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

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- Faculty Handbook Revisions
  - The 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 January FSC meeting.
  - 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.

- Tax Assistance for Same-Sex Couples
  - NYU’s new policy for tax assistance to offset the federal government's policy on same-sex benefits goes into effect in 2013 and will be a maximum amount of $1,500.

- NYU Retirement Plan
  - The EC inquired on the possibility of early withdrawal from the NYU retirement plan.
  - The University is concerned about faculty turnover, 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.

- Vanguard Mutual Funds and Roth IRA/529 Plans
  - The university retirement committee analyzes all Vanguard 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.
  - The University does not offer Roth IRAs or 529 plans because the administrative costs are too high and both are available through financial institutions outside the University.

- NYU 2031
  - 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. 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.
  - 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.
  - Chairperson 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.
  - 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.

- Coles/Palladium
  - In February, the Admin Issues 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 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. He will get a memo back with more information, which will be posted on the FSC website.

- Posting of Course Evaluations and Syllabi
  - 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. Chairperson 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.