



## Minutes of the Meeting May 7, 2019

The ninth regular meeting of the Boston University Faculty Council for the 2018-2019 Session was held on May 7, at 3:30 p.m. in the Kenmore Conference Room, 1 Silber Way, Room 916. Cataldo Leone, Chair of the Faculty Council, presided over the meeting.

Officers and Committee Chairs							
X	Leone, Cataldo	Chair	GSDM	X	O'Keefe, Eileen	Faculty Policies	SAR
X	Dixon, J. Robb	Past Chair	QST	X	Howard, Kimberly A.S.	Graduate Programs	WCEHD
X	O'Keefe, Eileen	Secretary-Treasurer	SAR			Media/Communication	COM
X	Hamilton, James	Academic Freedom	MED		Henderson, Andy	Research	MED
X	Hoecherl-Alden, Gisela	Awards	CAS	X	Hughes, Jeffrey	Student Policies	CAS
X	Williams, Mark T.	Compensation and Benefits	QST	X	Dixon, J. Robb	Sustainability	QST
X	Brady, Steve	Credentials and By-laws	MED	X	Kinraide, Rebecca	Teaching Resources	CAS
X	Cozier, Yvette	Equity and Inclusion	SPH	X	O'Brien Hallstein, D. Lynn	Undergraduate Programs	CGS
Representatives and Alternates							
	Abbott, Jodi (R)	MED			Furman, Jeff (R)	QST	X
	Abrams, Binjamin (R)	CAS			Gapotchenko, Maria (R)	CAS	
	Amato, Felice (R)	CFA			Garik Peter (A)	WCEHD	
X	Ampountolas, Apostolos (R)	SHA	X		Gavornik, Jeffrey (R)	CAS	X
X	Andres, Andy (R)	CGS			Gopalan, Srikanth (R)	ENG	
X	Austin, Judy (A)	COM	X		Griffin, Sue (R)	CAS	X
	Beaton, Jamie (A)	CELOP			Hopper, Clay (A)	CFA	
	Bor, Jacob (R)	SPH	X		Huckle, Nicholas (R)	CAS	
	Brandwine, Joel (R)	CFA			Jafarzadeh, S. Reza (R)	MED	X
	Breehan, James (A)	CFA					
	Byttebier, Stephanie (A)	CGS			Kealy, Sean (R)	LAW	X
X	Chang, Charles (R)	CAS	X		Kirby Jones, Alison (A)	QST	X
X	Chogle, Sami (R)	GSDM			Klinger, Julie (R)	Pardee	X
	Choi, Hee An (A)	GSDM	X		Liu, Ching-Ti (A)	SPH	
	D'Amato, Laura (A)	LAW			Liu, Chunyu (R)	SPH	X
	Dashoush, Nermeen (A)	WCEHD	X		Lopez, Luz (A)	SSW	X
	Davies-Heerema, Theresa (R)	MED			Lynch, Shawn (A)	CGS	
X	Decosimo, David (R)	STH			Masters, Joellen (R)	CGS	X
	DeNatale, Doug (A)	MET			McLaughlin, Donna (R)	SSW	
	Dibart, Serge (A)	GSDM	X		Miller, Margo (R)	CELOP	X
	Doherty, Mary-Jane (R)	COM	X		Mochida, Yoshiyuki (A)	GSDM	X
X	El Hachem, Lea (R)	GSDM			Mody, Makarand (A)	SHA	
X	Ellenwood, Stephan (R)	WCEHD			Mulvihill, Maggie (A)	COM	
	Errante, Margaret (A)	GSDM			Myers, Samantha (R)	CAS	X
X	Feng, Hui (R)	MED			Nentwich, Lauren (R)	MED	
	Fernandez-Val, Ivan (R)	CAS					

## **I. Secretary's Report: Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes of the April 2, 2019 Faculty Council meeting were approved.

## **II. Chair's Report**

Chair Leone announced the outcome of the Spring 2019 Faculty Council Officers election.

The Faculty Assembly elected Eileen O'Keefe as Vice Chair and Gisela Hoecherl-Alden as Secretary-Treasurer. Dr. O'Keefe will assume the office of Faculty Council Chair on June 1, 2020.

Chair Leone requested that the voting members of the Faculty Council vote on proposed changes to the Constitution of the Faculty Assembly/Faculty Council via electronic ballot. The first draft was presented to the Council at the January 15, 2019 meeting and discussed at Executive Committee as well. Council members sent editorial corrections to the Credentials and By-laws Committee, but the Committee received no substantial changes or objections to the draft. The Council members agreed to vote to approve the changes via electronic ballot. Chair Leone said the proposed changes will be presented to the Faculty Assembly for a vote during the 2019-2020 academic year. The changes do not take effect until approved by the Faculty Assembly and the Board of Trustees.

Chair Leone informed the Council that J. Robb Dixon and Andy Andres will serve on the Student Information Systems Committee. He reminded the Council that Associate Provost and Dean of Students Kenn Elmore invited the Council to his house on May 15 to view the plans for the Thurman Center.

