MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATORS COUNCIL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 16, 2012

The New York University Faculty Senators Council (FSC) met at noon on Thursday, February 16, 2012 in Room 905/907 in the Kimmel Center for University Life.

In attendance were Senators Adelman, Amkpa, Cappell, Carpenter, Cowin, Fernandez, Gale, Hammack, Harrington, Hutchins, Jelinek, Jones, Ling, Magder, Monaco, Nolan, Phillips, Raiken, Rodwin, Schacht, Simon, Sternhell, Sundaram, Tranchina, Uleman, Van Devanter, and Zwanziger and Alternate Senators Borowsky and Tannenbaum.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD JANUARY 26, 2012

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the January 26, 2012 meeting were approved unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR FSC CHAIRPERSON 2012-13

The Nominating Committee is continuing to collect nominations, including self-nominations, for the position of Chairperson. At present, the slate contains one candidate: current Chairperson Ted Magder.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRPERSON: TED MAGDER

Chairperson Magder reported the Executive Committee (EC) is working with Chief of Staff & Deputy to the President Diane Yu on the efforts to revise the Faculty Handbook, following the resolution passed at the December FSC meeting. See attached Document A. Senators Nolan, Harrington, and Jelinek attended a meeting with Associate Provost Carol Morrow concerning ministerial changes to the Handbook, including minor editing of language and numbering to be consistent with the University By-laws. The By-laws are amended by the Board of Trustees and the Faculty Handbook is administered by the administration. The EC is pursuing information on the formal procedure for editing the Handbook and looking into how the FSC will be included in this process.

The EC is researching Google’s changes to their privacy policies and the effect on NYU’s Gmail system.

Magder stated he and Secretary Jones met with Executive Vice President Michael Alfano and Senior Vice President, Human Resources & Global Support Katie Casey. Alfano provided more details on NYU’s new policy for tax assistance to offset the federal government’s policy on same-sex benefits. The maximum amount will be $1,500, and this will go into effect in 2013. Senators expressed the importance of communicating this change to faculty and acknowledging FSC’s role in the policy adoption. Upon a motion duly made and seconded it was approved that the EC will send a memo to the administration expressing thanks for their attention to this matter.

At the meeting, Alfano addressed the possibility of early withdrawal from the NYU retirement plan. The University is concerned about faculty turn-over, and they are unable to model an early withdrawal plan that could be both non-discriminatory and not have an impact on faculty decisions on when to retire.
At the meeting, Alfano and Casey provided information on why certain Vanguard mutual funds are available to faculty. The university retirement committee analyzes all funds and chooses them based on performance. There is an administrative cost to adding funds, therefore not all funds can be available. The committee meets soon and will re-examine all funds. A Senator noted this issue came up in the past and the number of funds was increased. They also discussed the possibility of NYU offering Roth IRAs and 529 plans. While they can be available through NYU, the administrative costs are too high and Roth IRAs and 529 plans are available through financial institutions outside the University. Casey stated she is willing to attend a FSC meeting and discuss how these decisions are reached.

The FSC Housing and 2031 Committees met with Senior VP for University Relations & Public Affairs Lynne Brown and Vice President for Government Affairs & Community Engagement Alicia Hurley. They discussed plans for mitigation, if the proposal is approved and construction begins. Some mitigation procedures are required by law, such as dust and noise reduction. Brown and Hurley are identifying faculty who live in housing based on their unit's location (i.e. units with windows facing construction sites). They are working with individuals and small groups to discuss special mitigation procedures such as extra filters on air-conditioning, sound proof windows, etc. Senators also suggested benefits beyond standard mitigation procedures such as rent ceilings.

In terms of timeline, the Coles/Zipper Building continues to be the first in the construction plans.

Other faculty concerns presented at the meeting included retention/recruitment, impact on academic mission, quality of work life, concerns about the budget, lack of transparency of the budget, and fiduciary responsibility.

A Senator pointed out that the School of Medicine also has growth plans, in addition to plans of partnering with Continuum. SOM faculty are concerned about the financial issues of the projects and potential decrease in academic standards.

Magder detailed the main arguments the administration has made in response to these concerns. In terms of financials, the project will be funded in a similar way to other University projects. The University also is facing financial concerns with leases and 2031 will help alleviate these lease issues/space needs. For long-term growth, purchasing buildings and working on currently owned land is a way to grow assets. In addition, the University needs to support growth. The student body should grow by 1.4 % per year.

Magder stated 2031 is a very important current issue, particularly for the next few months. He proposed the idea of a task force, including FSC Finance, Housing, and 2031 Committees.

**FSC COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Administrative Issues: Carol Hutchins**

In January, the Committee met with Alison Leary, Executive Vice President for Operations, to discuss issues regarding the Coles/Palladium facilities raised in the spring 2010 FSC survey. The main concerns included high membership rates, payment schedule, additional charges for classes, operating hours, and family policies. The Committee offered their suggestions for more flexible membership plans, lower fees, and discussed ways to better advertise the facilities as part of NYU’s wellness and benefits information. In addition, with the upcoming 2031 project, questions were raised concerning the plans for a temporary fitness center. In February, the Committee met with Marc Wais, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Christopher Bledsoe, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Director of Athletics, to further discuss these issues. He will get a memo back with more information, which will be posted online.

**Faculty/Student Relations: Carol Sternhell**

The Committee gathered issues/concerns from students at their recent meeting. Students expressed an interest in having course evaluations and syllabi publicly posted and possibly in a central system such as
Albert. The Committee collected information on the course evaluation process and variations between schools.

Magder stated this issue will be discussed again at the next FSC meeting and asked Senators to discuss with their constituents and bring back any suggestions/comments from school faculty members.

**OLD BUSINESS**

At the January FSC meeting, a motion was proposed regarding working with a contract faculty council, if one is created, specifically inviting one member of that Council to sit on the FSC. Magder stated that it is important for the FSC to consider how we plan to communicate and collaborate with the other Council, should one be created. SCOG is currently reviewing the FSC’s recommendation.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 PM.
Resolution of the Faculty Senators Council
regarding revision to the Faculty Senators Council section of the Faculty Handbook
Approved 12/15/11

At the December 15, 2011 meeting of the Faculty Senators Council, the Council approved the following resolution:

The FSC proposes that the revised text below be inserted into The Faculty Handbook (on p.12, under the section heading “University Councils and Commissions”, subsection “The Faculty Senators Council”):

University Councils and Commissions

The Faculty Senators Council

Each of the faculties, according to its size, has one or more representatives on the Faculty Senators Council, a University-wide body of elected professors. University Bylaw 63 (a) provides that “The Faculty Senators Council may consider any matters of educational and administrative policy and will function as the Faculty Personnel Committee of the Senate. It will designate representatives on the other standing committees, and in appropriate instances on the ad hoc committees, of the Senate. It may bring to the attention of the various committees of the Senate any matters that it believes should be presented to the entire Senate. It may bring to the attention of the President and Chancellor any matters that it wishes to discuss with him or her. It will perform such other educational functions as are assigned to it by the President and Chancellor or by the Board.” The Faculty Senators Council, in accordance with the rules and procedures it adopted, adheres to the principles of shared governance.

Faculty Senators Council Rules and Procedures: