MINUTES OF THE C-FACULTY SENATORS COUNCIL MEETING OF DECEMBER 1, 2020

The New York University Continuing Contract Faculty Senators Council (C-FSC) met at noon on Tuesday, December 1, 2020 via Zoom.

In attendance were Senators Barnes, Brar, De Bartolo, de Leon, Gershman, Gold-Von Simson, Illingworth, Jahangiri, Killilea, Liston, Maier, Maynor, McCarty, Patterson, Renzi, Tourin, White, Williams, and Youngerman; and Alternate Senators Davis (for Abel-Bey), Ferguson, Kleinert, Morrison, O’Connor, Owens, Ritter, Spivakovsky, Stevens, Sun, and Tyrell.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting agenda was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the November 12, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

See attached Document A.

Discussion/Questions on Chair’s Report

Chairperson Youngerman thanked Council members for their hard work during this challenging semester.

Wasserman Center for Career Development

Youngerman highlighted at the November 17 Steering Committee (SC) meeting with members of the Board of Trustees they discussed the Wasserman Center for Career Development and challenges regarding support of students at both the individual and program-wide level. He suggested a role the C-FSC could play is developing a better relationship between faculty and Wasserman. The SC will be meeting with the Wasserman Center on the issue. Senators commented positively on Wasserman’s collaboration on events, however noted varying feedback from students regarding individual counseling.

A Senator stated Wasserman has an advisory committee comprised of faculty from different schools and the importance of adequate C-FSC representation on that committee.

Senators recommended a more specialized rather than central approach might improve the services. They also noted the importance of supporting faculty efforts in individual schools and programs.

Faculty Mental Wellness

Youngerman noted the C-FSC and T-FSC Chairs met on November 25 with Linda Mills and Karen Nercessian from the Provost’s office to discuss support for faculty wellness. He commented this is a strong concern for the administration and they wish to hear from the Councils on faculty issues. The conversation focused on workplace issues, such as email overload, zoom fatigue, and the pressure of the teaching and supporting-students schedule. They also discussed sources of anxiety around reappointment, promotion and tenure and pressure from chairs. The administration is working with chairs on being supportive of faculty work/life and
wellness and the hope is to continue to broadcast this message. On a more concrete level, the University is hiring an in-house counselor to work with faculty.

A Senator discussed improving email culture to alleviate an expectation of 24/7 availability. It was suggested to use a statement in the email signature line and/or in syllabus to remind of boundaries and expectations in email communications. A Senator recommended a message come from the Provost’s office reiterating the best practices regarding communications on weekends and early morning/late evening hours.

Senators noted that some faculty only have time to respond to emails later in the evening or off hours, particularly with childcare responsibilities during the day. It was suggested that messages should be individualized by faculty members.

Being@NYU

Youngerman reported the full Being@NYU October 2018 report is posted online: link

The Chair’s Report was accepted into the minutes.

PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND VOTE

Joint T-FSC and C-FSC Resolution on Anti-Racist Education

See attached Document B.

Ad Hoc Anti-Racism Committee Member Davis presented the joint resolution. The original resolution was presented and approved at the September Council meeting. Following the October Presidential Executive Order (EO) on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping, the Committee revised the language to make the resolution compliant with the EO. Davis noted the language in the resolution was reviewed by the General Counsel.

In response to a Senator’s concern on faculty including the following pledge in their syllabi: “I will be brave enough to have uncomfortable conversations and take action against racism at NYU”; Davis stated they adjusted the language to “propose” faculty to include the pledge. She noted faculty can choose to include, not include, or modify the pledge.

The resolution was approved by vote of the Council.

Letter on Spring Break

See attached Document C.

Educational Policies & Faculty/Student Relations Committee Chair Illingworth presented on the letter to Provost Fleming regarding a proposal on communication and collaboration regarding the modified spring break.