## **III. VOTE: Committee Chairs**

The Nominating Committee put forth the following candidates for Committee Chairs:

Academic Freedom	David Decosimo
Credentials & By-laws	Steve Brady
Teaching Resources	Andy Andres

Chair Leone called for nominations from the floor. Yvette Cozier nominated Fadie T. Coleman as Chair of the Research Committee. Steve Brady seconded the nomination.

There being a quorum, the Faculty Council voted unanimously for the four candidates. They will serve a two-year term. Chair Leone thanked the Nominating Committee for their work.

## **IV. Discussion: Task Force to Envision Data Science Report**

**a. Guest: President Robert A. Brown**

President Robert A. Brown joined the meeting to discuss the recommendations of the Task Force to Envision Data Science. The report was published prior to the meeting and the link was sent to the Council members.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Brown asked for the Council's input on the report. The Task Force recommends the creation of a Data Science Center as an independent academic unit. The unit will have two categories of faculty: full-time faculty whose primary affiliation is the Data Science Center and will report to the University Provost; and part-time faculty with a primary appointment within an existing school or college. Dr. Brown posed questions about faculty hiring, how to organize graduate and undergraduate education in data science, and how to gather our research strengths to receive research funding.

A general discussion followed. The Council members were concerned for faculty who will report to two bodies: their school or college and the data science center and agreed that there will need to be a review structure in place for these faculty. A Council member noted the potential for the arts to be involved with the data science center as well; there is work and research about the visualization of data that could have a co-home within the data science center. Council members said there is a demand for data science education in many disciplines, beyond the STEM disciplines.

Council members asked how requests will be generated for joint appointments with the existing colleges. Dr. Brown said the College will reach out to the University Provost for fifty-percent (50%) appointments with Data Science. The past difficulties with the department of neuroscience were mentioned, but neuroscience had no independent faculty slots. The Data Science Center will have independent slots and it will grant degrees. This will require approval of the Board of Trustees.

A Council member discussed a similar venture at another institution where all of the faculty appointments were joint appointments because faculty tend to hire people from like disciplines. He asked whether the Administration can encourage faculty hires that are interdisciplinary. Dr. Brown answered that as the Data Science Center will be centrally funded, they will only fund the faculty hires that fit the needs for the Center. Newer graduates seek interdisciplinary appointments and fewer are trained in a single discipline.

A Council member asked how this plan compares to our peer institutions. Dr. Brown said that the Data Science Center as it is conceived is not what donors are generally looking to fund. They tend to fund schools/colleges and traditional centers.

A Council member asked how the Data Science Center and its faculty will be integrated with the existing governance structure. Dr. Brown said that has yet to be determined.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bu.edu/provost/files/restricted/entire-bu-community/Taskforce-to-Envision-Data-Science-at-Boston-University-report-FINAL.pdf>

Dr. Brown said that the leadership for the Data Science Center will be important; they need someone with a reputation for bringing faculty together. It could very well be an internal hire, but a national search will be conducted.

Dr. Brown thanked the Council for the discussion.

## **V. Discussion: Task Force on Evaluating Teaching**

### **a. Guest: Gillian Pierce, Assistant Provost for Academic Assessment**

Gillian Pierce joined the meeting. Rebecca Kinraide, Chair of the Teaching Resources Committee and a member of the Task Force, joined Dr. Pierce to introduce the Task Force's report.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Pierce and Dr. Kinraide informed the Council that the feedback portal is still open and encouraged them to send their responses to the report. They provided an executive summary of the substantial report. The Task Force recommends that the University adopt a university-wide online student feedback survey that includes a set of core questions with quantitative and qualitative elements. The online system should include customizable questions to allow Schools and Colleges discretion to collect information unique to a discipline. The Task Force also recommends mid-term course surveys, available to the teaching faculty only, and recommends that the survey results be disclosed to the students. The Task Force made other recommendations, available in the report.

A general discussion followed. One Council member said that when their school started to use online surveys instead of paper the response rate dropped. Another Council member said that their school does not release grades unless the student completes the evaluation. A Council member asked whether there is an established correlation between student evaluation and teaching outcomes. Dr. Pierce said that evaluations measure student satisfaction more than outcomes, but the evaluation has the potential to improve teaching, particularly if faculty adopt mid-term reviews.

A Council member asked why the survey results should be published for the students. The same Council member was concerned that this would encourage students to take a consumer-based view of their courses. Another Council member said that the students used to publish their own evaluations of classes that was quite popular and thought that the students should get to see how their peers evaluate a course. Another Council member said that sites such as Rate My Professor already do this and the standard of review is questionable.

A Council member asked whether the students have been asked what information they would like to know about their courses. Dr. Pierce said they will consider this. Another Council member said that the students should be asked to evaluate a course a year or so after they take it because students don't know when a class ends how useful it will be for their future courses.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bu.edu/provost/files/2019/02/Report-of-the-Task-Force-on-Evaluating-Teaching.pdf>

**VI. New business and adjournment**

There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen O'Keefe

Secretary-treasurer