BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE MEETING 4 – 2016-2017

MEETING MINUTES

AGENDA
Thursday, December 8, 2016
12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

UPDATE as of 12/8/16: The Heller School for Social Policy & Management, Classroom 163 (Floor 1)

OUTCOMES
♦ Shared Sense of Campus Climate
  o Post Presidential Election
♦ Planning Process for Upcoming Senate Actions:
  o Retreat on Faculty Governance – Wednesday, January 11th
  o Faculty "Teach In" – Sunday, January 29th

AGENDA

12:30 P.M.  WELCOME

Remarks from Chair & Council
  • Special Senate Meetings on Post-Election Climate: Ideas & Outcomes
  • Reflection on Meetings with President & Provost (Resolution, Teach In, other)
  • UAC and Other Committee Meetings Reflections

12:45 P.M.  Discussion: Faculty Governance Thoughts, Questions and Objectives for the Retreat
Other Business

1:30 P.M.  ADJOURN

Brandeis Faculty Meeting to follow at 2:00 P.M. in Gerstenzang, Room 124
[Agenda & Attachments Enclosed]

ATTACHMENTS
  ➢ DRAFT Agenda and Background Materials for Faculty Governance Retreat
PRESENT: Susan P. Curnan, Chair, Dan Bergstresser, Joe Cunningham, Jane Ebert, Eli Hirsch, Sarah Mead, Paul Miller, Thomas Pochapsky, Raj Sampath, Laurence Simon, Faith Smith, John Wardle

ABSENT: Elizabeth Ferry, Kathryn Graddy, Adrianne Krstansky, Laurie Nsiah-Jefferson, (and Kate Moran on leave fall 2016, Susan Parish on sabbatical fall 2016)

12:30 P.M.
Remarks from Chair & Council
➢ Special Senate Meetings on Post-Election Climate: Ideas & Outcomes
   • The Chair thanked the Senators for coming to the special post-election meetings of the Faculty Senate on November 17th and November 18th at the Faculty Club.
     Three primary ideas were explored as suggested by faculty:
     1) Post-election statement to the Brandeis community (as Senate did for #FordHall2015).
     2) Post-election Teach-In. (The Chair reported that this idea has gained traction with the President and Provost, and Faculty are submitting topics/ideas.)
     3) Consider how to establish a portal to share information on activism among Faculty, Staff and students at Brandeis. (The Chair noted that after further discussion among faculty and staff on this topic, it was determined that the Senate does not have capacity to do this, but there is interest around the University to centralize a space.)

➢ Reflection on Senate Council Meeting with President & Provost
   • The Provost’s office agreed to co-sponsor and participate in the Teach-In; a date has been set for the Teach-In, Sunday, January 29th, in the afternoon. The date was selected as a post-inauguration date that does not interfere with planned Marches both locally and in DC area; and does not conflict with Chinese New Year celebrations or the Jewish Sabbath observance.
   • So far, Faculty who have stepped forward with topic ideas for the proposed Teach-In include Senator Moran, Senator Sampath, and Senator Miller. – More to come!
   • Discussion ensued. Topics include: What does “Free Speech” mean, especially in terms of coursework pedagogy and Faculty roles. And Senators suggested more Teach In topics: Economics implications of the new political climate; Training on how to argue or present something in a logical way, i.e., a “modeling debate”, especially if two sides do not share common ground; Women’s Studies’ on “Trigger Warnings”; Discussing the stakes of truth believed on different sides of an argument.
   • One Senator inquired about bringing in participants from outside of Brandeis, especially in light of the anti-intellectualism sentiment noted among the voting public.
   • One Senator described the importance of not vilifying community members who voted for Trump and how important it is to understand more about them.
   • One Senator explained focusing on how to listen to “opposing points of view” and how to introduce change in that circumstance.
   • Senators discussed opening the event for the greater Waltham community, but would like to first focus on support of the students.
• Senators discussed including an international aspect in the Teach In, the U.S. post-election climate from a global perspective.
• One Senator suggested that participants might gain a better understanding of varying perspectives if they have the opportunity to come together in one group, rather than splitting into different “tracks”.

➢ Senate Business – Amendments
• Senator Wardle initiated a discussion about the Faculty Handbook amendments, revisiting the amendments proposed at the 1st reading of amendments at the November Brandeis Faculty Meeting regarding voting status of any emeritus faculty member serving on the Faculty Senate.
• Discussion ensued.

➢ Faculty Governance Retreat Discussion, January 11, 2017
• The President and Provost accepted the Senate invitation to attend the Faculty Governance Retreat.
• Discussion ensued about benefits and challenges regarding having the President and Provost present considering the broken trust remaining from prior University administration actions. The Senate recognized this as a new beginning and agreed it makes sense to meet together and learn from each other.
• The Chair said that she hoped every Senator will step forward to contribute ideas and participate in the Retreat.

The meeting adjourned at 1:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted on December 9, 2016 by Lanni Isenberg.