The letter suggests a messaging strategy and collaborative series of events that support the following: help faculty communicate their support for this policy, reinforce the vital need for rest, and make the faculty a partner in activities over those weekends to encourage a sense of community solidarity.

A Senator suggested it be noted that there are exemptions to the breaks, as there are several programs unable to observe. Examples include programs in Dentistry and Nursing. It was also recommended to include those on an Abu Dhabi or Shanghai schedule.

The Committee will add language under “Communications to Faculty & Students” to acknowledge that students enrolled at different portals/sites and those taking classes on multiple campuses might find that not all courses are following this particular schedule and to remind advisors and students of the varied calendars their courses will follow according to their enrollment across the GNU.
With these edits, the letter will be sent to the Provost.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*See attached Document D.*

**Discussion/Questions on the following submitted reports:**

**Faculty Benefits & Housing**

Committee Chair Renzi reported on the recent Retirement Investment Committee. He confirmed that the rollout of the streamlined retirement plan investments options will take place in April 2021. He noted after the implementation he hopes the committee will next address the C-FSC resolution of March 8, 2018, which called for the inclusion of the Vanguard Total International Bond Fund.

**Community Standards**

A Senator inquired on the possible amendment to the Senate Rules of Procedure regarding the updating of the Student Conduct Policy to help clarify what changes can be made directly by the committee. Illingworth responded this is due to the timeliness of making changes to the policy. The most logical time to alter the policy is after the second summer session, before the start of the fall semester. The suggestion is to create a smaller representative Senate committee with the ability to approve changes over the summer. He stated the current policy is unclear about what needs full University Senate approval.

Senators expressed concern with changing the level of input from the Council and noted changes should be voted on by the Senate.

**Ad Hoc Committee on Course Evaluations**

Committee Representative Youngerman noted the Committee, which was established following a C-FSC report and recommendations in spring 2017, will continue conversations this spring.

**No Discussion/Questions on the following submitted reports:**

**Educational Policies & Faculty/Student Relations**

**Reports at Meeting:**

**Finance & Policy Planning**

Committee Chair Patterson noted at the Senate Financial Affairs meeting the Committee did not receive the two salary studies as expected. The first study on “pay equity analysis” examined potential inequalities in pay for women and minorities and was completed by an outside consulting firm. The Committee was shown a slide deck for faculty. The results presented were from the law firm hired by NYU to do the evaluations of the consulting firm’s model. The conclusion was it did not reveal any systemic disparities based on gender or race/ethnicity.

The second study on “faculty salary inversion” investigated whether higher ranked faculty are paid less than lower ranked faculty. This study was done internally by the Provost’s Office. It was indicated that study is not yet complete, but would be ready to be reported on by February 2021.

The Committee expressed disagreement with the lack of data, parameters, and methodology presented and is discussing next steps forward to address this concern. It was also suggested for this issue to be brought to the attention of the President and Provost by the Steering Committee.
Senators discussed examining the results of the C-FSC Compensation Survey of December 2018. They also discussed developing another survey. Senators noted the administration pursued the study to provide more complete data than a voluntary, self-reported survey. Senators also referred to the Reports of the Analysis of Equity for Arts & Science Faculty, and commented it provides valuable, transparent data.

The Steering Committee will discuss this issue with President Hamilton at this afternoon’s meeting.

**Senate Committee on Organization and Governance (SCOG)**

Committee Chair Killilea reported this semester SCOG convened three times to discuss the following: 1) the function of the Senate, 2) the size of the Senate to meet that function, and 3) the recommendation of representation of the Long Island School of Medicine (LISOM). These conversations continued from those held last spring.

A range of proposals were discussed and weighed, including adding seats to accommodate the LISOM, maintaining the size of the Senate and adding LISOM, and decreasing the size of the Senate while including LISOM to better facilitate deliberation.

