BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

FACULTY SENATE

Meeting of the 2013-14 Faculty Senate

This meeting was held May 14th, 2014 from 12:00-2:00 in the Faculty Club.


Approval of the minutes of April 3rd, 2014

The minutes of April 3rd, 2014 were approved by the Senate.

Findings on Executive Compensation

Several documents created and/or requested by the Faculty Senate regarding executive compensation will be posted on the Faculty Senate Google Site as soon as they are checked for accuracy (Unet password required.):

1) Faculty Recommendations on executive compensation as sent from the Senate to the Board of Trustees

2) Letter to Perry Traquina following his report to the faculty

3) Charge from the Senate to the UBC for a contextualized annual review of executive compensation to follow the report from the Board Chair.

4) A detailed narrative outlining the history of this matter with relevant numbers.

Once again, it was proposed that the faculty and staff need to be “made whole” from the loss of University contributions to their 403(b) accounts. It was also mentioned that the University policy forcing plan participants to forgo six-months of contributions when borrowing from their accounts is significantly more draconian than at other institutions and should be changed.

Xerox/Canon Issue

There are currently ten members of the postal department at Brandeis employed by Canon. Several of these workers predated the outsourcing of postal services to Canon and were, originally, Brandeis employees. With the new contract the University recently signed with Xerox, that number will be reduced to five. Xerox
will change these five positions from full-time to part-time, with no benefits and only will pay $10.50/hour. This practice is of significant concern to many faculty members.

The Senate Council, augmented by Susan Lanser and Sabine Vonmering, met with Steve Manos on May 2nd to address the faculty concerns about fair labor practices and a living wage. The committee was told that the contract would be signed. The option of not moving forward off the table, discussion emphasized the importance of considering the well-being of each community member at Brandeis, especially when making tough business decisions. The committee asked that Mr. Manos regularly consult the VP of Communications and develop practices that will better inform the community.

As the postal workers are employed by Canon, a subcontractor, no thought was given to their fate. The committee insisted that subcontractors or not, it is the humane thing to talk to people and to seek to help with their transitions. Further, committee members made the case that there are several actions that could have been taken with a minimum of difficulty and little to no expense. Mr. Manos was asked to work with HR to look into internal positions at Brandeis that might be open and appropriate for the fired workers. He was also asked to provide job counseling. He did agree to investigate these services and subsequently we were told that they were provided.

A second meeting was held on May 12th with Steve Manos, Steve Goldstein, and for the beginning and end of the meeting, President Lawrence in attendance. This discussion recounted each case in the past two years in which “restructuring” was carried out without consultation and with poor communication plans.

In prior meetings, Mr. Manos has been advised repeatedly by staff and faculty alike that Brandeis functions with a model of “shared governance”. He has stated clearly that he is not use to this model and does not believe in it. President Lawrence has been a supporter of shared governance, even instituting the “Strong Provost” model advised by the committee that he appointed to study the issue prior to the hiring of Steve Goldstein.

The evidence is that both the change to pension practices (TIAA-CREF controversy) and the staff buyout plan would have progressed more successfully with attention to consultation and communications. Further, the “Strong Provost” model and shared governance cannot function without true consultation and regular communication between faculty and all arms of the administration.

The meeting ended with an agreed upon series of measures:

1. **A subcommittee of the Senate on Operations** will be established. This subcommittee will be in regular contact with Steve Manos’s office, and will be apprised of all initiatives as they develop. The chair of the subcommittee will be appointed a member of the UAC.
2. A philosophy statement on employment practices with a view toward the Brandeis core value of social justice will be developed. This statement will be similar to that recently adopted by the Trustees on executive compensation.

**Steve Manos/ Follett Meeting regarding the bookstore**

Susan Lanser, Cindy Thomas and Daniel Bergstresser met with Steve Manos to discuss the change of the University Bookstore and its new management by Follett. All agreed that while many of the recent decisions have been mostly financial, that there needs to be more consultation and better communication about these changes. Some directly affect faculty, while others affect the wider community and need the faculty voice in these matters.

**Election of Senate Chair and Council**

New chair Thomas Pochapsky was elected. Senate Council will be Liuba Shrira (continuing,) Sarah Mead and Jeffrey Prottas.

**The meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.**