

Boston University Faculty Council

Minutes of the Meeting

November 2, 2016

The third regular meeting of the Boston University Faculty Council for the 2016-2017 Session was held on November 2, 2016, at 3:30 p.m. on the Charles River Campus, 595 Commonwealth Avenue, Room 410. J. Robb Dixon, Chair of the Faculty Council, presided over the meeting. The following members attended:

Representatives and Alternates

Charilaos Asikis (GSDM), Alt.

Kazam Azadzoi (MED), R.

Rebecca Bourgault (CFA), Alt.

Joel Brandwine (CFA), R.

Charles Chang (CAS), R.

Roberta Clarke (Questrom), R.

Shea Cronin (MET), R.

Sharon Daniels (CFA), R.

Cristian De La Rosa (STH), R.

Serge Dibart (GSDM), Alt.

Stephan Ellenwood (SED), R.

A. Rani Elwy (SPH), R.

Rich Feely (SPH), R.

Ivan Fernandez-Val (CAS), R.

Srikanth Gopalan (ENG), R.

Liah Greenfeld (CAS), R.

Virginia Greiman (MET), Alt.

Hyeouk Chris Hahm (SSW), R.

Gisela Hoecherl-Alden (CAS), R.

Mark Horenstein (ENG), R.

Rebecca Kinraide (CAS), R.

Alison Kirby Jones (Questrom), R.

Cataldo Leone (GSDM), R.

Ching-Ti Liu (SPH), Alt.

Jennifer Luebke (MED), R.

Donna McLaughlin (SSW), Alt.

Karen Metheny (MET), Alt.

Eileen O'Keefe (SAR), R.

Carole Palumbo (MED), R.

Toni Pepe (CFA), Alt.

Kelly Pesanelli (SAR), Alt.

Safoura Rafazeideh (COM), R.

Marnie Reed (SED), R.

Steven Roberts (GDSM), R.

Kamal Sen (ENG), Alt.

Donald Smith (Questrom), R.

Anne Sullivan-Soydan (SAR), R.

Kathryn Webster (SAR), Alt.

Committee Chairs

John Carroll, Media and Communication

Yvette Cozier, Equity and Inclusion

Kathe Darr, Awards

James Hamilton, Research

D. Lynn O'Brien Hallstein, Undergraduate Programs

Robert Volk, Credentials and By-laws

Officers

J. Robb Dixon, Chair

Member without a vote

Margo Miller, R. (CELOP)

Guest

Robert Brown, President

I. Secretary's Report: Approval of the Minutes

There being a quorum, the minutes of the October 5, 2016 meeting were approved without objection.

II. Guest: President Robert Brown

President Robert Brown joined the meeting and responded to the Faculty Council's questions that he received prior to the meeting.

The Faculty Council asked if the Administration will study the impact of the new health insurance on lower income faculty members with high medical need. President Brown said that they will study the plan in the aggregate at the end of this academic year. We don't yet have enough data to draw a meaningful conclusion. He said he is more concerned about the impact on staff than faculty. He anticipates that health care usage will change, but with 6%-10% growth in health care costs, the University cannot absorb all of the cost.

The Faculty Council renewed its concerns about the review and promotion standards for non-tenure track ("NTT") faculty. Since Steve Brady sent a memo to the President and Provost during his tenure as Chair of the Faculty Council, the full-time lecturers have unionized. President Brown said that now the NTT faculty are divided into separate categories: lecturer rank, modified professorial rank, and non-modified professorial rank. With respect to non-modified professorial ranks, those faculty are mainly in the Medical School, but there are a few on the Charles River Campus. Those ranks are being phased out. The lecturers are under a

collective bargaining agreement (“CBA”) and their process of review and promotion will have to be negotiated by their union. Chair Dixon noted that the lecturers in the professional schools are not under the CBA. President Brown said that the Administration is not making that distinction at present.

With respect to modified professorial ranks, President Brown said that the individual schools and colleges should each have its own set of requirements for promotion. Those requirements could be approved by the Provost, or harmonized through some University-level review by a faculty body, not the UAPT. At present, there is no University-level committee to do this. President Brown asked the Council what they think the process for handling review and promotion for modified professorial ranks should be and when do they think that the process represents the constituency well. He also asked if faculty are holding back from going up for promotion. A discussion followed. A Council member said that the concern is not about how an individual’s case will be treated, but about the processes in each school and college. Are those processes clear and do the faculty understand them? Is the avenue for promotion open, or is it limited?

President Brown said that there is no probationary period for modified professorial titles. There should be a discussion about the standard for the length of appointment, the re-appointment process, and the standards for promotion. The MED campus does not have tenure, but promotions come up through a committee similar to the UAPT, and are forwarded to the MED Provost and then to President Brown. The ranks would benefit from having a promotion process that is above the school/college level, but there will always be a University standard for those promotions and not all cases will be successful.

Chair Dixon said that retention is another issue for modified professorial titles. There is no uniform retention policy and the practice varies among departments. President Brown said he is interested in a uniform contract policy for all persons at each rank who aren’t tenured, but contracts should differ depending on rank. The reassessment process should govern if faculty on contracts are renewed.