On November 13, Mary Killilea and Vice Chair Cassandra Bizzaro led the Committee in a brainstorming exercise to rethink the composition of the Senate in a way that would allow for more meaningful deliberation, enhance the importance of voices in the room, and make the composition more sustainable for future growth of the University. The exercise led the committee to conclude that it is a faulty assumption that shrinking the size of the Senate would make it more deliberative. Faculty and Student members both voiced concerns about decreasing their number of Senate seats.

SCOGe is now turning its attention to 1) focus on making adjustments to the Bylaws that will provide a more sustainable solution to increase the size of the Senate as new schools are developed at NYU and 2) create recommendations to help facilitate more deliberative conversation within the Senate. The recommendations will be presented to the Senate Executive Committee in the spring.

Committee Chair Killilea reported on the discussion on adjusting the size of the Senate. It was concluded to not decrease the size of the Senate. They discussed increasing the size to add seats for the Long Island School of Medicine (LISOM), which needs representation on the Senate.

To address attendance issues, the Committee discussed enhancing accountability for Senators, or Alternates, to attend Senate meetings. They also discussed rethinking the format of the Senate in a way that would allow for more meaningful deliberation, enhance the importance of voices in the room, and enhance the interactivity rather than just having reports.

They also discussed addressing the space constraints of the room if the Senate size is increased. They discussed allowing for a remote attendance option. Senators suggested a RSVP function for in-person versus remote attendance.

**Personnel Policies & Contract Issues**

Committee Chair White reported the Committee is working on review of the School of Global Public Health (SGPH) Policies and Procedures for the Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion of Full-Time Continuing Contract Faculty. They are working with the T-FSC Personnel Policies & Tenure Modifications Committee on this review and hope to present to the Council in early spring. The Committee is also waiting for the Provost Office to send the c-faculty policies from the Division of Libraries and the Steinhardt School for review.

White noted she is in communication with Courant representatives on the status and transparency related to a new governance structure and policy. In the C-FSC’s review of spring 2020 the Council requested (1) the creation of a contract-faculty governance structure and (2) an opportunity for the contract faculty to participate in formulating the school’s reappointment and promotion policy.
Steering Committee

Chairperson Youngerman referred to Appendix B in the Chair’s report: Agenda for Steering Committee Meeting with President Hamilton.

A Senator expressed concern with the phrasing of the first sentence under 4. Faculty departures: “Faculty departures may bring a sense of relief since they alleviate the budget pressure at a time of crisis.”

Youngerman noted the second sentence: “However, they might affect disproportionately some segments of Faculty who are struggling particularly at this time, such as caregivers,” expresses the SC’s concern and they will better express the sentiment of the first sentence in the meeting.

A Senator inquired if continuing contract faculty were being asked to fill-in teaching responsibilities because of the retirement of tenured faculty members under the special retirement package. This issue will be brought up to the Provost. In response to an inquiry on the retired positions, it was reported the tenure line would be preserved.

Youngerman provided the link for the Advising for Course Registration Across Time Zones, October 26 memo.

A Senator inquired on 3. Shared Governance and the Law of Appendix B. “More broadly, could we think about the appointment of Aisha Oliver-Staley as an opportunity for us to reframe the way that faculty governance and OGS can collaborate on university policies?” He noted this is also an opportunity for the Council to develop their relationship with the Office of General Counsel and improve the University Senate meeting format.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM.
1. CFSC Steering Committee meeting with members of the NYU Board (11/17)
   a. We had a productive conversation with Bill Berkley and several members of the Board. We spoke to two big questions. #1 Even given everything that has gone on this year, are there elements of the way we have adapted that suggest ideas about how NYU could operate in the future? We noted the ways tech can be used to increase connectivity with portal sites/students, and yet the ways in which we need to think about principles around attendance (student and faculty). We pushed the Board to ensure that students continue to get taught by full-time faculty. And we pointed out that faculty need support to continue to innovate on curriculum delivery. #2 We know this has been a difficult year for faculty, are there particular issues you want to bring to our attention? We believe there will have to be a cultural re-set around student expectations of faculty accessibility (e.g. not 24/7). We also continued to voice concerns around faculty retention and program closures. Finally, the conversation turned to the Wasserman Center for Career Development and difficulties people have had with their support of students at both the individual and program-wide level; Steering will reach out to that office to begin conversations between them and faculty.

