BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE MEETING 4 – 2017-2018
MEETING MINUTES
AGENDA

Wednesday, November 29, 2017
3:00 PM – 4:30 PM
Board of Trustees’ Room, Irving Presidential Enclave

3:00 P.M. WELCOME

Check in with Provost Lisa M. Lynch on Senate Topics
• Update on Senior Administration Reorganization
• Update on Faculty Governance Task Force/Timetable
• Senate Retreat – January 9, 2018
• Draft Faculty Meeting Agenda, December 11th

4:00 P.M. Meeting with Mark Brimhall-Vargas, Chief Diversity Officer & VP, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
• Update on “Organization” Building of Department of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Other Business
• Senate Schedule of Meetings for Spring 2018

4:30 P.M. Adjourn

Spring 2018 Faculty Senate Meeting Dates
12:00 P.M. - 1:30 P.M., Location: TBD
Tuesday, February 27th
Tuesday, March 13th
Tuesday, April 17th
PRESENT: Chair, Susan P. Curnan, Daniel Bergstresser, Joel Christensen, Jennifer Cleary, Joseph Cunningham, Jane Ebert, Susan Holcombe, Sarah Mead, Paul Miller, Kate Moran, Carol Osler, Rajesh Sampath, Laurence Simon, John Wardle

ABSENT: Joseph Assan, Elizabeth Ferry, Anita Hannig, Adrianne Krstansky, Faith Smith

Guests: Provost Lisa M. Lynch and Mark Brimhall-Vargas

3:00 P.M. WELCOME

Check in with Provost Lisa M. Lynch on Senate Topics
- Update on Senior Administration Reorganization
  - Provost Lynch provided an overview of senior administration reorganization (as described in the attached letter from the President).
  - A Student Life Task Force, to be created by Sheryl Sousa, Vice President for Student Affairs, will include faculty and students (undergrads and graduate) to improve the student experience/student life.
  - The Provost and President have been reviewing student club funding to determine better distribution oversight.
  - The Provost also described a huge spike in student counseling services demand and use on campus. She highlighted two shared characteristics among Brandeis students: they are very serious about their studies and students at Brandeis care about others. The Provost would like to find ways to bring students more joy in their Brandeis experience beyond academics.
  - The new Student Life Task Force will review how students connect with the Dean of Student Life, who is currently in an office located in Administration, while other universities include this Dean’s office and faculty advisors physically within student living buildings.
  - Senior Administration is looking at restructuring the Curriculum Committee and are reviewing the admissions process and how faculty participate.
  - Provost Lynch responded to questions from Senators about graduate student pay implications in the proposed government tax bill and then brought up Brandeis leadership within the Colonial Group (a consortium of Colleges and Universities in 13 states) focusing on other policy topics.
  - One Senator requested a recap of the November Board of Trustees meeting.
    - Provost Lynch provided a brief summary.
    - The Chair noted that both resolutions from the faculty – on climate threat and the retirement fund – are under review by the Trustees.
  - Senators complimented the care and safety of the construction company working on the new dorm. Provost Lynch described the documentation process of the geo wells and the daily progress construction.
Senators inquired if there are any messages to convey or any other way to assist campus systems in light of the armed burglary in a campus dorm. Discussion ensued regarding how the Administration is improving security and communication.

- Update on Faculty Governance Task Force/Timetable
  - The Task Force expects to have an interim report released in early January for dissemination and vetting with all Divisions, Schools, Senate and others.

- Senate Retreat – January 9, 2018
  - The Retreat will have a dual agenda: Dignity at Work Report and Faculty Governance Report, assuming the Task Forces are on schedule.

