Daniel Kleinman; Dean of Sargent College Christopher Moore; MSAT Program Director Dr. Kimberly Mace; Theresa Ellis Chair of Department of Physical Therapy & Athletic Training, Sargent College; faculty of MSAT Program: Chad Clements, Mark Laursen.

## I. Discontinuation of MS in Athletic Training Program

Per the Faculty Handbook<sup>1</sup>, the Faculty Council met with the Dean of Sargent College, the faculty of the MS in Athletic Training Program, and the Co-Chairs of the Graduate Programs and Policies Committee to hear presentations about the proposed closure of the MS in Athletic Training. The guests were allotted fifteen minutes each for their presentations. The Council received the Dean's proposal, his presentation, and the response of the affected faculty prior to the meeting.

### Sargent College Dean Christopher Moore's Presentation

Dean Moore stated the rationales for program discontinuation are the financial factors necessary for operational efficiency of Sargent College, citing the Faculty Handbook. The considerations for closing the program are in the context of the entire College. Operational efficiency includes consideration of opportunity costs and relative efficiency across the College. He stated that annual enrollment targets inform the viability of graduate programs. Budgetary considerations interact with demand for the programs. He stressed that program quality, the value of the discipline, and its value to the community are not at issue. Dean Moore presented the timeline of the process year, which commenced on June 1, 2020. He listed the parties he has consulted with thus far: members of the Administration and the Faculty, and other units of the University (Student Health Services, Dept. of Athletics, the Physical Therapy Center). He presented enrollment data for 2016 through 2021 and listed unfavorable market factors for the MS degree. He reported the faculty who will be affected by this closure. One faculty member's appointment will be terminated one year early. Two faculty members' contracts, that do not extend beyond the proposed program closure date, will not be renewed. A fourth faculty member holds a primary appointment outside the program and is not affected. The 14 students of the class of 2021 and the 4 students of the class of 2022 are on track to complete their degree.

Dean Moore presented the strategic objectives of Sargent College and noted how the Program is potentially aligned and how it is not aligned with those objectives. The Program is potentially aligned in its service to the community and the interprofessional opportunities it offers to students. It also has the potential to contribute to diversity, equity and inclusion at BU and to enhance the national reputation of the University. However, the Program does not conduct high impact, externally funded research, and there is not a high potential for revenue-generating professional education. In the context of college-wide considerations, Dean Moore cited opportunity costs and limited resources that must be shared with other graduate professional programs in the College. The pandemic exacerbated enrollment pressures on graduate programs and the University-wide Covid response measures required immediate reductions to the permanent college budget. The numbers for the Program's net revenue and expenses and reported that the revenue narrowly exceeds its cost. Information about the distribution of the

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bu.edu/handbook/leaves-absences/program-discontinuation-and-consequent-faculty-terminations/>

budget for Sargent College was presented. In the context of budget constraints and the strategic priorities, the Program's underperforming enrollment numbers provided an area to reduce the budget and improve operational efficiencies required by the Provost's budget cuts.

#### Program Director Dr. Kimberly Mace's Presentation

Chair O'Keefe invited the Program faculty to introduce themselves to the Council. Dr. Kimberly Mace, program director for the MS in Athletic Training, presented the faculty response. Dr. Mace noted that athletic training is a health care profession, in spite of public perception. She gave an overview of the current landscape for the profession, national changes to certification requirements and the effect those changes have on baccalaureate and master's programs, and projected labor statistics and salaries for athletic training in the next decade.

Dr. Mace presented the Program faculty's position. The Program faculty have three primary concerns about the proposal to discontinue the Program: lack of consultation with the faculty, conflicting information about the rationale for closing the Program, and the loss of significant programmatic impact. Dr. Mace said the Program faculty were invited to a meeting with one hour's notice on June 26 where the Dean informed them of his intent to close the Program, due to emergency budget cuts associated with COVID. She noted that the Dean's proposal did not state this as the rationale.

In May, the Dean asked the departments of the College to draft budget cuts of 5%, 10% and 15%. The Department of Physical Therapy and Athletic Training did so, but did not propose closing the Program. Ultimately, the College budget was cut by 7.5%. The Dean told the Program faculty that budget pressure was the rationale for closing the Program. The faculty asked to see the program budget so they could propose alternative reductions and strategies. This was shared on October 15. The budget indicated that the Program has never lost revenue. Dr. Mace reported that the budget they received contained inaccuracies that were not resolved until November 24. Dr. Mace presented a budget table for FY19 through FY24 and noted that a projected 4.68% shortfall in FY22, or approximately \$40,000. In FY20 and FY21, the Program's profit margin is projected to be between \$180,000 and \$200,000. The Program faculty maintain that budgetary constraints do not appear to be the rationale for closing the Program.