2. CFSC Steering Committee/TFSC Executive Committee/AMC Executive Committee meeting with Provost’s and Work/Life Office re: DOE school closing 11/24
   a. Although this meeting was scheduled to be proactive in advance of DOE closing, it ultimately took place after the DOE had already closed in-person schooling. (See appendix A for an email our leadership teams sent to all full-time faculty.) Nonetheless, it was a productive voicing of shared employee concerns. Grace Protos walked us through current support (e.g. $1800 Childcare Grant; increasing Bright Horizons child/elder care from 10-15 days for both 2020 and 2021; and a googlegroup to connect families with students looking to babysit/tutor/etc.) There are also efforts underway to launch an app to help families create pods, as well as to create a temporary collaboration with currently existing childcare centers to allow for drop-in service. This spread of potential resources is meant to address a central difficulty: different families have different needs and comfort levels with everything from having a bright horizons person in their home to having children go to in-person school days.

   We looked at ways to extend the material support of the Childcare Grant, including by potentially opening up the Emergency Relief Fund to childcare costs. We also discussed the anxiety that performance conversations and reappointment moments bring up for staff/faculty in the COVID context. The administration has been having conversations with supervisors and chairs about giving employees flexibility and pushing off ‘til a later date any work (e.g. service projects) which are not essential. The TFSC/CFSC will look to collaborate on messaging to chairs about the pressures faculty are under. That said, the Provost’s office has made clear to Deans and Chairs that even with the fiscal pressures the university is currently under, there should be no impact on promotion decisions; funding such promotions remains a priority and everyone has explicit permission and encouragement to continue the regular faculty R&P. Vice Provost Kristen Day
noted that there was no difference between Spring 2019 and Spring 2020 faculty reappointment and promotion statistics. In that context, although we brought up the issue of extending contract faculty contracts by a year and extending the tenure clocks by time longer than the current 1-year extension, there was resistance to those measures being necessary. Other suggestions for support for faculty included increased TA support for courses, increased flexibility on expectations of scholarly production (including artistic productivity for C-Faculty in Tisch), and clarity on the implication of the Covid moment on C-Faculty promotions.

3. CFSC/TFSC Faculty Mental Wellness meeting with Provost’s Office (Chair only)  
11/25 Ethan and Darcey Merritt met with Linda Mills and Karen Nercessian from the Provost’s office to discuss support for faculty wellness. The clearest take-away is that this is very much a concern for the administration and they want our ideas and want to hear from us about faculty issues. The conversation focused on workplace issues, such as email overload, zoom fatigue, and the pressure of the teaching/supporting-students schedule. The conversation also took up sources of anxiety around reappointment/promotion/tenure and pressure from chairs; the administration is working with chairs on, essentially, being supportive of faculty work/life and wellness but the hope is to continue to broadcast this message far and wide. On a more concrete level, the university is hiring an in-house counselor just to work with faculty. A project to help students understand what the faculty life is like and help faculty understand what the student life is like – in an attempt to build a culture of empathy – was discussed as well.