- Draft Faculty Meeting Agenda, December 11th
  - A Senator inquired about making a motion to include the Senior Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as a voting member at faculty meetings. Discussion ensued and it was determined to bring the idea to the Faculty Governance Task Force.
  - One Senator asked about the plan regarding remote voting and participation at meetings and how faculty will know. The Senate Chair reminded the Senate that the topic will be up for further discussion at the January 9th Faculty Senate Retreat.
  - The Faculty Senate initially invited Dean of Admissions Jen Walker to give an admissions and enrollment update to faculty at the December Faculty meeting, but upon further discussion determined that timing will be better for a January Faculty meeting presentation. The Chair will invite her for the January Faculty meeting.
  - The Senate discussed whether there should be a December Faculty meeting or if it would be better to cancel and determined to move forward with it with a presentation by Mark Brimhall-Vargas on the new structure of the Diversity Office and also asking Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration, Stew Uretsky, to provide a report to Faculty about the financial matters presented in recent open forums. It was decided to hold the meeting and deliver brief reports from the Faculty Representatives to the Board of Trustees, the Senate, and a focus on Administration and Finance capacities – to be presented by Stew Uretsky and panel.

4:00 P.M. Meeting with Mark Brimhall-Vargas, Chief Diversity Officer & VP, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- Update on “Organization” Building of Department of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
  - Mark Brimhall-Vargas described the formation of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion staff to address diversity policy and programming.
    - A new ombuds officer, Donald Greenstein, was hired to serve the entire community and starts on December 1st. This position will be paid partially from the Diversity Office operating expenses.
Brimhall-Vargas is retaining on-call ombuds to provide multiple points of entry for students, staff and faculty, including Elena Lewis, Interim Director of the Student Support Services Program (SSSP), and Cathy Burack, Senior Fellow at the Center for Youth and Communities at the Heller School. In a 1-2 year evaluative process, the team will establish clear pathways for all to navigate the resources available for conflict resolution.

Hiring is in process for a Director of Diversity Education, Training and Development to provide training for the Brandeis community, assist with search and selection committees, conduct equity training and to engage students.

Chaplaincies are now under Brimhall-Vargas’ purview with a goal to create more stability among these campus entities, which have had interim staff for a while.

A Senator asked about assessing inclusivity of Professors in the classroom and if there is a question that might address this matter in course evaluations.

Mark Brimhall-Vargas described some concepts to consider to assess inclusivity, e.g., reviewing the equity process and how a person accesses assistance, who will have access to data and who updates data, who are the experts on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion to review information and lead trainings, determining the standard for success and the course for assessment measurement.

There is a Faculty Diversity series through the Center for Teaching and Learning that Faculty are encouraged to attend as well.

The Senate continued discussion.

Other Business

- Senate Schedule of Meetings for Spring 2018

4:30 P.M. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:35p.

Respectfully submitted by Lanni Isenberg.
Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff,

One of the areas on which I have focused significant attention during the past year is the state of the academic, cultural, and social experience of our undergraduate and graduate students. A deep commitment to learning and intellectual discovery requires the close integration of the academic and non-academic aspects of a student’s education. To advance that integration, I am announcing the reorganization of some departments and reporting structures within the university.

The changes, which take effect today, will streamline operations, increase accountability, and align administrative responsibilities with authority in a way intended to support our students more effectively.

Undergraduate and graduate student life will be integrated into the provost’s office. Sheryl Sousa ’90, vice president for student affairs, who oversees the dean of students, community living, athletics, the Hiatt Career Center, the Health Center, and student activities, will now report to Provost Lisa Lynch. Sheryl and Kim Godsoe, associate provost, will together lead a comprehensive assessment and evaluation of the academic and non-academic support we provide our undergraduate and graduate students. This work will help us define what constitutes vibrant and engaged communities in our residence halls, and how we can best support our graduate students with services that do not now exist or need greater attention.

To align responsibilities with authority, the Chaplaincy will report to our chief diversity officer and vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our successful and growing pre-college programs will become the responsibility of the vice president of the Rabb School of Continuing Studies; admissions will report to the dean of arts and sciences; and student financial services will report to the chief financial officer.

Andrew Flagel, senior vice president for students and enrollment, has been offered a senior research fellowship at the National Research Center for College and University Admissions. In recognition of his years of dedicated service to Brandeis, I have granted him a research leave beginning after Thanksgiving to further his research on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We thank Andrew for his years of dedicated service to Brandeis and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

I want to thank everyone within the student affairs division for their hard work, ongoing cooperation, collegiality, and commitment to our students and university.

Sincerely,

Ron