The fifth meeting of the Faculty Senate was held at 3:00 p.m., 29 November 2007, in the Board of Trustees Conference Room. Senators present: Marc Brettler (Chair), William Flesch, Ira Gessel, Jody Gittell, David Jacobson, Harry Mairson, Catherine Mann, Robert Moody, Richard Parmentier, David Rakowski, Ilan Troen, Malcolm Watson. Senators absent: Seth Fraden, Eric Hill, Leonard Muellner, Govind Sreenivasan

Faculty Handbook Committee
Richard Parmentier, a member of the Faculty Handbook committee (Govind Sreenivasan, Politics, Provost Marty Krauss, Assistant Provost Richard Silberman), reported that the committee will bring proposed Handbook changes to the spring 2008 faculty meetings. He asked Senators if they felt that the Senate Chair should report on the Senate’s discussion of the proposed changes at the Faculty Meetings, and whether or not there is Senate agreement on those changes. The Senate felt the Chair should do so.

Firearms Policy
After some discussion, the Senate moved that the minutes reflect the following:

The Faculty Senate is concerned that it was not involved in the constitution of the original committee that recommended that the Brandeis Public Safety force be armed. We appreciate that we were asked to nominate two members to the new committee. As the arming of the Public Safety Officers has direct bearing on the wellbeing of the entire campus community, including the faculty, we hope to be fully informed of the deliberations of the new committee.

Senate Meeting with the Provost and the Dean of Arts and Sciences
The Chair reported that the Senate, in accordance with the consultative role mandated by the Faculty Handbook concerning the reappointment of the Provost and the Dean of Arts and Sciences, will meet with Provost Marty Krauss and Dean of Arts and Sciences Adam Jaffe, on 11 December. Senators were in agreement that the minutes of the meeting should be complete and include the statements from the Provost and the Dean, as well as the discussion following. It was also agreed that the Chair should send the following statement to the faculty:

The Faculty Senate will be meeting with Dean Jaffe and Provost Krauss on December 11 concerning their reappointment. Should you have views or questions, please communicate them to the Senate through any Senator.
Campus Parking
At the 25 October Senate meeting the Chair was asked to look into a parking plan that will help mitigate difficulties encountered by faculty and staff. He reported that he has met with Mark Collins, who is focused on a long-term (3-5 year) solution to the problem, which may include construction of a parking garage on campus. Senators, however, continue to believe that, in addition to any long-term plans, a short-term solution (especially for faculty in Creative Arts) needs to be pursued.

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee
The Chair reported that the Rights and Responsibilities Committee has issued its ruling on the harassment case involving a faculty member. He reported: the committee’s findings are confidential; there are avenues of appeal on various sides; the legal issues addressed in the memo sent by the Senate Council to the Provost continue to be discussed by the Rights and Responsibilities Committee and the Provost; that there is a strong sense that the Human Resources Policy on Harassment approved by the Senate several years ago needs to be re-examined; and that the Senate may need to consider revoking its approval to that policy. One Senator said that what has taken place is the complete antithesis to the understanding expressed before the Faculty Senate, when it approved the policy.

Workshops on Diversity
The Chair said that he had met with the Provost, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, and Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education Elaine Wong to discuss a series of workshops on diversity. The format of the workshops would include a discussion of legal issues and student life issues, and the distinction between what is legal and what is “human and good.” Follow-up workshops would include viewing diversity videos and interviews with students, and discussing scenarios from classroom experiences. The Chair asked the Senate if it wants to co-sponsor such a series of workshops with the Committee for the Support of Teaching. After some discussion, the Senate agreed that the Faculty Senate needs to protect academic freedom in the classroom and to publicize that there is a distinction between what is legal teaching and what is humane teaching. There was general agreement among Senators to co-sponsor the workshops.

Course Banking
The Faculty Handbook states that (section III.C.2.g.i) that “Proposals for changes in university policy with respect to the work load of faculty must be submitted to the Faculty Senate, the School Councils and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for prior review, and may be submitted to the Faculty meeting for review.” Dean of Arts and Sciences Adam Jaffe sent a memo to the Senate asking if the process has been satisfied through previous discussions with the Senate. The Senate concurred.

Contract Notification
William Flesch was asked by the Senate to meet with Dean Jaffe and University Counsel Judith Sizer to discuss whether or not faculty members have to sign their reappointment letters in order for their contracts to be binding. He reported that the letters do not need to be signed, and that receiving the letter is considered binding.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.