President Brown asked if faculty with modified titles would feel better served if there were a university-wide committee, something like the UAPT. At the start of his tenure as president, the schools and colleges weren’t doing a rigorous enough job assessing non-tenure track faculty for promotion. The process needs to be rigorous on the departmental and decanal level, if their recommendations are to be accepted on the provostial level more often than not.

President Brown discussed the plan to upgrade the Student Information System (“SIS”). The project is at the early stage and it will take approximately five years to do. SIS will not be

replaced by a purchased product, like SAP. SIS performs too many functions (billing, recruiting, scheduling, Blackboard) and has too many classes of users (faculty, staff, students), to be replaced by a retail product. Key administrators are working on a requirements document, under the leadership of Tracy Schroeder, Vice President of Information Services & Technology, and Chirstine McGuire, Vice President ad interim of Enrollment and Student Affairs. The student recruitment module is the first upgrade on the schedule; this affects undergraduate recruitment only.

A Council member asked why SIS is being upgraded. President Brown said that SIS is antiquated and it does not work well on mobile devices. SIS runs on an IBM mainframe and it is coded in a language that is not used anymore.

President Brown discussed the search for an Associate Provost of Equity and Diversity. He anticipates that the search will take six to nine months. This is a competitive field because many large institutions are hiring for this position right now. Each school/college should have its own corresponding diversity officer. In the large colleges, the officer might be an associate dean. He expects that the schools and colleges each need to develop a diversity plan, but it might be better to wait until the Associate Provost is hired.

President Brown responded to a question about metrics and rankings. He said that the model for a research university is to give a faculty member the freedom to develop their career and their reputation and build their dossier. When it is time to review the faculty member for promotion, the administration relies on peer review to assess the quality of the faculty member's research. Either the faculty member can get letters from experts in their field, or they can't. President Brown said he will not push back on attempts to measure quality or impact in higher education. The political climate will not tolerate such a push back, and he does not support such a push back, either.

President Brown discussed rising tuition costs. Nationally, tuition will continue to climb. The best measure of the quality of an institution is still student to faculty ratio. On the Charles River Campus, the student to faculty ratio is 12:1. On the Medical Campus, it is 2:1. Tuition and fees account for approximately seventy percent (70%) of the University's revenue.

President Brown informed the Council that the Administration will reconsider changes in retirement plans and recommence discussion in spring 2017. Changes will not be implemented until January 2018.

President Brown raised a question to the Council about faculty ranks. The University has a diverse set of ranks and asked if the ranks bring in all of the expertise we need. There is an academic rank that is growing at peer institutions: Professor of Teaching. For this rank, teaching

is at the base and pedagogical innovation or national leadership among teachers in the particular field brings distinction to the rank. President Brown said that if we are going to expect pedagogical innovation, then there has to be a rank that awards that work and makes it a viable career path.

A general discussion followed. A Council member asked if this would be a tenure-track or non-tenure track rank and would this rank be included in the governance structure. President Brown said it would be a non-tenure track rank, with guaranteed contracts and reappointment and those faculty would be included in the governance structure. A Council member asked what the balance would be between classwork and innovation and would these faculty teach a 4/4 load. President Brown said the balance would be similar to the duties of the research professorial ranks and the rank would not require a 4/4 load. A Council member said that faculty hired into this rank cannot be permitted to stay in that rank for a long time, or else it would be unfair to the faculty who hold lecturer ranks. The same member said that she thought this rank would benefit her college and her colleagues. President Brown said that the service requirement would have to be carved out in a different way, so that these faculty would serve as a resource for their peers teaching in the same field.

III. VOTE: CFA and SSW Dean Search Advisory Committee Members

The University Provost issued a call to form a Dean Search Advisory Committee for the College of Fine Arts and the School of Social Work. The Faculty Assembly received a call for nominations for both committees.

There being a quorum, the Faculty Council elected John Bernstein (COM) and Steve Brady (MED) to serve on the Dean Search Advisory Committee for the College of Fine Arts; and Harold Cox (SPH) and Martha Thomson (GRS) for the Dean Search Advisory Committee for the School of Social Work.

IV. Chair's Report

Chair Dixon announced that Faculty Assembly will convene on November 7. University Provost Jean Morrison will report on the diversity initiative. He asked the Council members to encourage colleagues to attend. The Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing met on November 1. As part of its recommendations about fossil fuel divestment, the University has formed a Climate Action Plan Committee. Jennifer Luebke (MED representative, Faculty Council) serves on that committee.

V. New business and adjournment.

Rebecca Kinraide (CAS representative) raised an item for new business. There is a website called Course Hero. Course Hero purports to offer study aids for classes based on the school, department and subject. It looks to be a cheating website. Students can upload syllabi and papers. The CAS Writing Program has discovered that over 8,000 documents from its courses are on the site. Joseph Bizup, CAS Associate Dean, is looking into this matter. Rep. Kinraide suggested that the Council members look at the site and see if their course materials are posted. Chair Dixon said that this merits additional investigation and said he would speak with the General Counsel.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Janelle Heineke

Secretary-treasurer