Dr. Mace reported that the Program faculty were informed in September that program enrollment was the rationale for closing the Program. The enrollment targets were set in 2016 without market analysis or formal study. The target was based on a best guess and never reviewed or revised. Enrollment has been on an upward trend, prior to the pandemic. The Program meets the necessary enrollment to cover its operating and overhead expenses. The profession is undergoing a transition as people take the baccalaureate degree while they are still able to sit the national certification exam. The national accreditation body will require a Master's for certification, starting in 2026. The Program has growth potential to meet enrollment targets in the future without the investment of additional faculty or resources.

In response to the Dean's statement that the Program does not align with the College's strategic initiatives, the program presented Sargent's Strategic Alignment map, dated Fall 2019, and explained

how the Program meets the criteria and contributes to Sargent's goals of expanding its global reputation. Dr. Mace maintained that the Handbook procedures have not been followed properly. There was not adequate consultation with the Program faculty, Sargent's department chairs, the Director of Graduate Enrollment, and other stakeholders at the University before the process year started on July 1. The lack of consultation, coupled with the program's perceived deficiencies in the proposal and unclear rationale, might set a bad precedent for future programs facing closure. She asked the Faculty Council not to support the proposal.

#### University Council Graduate Academic Programs and Policies Presentation

The GAPP Committee's report was presented by Co-Chair Kimberly A.S. Howard. She outlined the process prior to GAPP's review. Sargent College faculty were invited to send their comments about the proposal to the GAPP Committee. These comments were anonymized and sent to Dean Moore prior to meeting with the Sargent faculty on October 19. After that meeting, faculty sent their comments, questions and reactions to Dr. Howard. GAPP reviewed 51 pages of material. Three themes emerged from the faculty comments: conflicting rationale for closing the Program; lack of transparency during the process; concerns whether the process mandated by the Faculty Handbook, especially consultation with the faculty being impacted, has been followed. GAPP met with Dean Moore on November 2 and November 23. The Committee's role is to evaluate the rationale for the proposed discontinuation and to examine the process followed, as required by the Faculty Handbook. The GAPP committee moved to make no recommendation on the proposed closure of the Program. Although the Faculty Handbook does not specifically define the nature and extent of "consultation," the GAPP Committee concluded that the Dean did not engage in sufficient consultation with the affected faculty. Also, while the timeline required by the Handbook was followed, the Dean's decision to suspend admissions review during the process year effectively closed the program before the discontinuation process was actually concluded. The GAPP Committee maintains that the Faculty Handbook is not clear enough to give adequate guidance to make a recommendation about the Proposal.

#### Discussion

Chair O'Keefe thanked Dr. Howard for her presentation and opened the floor to questions. A Council member asked for clarification about the process and what action is expected of the Council at this meeting. Chair O'Keefe said the presentations from the Dean, the affected faculty, and GAPP are mandated by the Faculty Handbook. The proposal will be brought to University Council for discussion and a vote in Spring 2021. Those Council members who serve on University Council will be asked to vote then.

A Council member asked what proportion of the Program's classes are taught by faculty in other units, e.g. other Sargent departments, or CAS. Dr. Mace said that, since this is a focused graduate-level professional program, the classes are taught exclusively by the Program faculty. Students in both Athletic Training and Physical Therapy take these classes.

A Council member said it appeared that the Faculty Handbook is unclear and the policy needs to give the GAPP Committee more guidance. Dr. Howard agreed that the policy does not state what constitutes “consultation” with the affected faculty. Also, GAPP was unclear about what programmatic decisions can be made during the process year, such as suspending admissions, before a final decision is voted upon by University Council in the spring. It was noted that, with graduate programs that are one or two years long, suspending admissions review can harm programs significantly. On the other hand, Dr. Howard reported that GAPP is also concerned about whether it is appropriate for admissions review to continue while a program is potentially going to be closed. She asked the Faculty Council to consider whether additional guidance needs to be written into the current policy.

