BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

FACULTY SENATE

Meeting of the 2014-15 Faculty Senate

This meeting was held October 7th, 2014 from 2:00 – 4:00 in Shapiro Student Center 313.

Present: Sarita Bhalotra, Daniel Bergstresser, Joe Cunningham, William Flesch, Matthew Headrick, Jens Hilscher, Eli Hirsch, Sarah Mead, Thomas Pochapsky, Jeff Prottas, Liuba Shrira, Joseph Wardwell

Absent: Aliyyah Abdur-Rahman, Ulka Anjaria, Susan Parrish, Ellen Schattschneider, Laurence Simon

Approval of Minutes
It was agreed the approval of last meeting’s minutes would be determined by email. See addendum.

Introductions, Updates on a few issues from last meeting

At the end of last year, after concerns with changes in the mail room and bookstore, an operations committee was proposed that would meet with Steve Manos on a regular basis. This was then amended to having the Senate Council meet with Steve regularly. The Council now meets with the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the President, the Provost, and now Steve Manos once or twice a month. The first meeting with him was to take place the next day (October 8, 2014).

Ljuba will take over as head of committee formed to address what changes may be made to potentially conform our tenure committee to the standards of our peer institutions. To that end, the tenure committee is currently an ad hoc format, and we are one of the last universities of our peer group to use this format; a change to a standing committee is being addressed.

Sexual Violence Report and Title IX Training

Bernadette Brooten joined via BlueJean from Jerusalem; Kim Godsoe joined in person.

The Senate had many question for Bernadette regarding specifics with the sexual violence report (Report of University Advisory Committee Subcommittee on Sexual Violence, June 2014), and for Kim regarding the upcoming online Title IX Training. [Note: To see the results of the vote to endorse this report, see Addendum.]
The student code has been changed since the report was made; there are still changes Bernadette would like to see, but she acknowledges changes like defining what sexual infractions are, outlining ranges of sanctions, and creating a survivor’s bill of rights were good steps forward.

In particular, regarding non-contact orders, Bernadette recommends taking this out of the realm of the Dean of Students and into the purview of Public Safety, given proper training.

A large concern of both Bernadette and the Senate was the clarity of University policies, and the accessibility of these written policies for the campus community. Currently they contradict each other and are buried in the HR website.

Given the confusion in policies, there was expressed concern that the online Title IX training match the University Code of Conduct; Kim believes they do line up.

While Bernadette and the Senate have remaining issues with the online Title IX training, it was agreed Senate members should encourage their constituencies to complete training.

Bernadette further suggested the Senate get involved with advocating for excellent training faculty in particular, as Senate members would know what sorts of questions faculty members might have.

Bernadette suggests hiring someone internal to the University with legal or law enforcement expertise to act as expert investigator, especially for those cases in which there is a complaint but the student does not wish to file a grievance.

Bernadette further cautions that the University needs to insure cultural competency as a part of all policies, with an eye to differing needs for students of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds. The intersections of gender and race when applied to sexual violence are critical to keep in mind while creating and updating policies.

**Dean appointment in IBS**

Bruce Magid joined the meeting for this section only, for approximately 10 minutes.

Issues surrounding the title of the new appointment were addressed. While it was pointed out that IBS, as a professional school, may not be able to have the same nomenclature mapped on to it, it was also encouraged that any IBS appointments still fall within the guidelines as set out by the faculty handbook.

Ultimately, the decision to make this position an Assistant Dean versus an Associate Dean falls to incoming Provost, Lisa Lynch. If the position is to be an Associate Dean, then the guidelines as set by the handbook must be followed. If it is an Assistant Dean’s position, then that should be made transparent. If Lisa does not want the position as created, Bruce offered to work out an alternative solution.
**Block system issues**

The issue of students getting double booked between classes and events/review sessions was brought up. Those professors with classes during night blocks – particularly art, theatre and music – often lose students to other conflicts. It was pointed out that students should not be left to mediate these issues themselves. Some suggestions included the potential for the University to have more reading days at the end of the semester, particularly in light of the number our peer institutions have; and scheduling an additional study block as part of classes that each department would share.

Senate members will speak with their respective departments and consider solutions that might work best for each.

**The meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.**

**Addendum**

Three votes were cast via email.

For the first, concerning the appointment of Marty Krauss as interim Dean of the Heller School, with the understanding that a search for permanent Dean following Handbook procedures will be undertaken as early as is convenient: The vote was 13 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention with 3 votes absent.

For the second, concerning the decision to endorse the sub-committee report on sexual violence recently presented to the Task Force, Senate and UAC: The vote was 14 yeas, 0 nays, with 3 votes absent. This endorsement is made with the understanding that the General Counsel has not accepted the proposal that one faculty member be involved in deciding when the University should investigate a case against the express wishes of the complainant.

For the third, concerning the acceptance of the minutes from the previous Senate meeting (5.14.2014), 3 changes of attendance were proposed, and the minutes were accepted by the Senate via email 10.22.2014.