4. Upcoming Meetings for the Semester

If you have any issues you would like to have discussed at any of the below meetings, please forward your requests/comments to the Steering Committee at:

c-fsc-steering-committee-group@nyu.edu

a. C-FSC Steering Committee
i. C-FSC Steering Committee Meetings
   1. TBD
ii. Meetings with the President
   1. Tuesday, December 1st, 2020 4pm – 5pm

b. University Senate
i. Senate Meetings
   1. Thursday, December 3, 2020, 9:00 am – 11:00 am
ii. Senate Executive Committee Meetings w/ Board Executive Committee (Chair only)
   1. Tuesday, December 8, 2020, 5:30 to 6:15 pm

Appendix A.
Email sent to all full-time faculty from CFSC/TFSC leadership teams
Dear Faculty Colleagues,
We are distressed by the abrupt closure of the NYC public schools -- distressed for the students, and distressed for their families. Our Councils are committed to advocating for faculty who are facing hardships as a result of these closures; we will continue to work at both the level of policy proposals but also troubleshooting for individuals. The administration has ensured us that they are fully sensitive and empathetic to the stressors involved with such abrupt changes in childcare routines, including the impact on the emotional wellbeing of all our faculty colleagues and their families. In fact, we have meetings with members of the Provost’s office and the Work/Life office in the coming days, so please continue to send us your concerns and needs. As always, you can email your senators directly, or you can contact your council’s leadership teams at t-fsc@nyu.edu and c-fsc@nyu.edu.

Warmly,
T-FSC Executive Committee
Darcey Merritt, David Irving, Marilyn Nonken, and Nick Economides

C-FSC Steering Committee
Ethan Youngerman, John Gershman, Scott Illingworth, Leila Jahangiri, Mary Killilea, Noelle Molé Liston, and Agnes Tourin

Appendix B.
Agenda for Steering Committee Meeting with President Hamilton

1. Faculty Salary Survey from 2019-2020. At the most recent Senate Financial Affairs Committee meeting, Tony Jiga presented findings from the private research firm, CRA. The findings showed that there were no systemic salary inequities by race or gender. However, there was no presentation of any data whatsoever, only summary bullet points. Plus, the data from the study on “salary inversion” was not fully presented either. Can we have access to the methodology and more general average numerical findings and ranges from the CRA report? And what, if any, action items has the university formulated out of that report? [Note that this item was on our September Agenda as a future topic of conversation.]

2. Childcare/Eldercare. In September, our agenda with you noted that “We thank you for the enhancements to BrightHorizons and the responsiveness of Grace Protos and her office more broadly. Given what we’ve heard from colleagues about the perennial struggles of childcare which were merely exacerbated by COVID, we’re hopeful that making these enhancements the new normal is on the table for beyond 2021.” In the interim, we’ve been grateful for the new Childcare grant...and the DOE has gone fully remote. Which is just to say that this remains on the minds of many colleagues.

3. Shared Governance and the Law. We recognize that the university has certain legal obligations to make changes as the result of litigation. However, we expect that the norm will be that such changes are made by the University as such (rather than by, say, OGS). We find the experience of reading about such issues in the public press (e.g. student appeals of Covid-related suspensions; class action suits on tuition) disorienting. Are there other legal matters which could potentially reshape university policies? More broadly, could we think about the appointment of
Aisha Oliver-Staley as an opportunity for us to reframe the way that faculty governance and OGS can collaborate on university policies?

4. Faculty departures. Faculty departures may bring a sense of relief since they alleviate the budget pressure at a time of crisis. However, they might affect disproportionately some segments of Faculty who are struggling particularly at this time, such as caregivers. We are concerned about parents of school age children, professors who care for elderly parents, and professors who are born abroad and have family outside of the US. If there is no concerted effort to retain them, this might result in a loss of diversity for NYU. At this time, we have only collected several anecdotes but we would like to urge the NYU administration to scrutinize the data and, if possible, to make an effort to retain valuable community members. Similarly, although it’s not technically our purview, we’ve been concerned about similar reports among student-facing staff.

