The seventh meeting of the Faculty Senate was held at 3:00 p.m., 22 March 2007, in Shapiro Conference Room 314. Senators present: Seth Fraden, Richard Gaskins, Ira Gessel, David Jacobson, Harry Mairson (Chair), Leonard Muellner, David Rakowski, Eugene Sheppard, Govind Sreenivasan, Malcolm Watson, Aida Wong. Senators absent: Stephen Cecchetti, Jon Chilingerian, William Flesch, Laura Quinney, Richard Parmentier.

Presentation of the Senate Council to the Board of Trustees
The Senate Chair reported on the Senate Council’s presentation at the 22 March 2007 meeting of the Board of Trustees to discuss the visit of President Carter. Senators were given copies of the statement that had been prepared by the Senate Council and that was read at the meeting. (Copies of the statement were given to members of the Board, and emailed to the Brandeis faculty later that day. A copy can also be found on the Faculty Senate website.)

The statement delineated an abbreviated chronology of events leading to President Carter’s visit, reaction to the visit, and suggestions on how the university can move forward. Speaking in response for the Board, its Chair, Mr. Stephen Kay, emphasized that the Board supports Israel, that it supports President Reinhartz and the administration’s Middle East initiatives (the Crown Center, the al-Quds collaboration, etc.), and that the Council was henceforth invited to work with the Board through its elected representatives. (The Senate Chair reminded Senators that the Council had sought the advice and the consent of the faculty representatives prior to requesting a meeting with the Board, to ensure that they did not sense their role to be abrogated.) These remarks set the tone for comments made by other members of the Board, engaging the larger geopolitical issues raised by President Carter, but not the relevant institutional issues underlined by the Senate Council. Members of the Senate exchanged their perspectives on these institutional issues.

Contract Faculty Appointments to Tenured Positions Without National Searches
Professor Gaskins, Chair of the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities, informed the Senate about a tenured appointment that has been approved by the Board of Trustees. The matter was discussed just prior to approval in a meeting that included himself, the Provost, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of the Heller School, the Senate Chair, and Professor Burg, the relevant Board representative. At that meeting, Professor Gaskins and the Senate Chair explicitly reiterated the judgments reached by their respective representative bodies during last academic year, without dissent, that the action contravened the rules of the Faculty Handbook. Attention has focused on a Handbook supplement, “Guidelines for Appointments in the Tenure Structure without National Searches,” and its relation to cases involving conversion of current contract faculty to tenured and tenure-track positions. The administration stated that, from now on, it would follow these Guidelines in all cases. During the fall semester, the Committee will revisit the Guidelines to address their application to current contract faculty.
Faculty Elections
Professors David Jacobson and Leonard Muellner agreed to work with the Chair to assemble a ballot of candidates to run for election to faculty committees.

Brandeis “Affinity” Credit Cards
At the Senate meeting of September 21, there was discussion of repeated solicitation of Brandeis undergraduates to acquire University “affinity” cards. A parent vigorously questioned the University’s participation in the solicitation, given that the cards have very high penalties for missing payments, and because it seemed impossible to opt out. The Senate had been led at that time to believe that the solicitation was one-time over a student’s undergraduate residence. The Chair reported that after further communication with the administration, it became clear that the details earlier relayed to the Senate, provided by those involved in administering the solicitations, were incorrect. Evidently there is a solicitation every year, and last year there were two solicitations, the consequence of a change in the company handling the credit cards. It should now be possible for individual students to opt out of the solicitation.

Faculty Salaries
The Chair reported that Dean Jaffe said that, if the budget is approved, there will be a 4.2% merit-based raise pool, in addition to $150,000 for catch-up raises.

Meeting with President Reinharz
The Chair informed the Senators that President Reinharz will attend the 26 April Senate meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.