Meeting of the 2013-14 Faculty Senate

This meeting was held on November 01, 2013 from 12:00-2:00 in the Shapiro Student Center Room 313.


Absent: Ellen Schattschneider

Guests: Steve Manos

Approval of Minutes of November 1st, 2013

The minutes of the November 1st Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

Subcommittee and Liaison Reports

- Thomas Pochapsky updated the Senate on the work of the OLAC committee. Two Brandeis courses have been placed on 2U. Five on-line summer school courses were mounted this year through the Rabb School. Grade distributions and informal feedback from the (mostly Brandeis undergraduate) students who took these courses suggest a disconnect between student expectations (that the courses would be easier on-line than face-to-face) and the reality that on-line learning can be at least as rigorous as the live classroom. This is different from the cumulative experience of GPS professors in the Rabb School, who have significant experience with on-line courses offered at the graduate and professional levels. In general, students in these classes are quite motivated (and are usually paying for the courses themselves or with employer subsidies). While the Summer School courses provide only a small sample, the results are cautionary, and faculty who are considering mounting on-line courses are encouraged to contact OLAC (http://www.brandeis.edu/provost/committees/adhoc/online_learning_cmt_e.html) early in the process for help in course design. There has been a discussion of the total number of courses that students would be allowed to take online for credit. We are currently allowing twenty Brandeis students to enroll in 2U courses. These do not have to be Brandeis offerings.

- There was a meeting at Heller school on the role of faculty in reporting sexual harassment or sexual violence. The discussion is still centered on whether or not Brandeis should require mandated reporting. It was suggested that there
might be an educational component necessary to make clear the ramifications of mandated reporting. In addition, the question arose as to who would be mandated to report. Is this just faculty and, if so, would the definition of faculty extended to graduate TF’s, adjunct faculty, etc.? The Senate also discussed the confusion that currently exists regarding who should be filing a grievance when a student reports to the faculty member. Is this the duty of the faculty member whom the student has reported the incident to, or is the onus on the student to file the grievance on his/her own behalf? The Senate discussed that the advice from legal council is that Brandeis should have mandated reporting. Therefore, it seems that the most important action to be taken by the Senate would be to create an action plan, possibly working with Linda Shinomoto in HR, to begin clarifying the process of reporting and providing training for the faculty in the process of reporting.

- Elif Sisli Ciamarra reported the subcommittee exploring the results of the Test Optional policy has been told that no students have been admitted, as of yet, under this program. The cap for test optional admittance is 10%. It has been suggested that the committee work with Andrew Flagel and the Admissions Committee to get reports and information as admission for the following year moves forward.

**Presentation by Steve Manos on University Financial Status and Plans**

Steve Manos presented information to the Faculty Senate regarding the Brandeis’ current estimate budget deficit and draw on the endowment for the current fiscal year, as well as plan to reduce the deficit over the next two to three years. The same info was presented at this month’s Board of Trustees meeting.

**Discussion of Jehuda Reinharz’s Compensation**

The Faculty Senate discussed the recent Boston Globe article and details of former President Jehuda Reinharz’s compensation package. The Senate was apprised that the procedure for granting such compensation has changed and that the Board has engaged an outside advisor that is independent of Brandeis to review executive compensation, so that it is competitive and appropriate.

The focus of the Senate discussion was on how best to address faculty concerns in this matter. The members of the Senate do plan to reach out to both the trustees and Dr Reinharz to gain a fuller picture, to express faculty concerns, and to support board President, Perry Traquina’s goal, as stated in his recent message, "... to ensure that all current and future executive pay packages at Brandeis are fair, motivational and consistent with best practices". A message stating this plan will be sent to the Brandeis Faculty.

**Report on search for Dean of GSAS**
The Dean of GSAS, Mick Watson, will be retiring at the end of this academic year, and therefore there will be a search for new dean. The Senate and specifically the Senate Council will need to be involved in the process. This will be an internal search for a full-time, tenured professor to move into this position.

**Review of the Proposed Appointment of Associate Dean of Research at the Heller School**

At the request of Senate Chairperson Chasalow, Susan Parish spoke briefly about her goals if she is appointed associate dean for research at the Heller School. Parish noted that her role as associate dean will be to work to strengthen policies and practices that enable scientists, faculty and other researchers to secure external support for their research at Heller. Parish added that this work comprises a major facet of Heller's mission. Last fiscal year, $21.1 million was brought in for external research support, and Heller currently has approximately 90 individuals whose work is supported in whole or in part, by external funding.

The Faculty Senate went on record as in support of this nomination.

**Al Quds University**

The Senate discussed the recent decision to suspend the partnership between Brandeis and Al Quds University. Members of the faculty are concerned about the statement Brandeis has made in suspending this relationship as well as the potential problems it may cause for faculty engaged in projects and research with Al Quds. The Senate will be in touch with President Lawrence, the Ethics Center, and others with direct information.

**Discussion of Alternatives to Current Schedule of Faculty Meetings**

This discussion was tabled until the next meeting of the Senate.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10pm.