



BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Senate Update April 20, 2017

Faculty Senate Council, 2016-2017



Susan P. Curman (Chair)
At-Large (The Heller School)



Sarah Mead
Music/Creative Arts



Laurence Simon
The Heller School for Social Policy & Management



John Wardle
Physics/Science

Faculty Senate, 2016-2017



Daniel Bergstresser
International Business School



Joe Cunningham
Psychology/Social Science



Jane Ebert
International Business School



Elizabeth Ferry
At-Large (Anthropology)



Kathryn Graddy
Economics/Social Science



Eli Hirsch
Philosophy/Humanities



Adrienne Krstansky
Theater/ Creative Arts



Paul Miller
Biology, Computer Science/ Science



Kate Moran
At-Large (Philosophy)



Thomas Pochapsky
At-Large (Chemistry)



Raj Sampath
At-Large (The Heller School)



Faith Smith
African & Afro-American Studies & English/ Humanities

This brief update from the Senate replaces the usual report out at the Faculty Meeting with the hope of allowing more time for Q&A and discussion. There is no attempt to be comprehensive, but rather make mention of some key activities and potentially spark conversation at the meeting or thereafter. Three updates are included:

- Advance call for nominations
- Highlights from recent meetings
- Engagement challenge

Call for Nominations

The time is upon us. Please think about who you would like on the Senate next year. Nomination Forms and election details will be out next week for the following seats:



International Business School



The Heller School



The Heller School
Partial term – 2 years



Creative Arts



Humanities



At-Large



At-Large
Partial term – 1 year

Pending approval by the Board of Trustees next week, we will also be electing our first Emeritus/Emerita colleague



Finally, nominations for one Faculty Representative to the Board of Trustees will also be solicited.



Recent Meetings (January – April 2017)

- The Senate recently held a “Special Meeting” with the President to hear about his goals, accomplishments and challenges. By all accounts it was a productive, open, candid and positive learning exchange for all and ended with a commitment to more frequent meetings throughout the year. More than half of the meeting was taken up with a robust discussion of the President’s “Self-Reflection” exercise described in a recent memo from him to the Faculty.
- About 15 Faculty met for two hours over lunch to continue the conversation about faculty governance started at the January 11th retreat. The conversation was lively and participants seemed to confirm findings from the earlier retreat and generally agree that:
 - ◆ There is room for improvement in faculty governance and co-governance at Brandeis.
 - ◆ This is a good time, given the new President and new Board Chair, to try to make these improvements.
 - ◆ We need a clear and transparent process for any efforts to be effective.

The group discussed a tentative charge for the Faculty Governance Task Force:

- ◆ Assessing the state of faculty governance at Brandeis
- ◆ Comparing the situation at Brandeis with that of other campuses
- ◆ Drafting a specific set of recommendations to improve faculty governance and leading a process of revising the Faculty Handbook to turn these recommendations into policy.

There was then lively conversation about how to constitute such a Task Force. The faculty present agreed that diversity is needed in every sense (tenure status, race, gender, age, division, etc.). The most popular idea was to have Divisions (Science, Social Science, Humanities, Creative Arts) as well as IBS and Heller nominate 2 or 3 people who could serve. The leaders of the Task Force would then select a group of 7-10 that is diverse from those nominated.

Since this meeting, the President, Provost, Faculty Representative to the Board’s Coordinating Committee, and Senate Chair have conferred and agreed to officially launch a Faculty Governance Task Force, retain an expert consultant on Faculty Governance, and begin the process of assembling the membership and clarifying the charge in the coming weeks. More news on this soon.

- Karen Muncaster, Dean of the Rabb School, accepted the Senate’s invitation to provide an overview of Rabb programs, faculty, curriculum, assessments and degrees. Again, a positive learning exchange for the Senate that will be useful as we re-think Faculty Governance going forward.
- In keeping with the Senate’s goal of “Every Senator has a job,” Senators have been actively engaged in subcommittees and Task Force work on a number of issues, including: Faculty Governance; Dignity at Work; Free Expression; A Post-Election Teach-In; Sustainability; Sexual Assault Policy development; Resolution to Express Consensus on the Matter of Broken Trust and Lost Contribution to Faculty and

Staff Retirement Funds; and Standing and Special Committees of the Board of Trustees.
Updates from these groups should be forthcoming by the end of the year.

Engagement Challenge

As we prepare for the end of the academic year and look to the next, we would like to invite your ideas for Senate and Faculty engagement in 2017-2018.

In addition to Faculty Governance, some of the continuing topics and policy governance matters on the Senate's "advise and consult" agenda are expected to include: Gen Ed requirements and implementation; Reaccreditation; Dean Searches; Free Expression; Dignity at Work; Climate Change & Divestment; others?

From your perspective:

What is one thing – your highest priority – that you hope the Senate can address and get done in 2017-2018?

Hope to hear from you all. See you tomorrow!

spc