5. Spring/Summer/Fall updates and COVID. Admittedly a catch-all topic, and yet there is so much to catch…. 
JOINT T-FSC and C-FSC RESOLUTION ON ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

WHEREAS, the Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty Senators Council (T-FSC) and the Full-Time Continuing Contract Faculty Senators Council (C-FSC), representing the NYU tenured/tenure track and full-time continuing contract faculty (hereinafter, the “Faculty” and “NYU Faculty”) acknowledge that New York University has publicly condemned the racist attacks that have taken place in the United States over the past several months and applaud the educational initiatives, resources, and programming offered by NYU’s Office of Global Inclusion, Diversity, and Strategic Innovation (OGI) as well as the ongoing efforts of NYU’s Office of Equal Opportunity to address racism nationally and at NYU;

WHEREAS, racism and racial discrimination exist at NYU in teaching and scholarship and in the recruitment, retention, and accountability of Faculty;

WHEREAS, NYU Faculty desire to eradicate racism and racial discrimination in the recruitment, retention, and accountability of Faculty;

WHEREAS, NYU Faculty seek assistance in their efforts to identify and eliminate racism and racial injustice in their teaching and scholarship;

WHEREAS, NYU Faculty stand in solidarity with those who oppose hate, ignorance, and divisiveness, and are committed to taking action against race-based inequities that threaten excellence in teaching and scholarship; and

WHEREAS, a statement of commitment by NYU Faculty, both as a whole and individually, regarding their efforts to identify and eliminate racial injustice is a necessary first step to making lasting change;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1) NYU adopt and customize anti-racism education and pedagogical materials (“Materials”) that Faculty throughout NYU-NYC and its portal campuses can use;

2) NYU facilitate and encourage use of the Materials by frequently and regularly disseminating them to all Faculty and discussing at all Faculty meetings, whether school-wide or departmental;

3) NYU avoid racism in Faculty recruitment and retention; adopt a comprehensive plan to attract, recruit, and retain a diverse Faculty; and hold the schools and academic programs accountable for implementing the plan by, among other things, requiring special effort in the selection and education of search committees and the use of policies and practices to address equity gaps and discrimination in recruitment and retention.
4) We propose that Faculty include the following pledge in their signature blocks and syllabi: “I will be brave enough to have uncomfortable conversations and take action against racism at NYU”; and

5) The T-FSC and the C-FSC are committed to these resolutions and to taking steps to transform NYU into an institution and community for all people.
C-FSC Education Policy and Faculty/Student Relations Committee
Proposal on Communication and Collaboration Regarding Modified Spring Break(s)
DRAFT: 11/26/2020

November XX, 2020

Provost Fleming,

The C-FSC is aware of concerns from students and university administration that some faculty might be inclined to give longer assignments over the long weekends in the adjusted spring semester calendar. We share a commitment to providing vital space for students and faculty to rest during this time. We also want to ensure that the regular assignment of work that happens to fall over those weekends is not so restricted as to compromise pedagogy or curriculum, especially for courses that meet once a week or on irregular schedules. To that end, we are suggesting a messaging strategy and collaborative series of events that support the following: help faculty communicate their support for this policy, reinforce the vital need for rest, and make the faculty a partner in activities over those weekends to encourage a sense of community solidarity.

COMMUNICATION TO FACULTY & STUDENTS
We believe that communication to faculty around this matter should be distributed before the end of the calendar year and include the following:
- An encouragement to review all spring syllabi with a specific eye towards shifting tests and major assignments away from the days immediately after those weekends
- Strategies for helping students avoid cramming for project deadlines that fall the week after (i.e. breaking large projects into smaller segments or assignments; having deadlines that don’t fall on a class day)
- Acknowledgement that not all units of the university follow this schedule and an encouragement to check with their departments and schools before making plans and listing the schools that are impacted by the change

