



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Faculty Advisory Committee on NYU's Global Network

November 20, 2013 (8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.)

Meeting Notes

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN MEETING

Eliot Borenstein, Co-Chair
Una Chaudhuri, Co-Chair
Joyce Apsel, Liberal Studies
Jose Alvarez, School of Law
Sylvain Cappell, Faculty Senators Council, Courant Institute, Mathematics
Jennifer Carpenter, Stern
Andrea Chambers, SCPS
Jean-Louis Cohen, IFA
Patricia Corby, College of Dentistry
Lucinda Covert-Vail, Division of Libraries
Michael Dinwiddie, Gallatin School
Richard Foley, Administrative liaison to the Committee (Vice Chancellor for Strategic Planning)
Don Garrett, FAS (Philosophy)
Liliana Goldin, Silver School
Natasha Iskander, Wagner School of Public Service
Sameer Jaywant, Student Senators at Large
Zhong Ping Jiang, NYU-Poly
Martin Klimke, NYU-AD
Victoria Morwitz, Stern
Fred Myers, FAS (Anthropology)
Charles Newman, Courant Institute
Robert Rowe, Steinhardt School
Gail Segal, Tisch
Mal Semple, FAS (Neural Science)
Joshua Tucker, FAS (Politics)
Nancy Van Devanter, College of Nursing

Joanna Waley-Cohen, FAS; NYU-Shanghai
Niobe Way, Steinhardt

Guest speakers:

- **Ivan Szelenyi**, Dean of Social Sciences, NYUAD
- **Andrew Ross**, American Association of University Professors

Report on meeting

Co-chairs Una Chaudhuri and Eliot Borenstein opened the meeting by inviting guest speaker Ivan Szelenyi to address the topic of academic freedom at NYU-Abu Dhabi, with a particular focus on any possible areas of sensitivity and how they are being addressed. Szelenyi clarified that his statements were based on his own personal observations and opinions, and that he is not speaking on behalf of NYU-Abu Dhabi. He shared that he has neither experienced any infringements on academic freedom at NYU-AD, nor has he observed any cases of restrictions on the academic freedom of other faculty or students at the portal. In principle, and in practice based on his experience, classrooms at NYU-AD enjoy as much academic freedom as those in New York, including the freedom to discuss any topics, including those that may be deemed sensitive in the region. He noted that it remains to be seen whether there will be any restrictions on publishing, but that as long as faculty/students are publishing in academic outlets, he does not anticipate issues arising.

Szelenyi further explained that off campus, UAE law applies. Faculty and students who are new to the AD campus are cautioned during orientation that while there are no restrictions on academic freedom while on campus, there are limitations to what can be said or done off campus. Szelenyi also said he would discourage faculty from running political blogs, although again, on campus and with respect to issues that are clearly academic, there should not be restrictions. He cautioned that conducting field research in the social sciences sometimes can be complicated, since various permits are required for gathering data and interviewing subjects off campus. However, this would also be the case in most other countries in the region. Despite these complications, NYU-AD students have successfully conducted research off campus. Szelenyi said that it will take time to establish trust with local institutions, and that expanding research off campus will be a gradual process. In terms of conducting laboratory studies on human subjects, Szelenyi informed the Committee that NYU-AD does have experimental labs and that is working on developing a pool of subjects. They are also recruiting a research field coordinator who will be tasked with reaching out to various communities in order to develop subject pools.

Regarding restrictions on who can enter the UAE, Szelenyi explained that UAE does not recognize Israel and hence does not accept their passports. However, Israelis who hold other passports are able to enter. He noted that Shias also sometimes face challenges in entering the country.

Andrew Ross, President of the NYU AAUP chapter, next met with the committee to discuss AAUP's concerns regarding academic freedom. He noted that "academic freedom" is subject to interpretation, and can range from the minimalist interpretation, which holds that what is said in the classroom in one's area of specialty is protected, to more expansive interpretations, which maintain that it is the responsibility of professors to share their expertise for the public good, and restrictions on their carrying out these responsibilities constitute restrictions on their academic freedom.

One concern raised during the committee's discussion with Ross focused on the lack of clarity about the rights of faculty and students off campus. Ross emphasized that it would be desirable to have a written policy that clearly articulated rights of academic freedom within and outside of the NYUAD campus. The Committee also inquired what would happen if a tenured faculty member at the NYUAD campus was either deported or denied re-entry to the country. Ross explained that AAUP is demand driven, and that it responds to registered complaints. To date, no such case has been brought to AAUP's attention for discussion, although he admitted that the issue is a concern.

The Committee and Ross also discussed the guarantee of rights for workers who are employed for constructing NYU facilities. Ross noted that NYU had worked to improve labor standards for such workers. However, he raised issues about *monitoring* the application of these standards. He said that AAUP has requested information from NYU Shanghai on issues of monitoring and compliance, but has not yet received a response.

The Committee co-chairs wrapped up the meeting with a brief discussion on the "Principles and Tensions" draft that will be reviewed by members before being released to NYU faculty. The next meeting will include a discussion on this document.