BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

Meeting of the 2010-11 Faculty Senate

The meeting was held on November 11th, 2010 from 3:00pm-5:00pm in Heller G53.

Present: Bishop, Burt, Flesch, Garnick, Hall, Herzfeld, Hickey, Lichtman, Morrison, Nandakumar, Parmentier, Ratner, von Mering
Absent: Dibble, Meyer, Molinsky, Nelson, Rosenberg

Workload Discussion (Continued from Previous Senate Meeting)
The Senate Council will be meeting with Dean Jaffe next week. On the agenda will be a continuing conversation of the Senate response to the report of the Workload Committee. One possibility suggested was to have the Dean pursue more constructive and proactive measures with faculty who fall into the under-producing category as defined by this report. One suggestion was to encourage Department Chairs to take a more active role in reviewing and critiquing tenured faculty, which would include suggesting research and publishing opportunities as well as course suggestions, and that a Best Practices for Chairs would be useful. The idea of Department Chairs attending conferences to hone these management skills was mentioned, such as through the Tufts Academic Leadership Program. Another suggestion was for team teaching opportunities to replace research responsibilities, possibly pairing these tenured faculty with junior faculty, even across departments. Many members of the Senate felt that these options were preferable to the penalty option presented in the Workload Report.

However, the concern was raised that this still does not address the issue of overworked faculty during a time when Brandeis is accepting a larger number of students with reduced faculty. One compromise that was suggested was to allow faculty who are not actively participating in research or publishing to voluntarily trade those obligations for additional teaching or administrative responsibilities.

Block Schedule Discussion (Continued from Previous Senate Meeting)
The concerns were raised again about the plan for classes to start on the hour. Many concerns related to commuter schedules and the ability for those with family commitments to begin a class on the hour, particular for the 9:00am block. A suggestion was made that faculty with early morning responsibilities should make those conflicts known to the chair of the department, so that accommodations could be made. However, many felt that could be an unfair and unreasonable request to make, especially in departments that have a policy of rotating blocks amongst the faculty.

Approval of Senate Minutes from October 21, 2010
The October 21st Minutes were approved and will be posted on both the Faculty Senate Main Site and Google Site.
Lawrence Meeting/Gathering
The Faculty Senate will be hosting a dinner for the Lawrences. Time and Place will be set later.

Inviting the Provost to the Meetings
The idea was brought to the Senate of scheduling the Provost to meet with the Senate at every meeting for the first half hour, beginning Spring 2011. Many felt this was unnecessary, since the Senate Council holds monthly meetings with the Provost, especially given that the Senate Council is charged with speaking for the entire Senate. In addition, some members felt that thirty minutes from the two-hour meeting was too much to lose, especially without a clear agenda that might require the attention of the Provost. The suggestion was made that the invitation to the Provost should be considered by individual meeting should the need arise.

Provost Search
The ASAC has determined that there will be a national search, utilizing a search firm, to consider both internal and external candidates for the Provost and Senior Vice President for Enrollment. Both searches will be concluded by end of spring semester, allowing the summer months to be utilized for planning and placement. The Senate reviewed the list of questions developed by the committee for the search and the answers given by Fred Lawrence. These questions and answers are available on the Faculty Senate Google Site, under Provost Search, located here: https://sites.google.com/a/brandeis.edu/faculty-senate/home?AuthEventSource=SSO (Brandeis Unet and Password Required.) It is possible that the search firm utilized for the Presidential Search will be brought back on for these searches as well. The searches will be staggered, with the Provost search beginning first, to allow the new Provost to participate in the search for the new SVP as well as the new Dean of Arts and Sciences. Some concerns were raised that by using the same firm it might appear that the national search is a pro forma search, rather than a true desire to attract external candidates, given the restrictive timeline. However, the benefits of using the firm would be great, considering they have already worked with Brandeis and know the needs and desires of the institution. It was emphasized that this should be a true national search with an emphasis on diversity.

The Senate discussed both the possibility of polling the faculty for nominations as well as utilizing the Faculty Advisory Committee to the Presidential Search for the search process. The benefit in utilizing the same committee that served to assist in the Presidential search was that these candidates had already been chosen through the nomination process. However, it was decided that it was best to reopen nominations to allow for new candidates who might have an interest in this search. This suggestion will be made to Fred Lawrence at a meeting with the Senate Council on November 15th. In addition, the Senate will make the suggestion, through the council, that the Provost Search Committee be chaired by a faculty member with six additional faculty serving on the committee. The Senate would like to acquire these nominations from the faculty and then have a discussion with President-elect Lawrence about the composition of the committee, keeping various interests in mind.
The Senate will begin soliciting nominations after receiving approval from President-elect Lawrence. The members will then rank order the nominations online.

**HR Policy Report**

William Flesch presented on the report from task force created last year by the Senate to examine all documents at Brandeis related to academic freedom. This report serves to protect a version of academic freedom that the AAUP supports, and that it appears the faculty handbook and CFRR support also. This would guarantee faculty at Brandeis the same academic freedom in the classroom and all teaching activities as equivalent, by contract, to that guaranteed to faculty at public universities by statutes and law.

The committee would suggest putting language into the handbook and other contractual documents that guarantees this freedom. Flesch stressed that there are rational limits to what faculty can do in classrooms and that these changes would not allow for the same freedom as might exist in a public venue. The task at hand would be to harmonize the documents that students, staff and faculty receive that serve as guidelines for their rights as members of the Brandeis Community. These would be the HR Policy on Harassment, the Faculty Handbook and the University Bulletin. Identical language should be placed in all documents so that the issue is clearly covered for all constituencies.

The report also outlines ways to encourage a conflict resolution process when events occur in a classroom that might be soluble, even if the issue falls under academic freedom. This would enable chairs, deans, faculty and students to have discussions regarding an issue without these conversations having a perceived coercive quality. It was suggested that these guidelines and steps for resolution be available for all parties, possibly on a website, and that all members of the Brandeis Community be made aware of their location. This would also give students a clearer path for complaints, etc., but does not extend their rights past what is allowed at public universities.

There was a reminder that the Faculty Senate does not currently support the HR policy on harassment, and therefore these changes need to occur as soon as possible. The Senate will continue to review the policy and plan to present the report to the President early in the spring for approval. A draft will be shown to President-elect Lawrence. The report will then be revisited at the January Senate meeting for a final vote of approval from the Senate, where it will then go to the President for official approval. Approval by the Faculty body at the February faculty meeting would enable the language to be placed in the University Bulletin and HR Policy, but the Handbook Committee, as established by the Senate, will be charged with reviewing the policy and making any necessary changes to the faculty Handbook. Currently, the Senate has not formed a Handbook Committee for the 2010-11 year. This will be revisited at the January meeting.

**Setting Faculty Senate Agenda for Spring**

Agenda for next spring will include:

- Provost search, VPSE search, DAS search
• Centers and Institutes
• Workload (Council meets with DAS next Wed)
• Administrative Policies (e.g. faculty absence)
• Harassment Committee
• Academic Priorities Committee proposal
• Day and Time of University Faculty Meetings Next Year

The meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.