A Council member thought that the decision to suspend admissions during the review process was unacceptable because the decision to close the Program has not been made. If there are no admitted students, then a program closes on its own. The same Council member said a program was closed in his College a number of years ago. All of the College faculty were involved in the discussion. Some elements of the program could be absorbed in other departments and those faculty were transferred to other units in the College. Dean Moore replied that such consideration is required as part of the discontinuation process. He said the skill sets of the Sargent faculty are very specialized. Also, in some programs, a proportion of the faculty must hold certain types of licensure or membership in professional associations, so such movements were not practical or possible. He also noted the need to make budget cuts and three or four personnel cuts have been made already. He said every college has had to respond to budget issues due to COVID. The Council member said the program in his College closed several years ago, not under financial pressure.

A Council member asked Dean Moore to discuss the reasons for suspending admissions review prior to the conclusion of the discontinuation process. Dean Moore said this action is prescribed by the discontinuation process in the Faculty Handbook. He agreed with GAPP that the Handbook process is not well-suited to this process, or for programs of short durations with non-tenured faculty holding modified professorial ranks. Chair O’Keefe asked for clarification from GAPP about the policy. It appeared that the policy requires current and prospective students to be informed that the program is under review for discontinuation. Dr. Howard said the policy clearly states that the College must have a management plan for the current students, but she did not interpret the Handbook to require admissions to be suspended. Chair O’Keefe quoted the Handbook:

*“Once the Proposal has been sent to the faculty of the School or College, potential applicants to the department or program must be informed that a Discontinuation Proposal has been made, and that admission to the department or program is closed pending the outcome of the review process. The time and manner of providing that information will vary and must be part of the Dean’s Proposal.”*

A Council member said he was very troubled by the presentations of Dr. Mace and GAPP about the apparent lack of consultation with faculty before the decision to initiate the discontinuation process was made. This could set a precedent to allow other programs to be closed in a similar way. Dean Moore said he was dismayed by GAPP’s motion to make no recommendation. He cited the budgetary pressures caused by the pandemic and the instruction from the Administration to make budget cuts this

fiscal year. The timeline and the financial situation could not allow for a lengthy deliberation. He also stated that the program was already at risk because it did not meet its enrollment targets and disagreed that the enrollment targets were arbitrary. The targets are used to balance the College budget. Dean Moore said conversations about the Program were conducted over several years and there was an attendant risk of raising the entry level for the degree to the post-baccalaureate level. He said elevated entry level programs have been discontinued before. Dean Moore said the consultation about this risk began when the decision to elevate the degree was made.

A Council member said when the discontinuation policy was adopted several years ago, the Faculty Council and University Council discussed the possibility that the announcement that a program was under review for closure could effectively end it, or make it difficult to continue. He suggested that the policy be reviewed again.

The same Council member asked if the Labor Statistics salary data for athletic training were based on the bachelor's degree or the master's degree. Dean Moore said it is unclear what the salary will be for the Master's degree as it is not required for national certification yet. Dr. Mace said there is some data, albeit limited, and varies in different parts of the country. The data suggest a higher starting salary with the Master's degree. With respect to return on investment, there are models other than the two-year post-baccalaureate option (i.e., three plus two). Other programs in Sargent are looking into accelerated degrees under a three plus two model.

A Council member asked what happens if the University Council rejects the proposal. Dean Moore said it is difficult to answer the question. It is unclear what happens to the program or the faculty. The Council member said it seemed the goal of closing the program has already been achieved without adequate consultation with faculty, or a meaningful vote in University Council.

A Council member asked Dr. Howard how GAPP evaluated the rationale for closing the program. She reported that GAPP discussed this after hearing Dean Moore's presentations. The Committee found the Dean's reasons for closure compelling, which was in contrast to the comments of the Sargent faculty about the lack of transparency in the process and that data that was presented. She said the Committee members thought that they do not have to agree with the rationale, but their role was to evaluate whether the rationale was sound. The Committee concluded that it was.

Chair O'Keefe thanked the guests for their presentations and the conversation. The guests left the meeting and the Faculty Council continued the discussion.

## II. Open Discussion

Chair O'Keefe said that the Council seems to agree that the discontinuation policy is unclear, particularly with respect to the consultation requirement. She said she will bring these concerns to the University Provost and asked if there are other issues the Council thinks she should raise now. A GAPP Committee member said that the Committee discussed at length that the procedures are not clear, but it is important that the Faculty Handbook is followed. The Committee was very concerned that Sargent College did not follow the procedure and it was unfair to the affected faculty.

A Council member reiterated the importance of consultation in the process. If a program can be terminated before the process is allowed to be followed, then there is no significant consultation. Another Council member said this process was unjust to the affected faculty and thought a clear message should be sent to that effect.

A Council member asked what the precedent is for program discontinuation and if admissions have been suspended before. He also asked what happens if this is not approved by University Council. Dr. Howard said this is the first program to undergo this type of review since this policy was added to the Faculty Handbook. Prior to then, some programs did continue to accept applications and if the program was closed, the application fee was refunded. While this is not a good outcome for applicants, at least it allows the review process to conclude. She said if the University Council vote does not pass, then there will have to be a conversation about what happens next. There is no precedent for this case.

A Council member said the reasons for closing the Program are still not clear. The affected faculty might be reluctant to express what they think might be the Dean's real reasons for closing the Program. He suggested a private conversation might be helpful. He also noted that Ph.D. admissions to the Editorial Institute were suspended a few years ago, upon the directive of the CAS Dean and the University Provost, with no review process. Admissions are still suspended. He endorsed earlier statements of caution about setting a bad precedent. The Faculty Council Director reminded the Council that the discontinuation policy only applies if a faculty member's employment is terminated as a result of the program closure. If suspending admissions or merging programs does not result in termination of employment for faculty, the policy is not triggered.

A Council member said the Faculty Council's role is to ensure that the Faculty Handbook procedures are followed properly. Based on the presentations, it was not. The decision for closing a program ultimately rests with the Dean, the Provost, and the President. The Faculty Council can point to the flaws of the process and where the procedure was not followed. A Council member said it is unsettling, particularly for non-tenured faculty, that this process can unfold in this manner and a program could be terminated by shutting down admission.

A Council member said the policy has been triggered because it will result in faculty losing their jobs and the suspension of admission cut the program before the process was followed. However, the program still has to be voted on at University Council before it is officially closed. He suggested that the faculty members of University Council need to think carefully about how they will vote on this issue, and it may be necessary to have a meeting before University Council to discuss a strategy.

### III. Chair's Report

Chair O'Keefe reported that the update from the Academic Freedom Committee, chaired by David Decosimo, had to be postponed to the January 19 meeting to ensure adequate time to discuss the closure of the Program. Chair O'Keefe asked the Committee to review policies from the School of Theater and the Playwright's Theater. The Committee has concluded that the policies breach the

University's Academic Freedom policy. The Chair has shared these concerns with the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and they will meet to discuss this further. The Faculty Council will receive a report from the Academic Freedom Committee Chair on January 19.

The Executive Committee met with Swathi Kiran and McKinsey consultants to discuss the implementation of the BU2030 Strategic Plan. The plan has undergone some revisions and the Executive Committee raised questions about digital learning, the expression "research that matters," and the future of global programs. Chair O'Keefe will invite the Strategic Planning group to a Faculty Council meeting in Spring 2021.

The Executive Committee is scheduled to meet on February 9, 2021, 3:30-5:00 p.m. Willis Wang and Gareth McFeely from the Office of Global Programs will attend to respond to faculty questions about recent closures of study abroad programs and impact on global initiatives related to BU2030 strategic plan. This meeting will be open to all Faculty Council members who want to join the discussion.

#### IV. New Business and Adjournment

A Council member reported that the website Chegg published an exam, with solutions, for a class he is teaching this semester. The exam was posted during the time window students had to take the exam. He and other colleagues have identified some of the students who uploaded the exam to Chegg, which violated the University's Code of Academic Conduct. This happened last spring and the "Chegg Cheating Scandal," was posted on Reddit. During the pandemic, there is no way to give in-class exams for large classes and online cheating has been a problem. The Daily Free Press intends to interview the Council member and an Associate Dean and publish a story about this. The Council member wants to encourage students not to cheat and make it clear that there are consequences to doing so.

Another Council member said this occurred in his department last spring as well and felt that the University did not send a strong enough message to discourage cheating. He said it would be useful if the University communicated with students about this before final exams begin this semester.

A Council member said his department has this problem as well and has a structured penalty system for first, second and third offenses. Another Council member said he was concerned that the penalties for cheating on exams are not especially severe.

Chair O'Keefe agreed that this is a concern among faculty. Schools and Colleges determine the procedures and penalties for cheating on exams. There is no University-wide process.

Chair O'Keefe thanked the Council for their care and thought to the discussion to discontinue the Program in Athletic Training. It is difficult to discuss the careers of colleagues and their possible loss of employment. She will bring the Council's concerns forward to the University Provost. She wished the Council the best for the holiday season.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Khosla

Director