COMMUNICATION FROM FACULTY TO STUDENTS
We believe that providing faculty some key messaging strategies for their classroom discussions with students will help frame assignments in the spring semester in ways that will avoid miscommunication about workload and reinforce the core purpose of the long weekends. Some possibilities include:
- Reminding students that the original plan to completely eliminate spring break was modified to this schedule with the full support of the faculty and administration
- Directly sharing with students the ways they’ve adjusted their usual calendar and assignments to help ensure reduced work over these weekends
- Speak early in the semester about time management and their desire for students to have these long weekends as an opportunity to rest by not delaying projects/work
- Listing those weekends in the syllabus to directly acknowledge them as one might spring break week
COMMUNITY EVENTS CO-SPONSORED OR LED BY FACULTY

We also believe that this conversation around wellness and how to foster breaks provides a unique opportunity for the faculty to co-sponsor/lead some virtual events. Such events, which could take place throughout the semester, might help reinforce our collaboration on finding rest and fun without leaving town and risking our community public health strategies. Plus, the events would represent the university and faculty’s commitment to enhancing mental and social well-being. Some ideas might include:

- Videos of faculty offering NYC staycation ideas based on their expertise/knowledge of NYC
- Co-sponsoring events with The Office of Resident Life and/or Student Affairs or the Student Council
- An on-line faculty/student trivia night
- Community-wide virtual film screenings with post-show discussions with NYU alumni actors
- Possible sports event (i.e. conversation or panel with team members from Brooklyn Nets, etc)
- NYU|TISCH Game Center Community wide virtual competition
- Encourage Residential Life and their faculty affiliates and faculty fellows in residence to target events for those weekend

The C-FSC Education Policy committee would be happy to partner with the administration to help facilitate and move some of these ideas forward to ensure that students and faculty feel supported in this altered spring schedule and to use it to generate events that reinforce a sense of community and solidarity across NYU.
Date: November 24, 2020

Members: Aminda Heckman, Scott Illingworth (Chair), Stacen Keating, Noelle Molé Liston, Michael A Tyrell

REPORT
The committee met on November 19th. We reviewed the positive feedback to our October letter regarding spring classes and faculty flexibility to improve both in-person and remote offerings. It was noted that the Provost's office was already engaged with many of the same ideas and was receptive to many of our suggestions.

Based on a suggestion at the last C-FSC meeting, we crafted a letter to the Provost regarding faculty messaging and collaboration on adjustments to the spring 2021 academic calendar. A draft of that memo is attached for the feedback and review of the council.

We continue to value the ideas, input, and concerns of faculty representatives about other matters that our committee might help to work on or advance.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Illingworth
Committee on Faculty Benefits and Housing  
Report to the C-FSC meeting of December 1, 2020  

Harry Chernoff, Chris Dickey, Michael Ferguson, Vittoria Flamini, Robin Mitnick  

Vincent Renzi, chair  

The University has now confirmed that the rollout of the streamlined retirement plan investments options will take place in April, 2021. They have also confirmed changes to the funds line-up approved at the October 28th meeting of the Retirement Plan Investment Committee, revising the list that had been presented to us this past year by Patricia Halley, Assistant Vice President for Global Benefits.  

These all represent minor adjustments in the line-up, with the exception of the removal of the Templeton Global Bond Fund. This fund had been proposed to answer the request we had made in our resolution of March 8, 2018, calling for the inclusion of the Vanguard Total International Bond Fund. In point of fact, the Templeton fund was never a good substitute for the suggested Vanguard fund, because its portfolio includes a substantial holding of U.S. bonds, whereas the Vanguard fund’s portfolio consists solely of bonds apart from the U.S. In that sense, the decision to drop it is welcome.  

Although it will be possible for participants to access the Vanguard Total International Bond fund via the “brokerage window” to be implemented during the retirement plan streamlining, this will not substitute for featuring it as one of the basic funds in the streamlined line-up of investment options. I have, however, received an assurance that the Retirement Plan Investment Committee is open to reconsidering adding the Vanguard fund to the line-up after the implementation is complete and once markets stabilize post-pandemic.  

The next meeting of the Retirement Plan Investment Committee is scheduled for December 1, 2020.
Senate Community Standards Committee
Report

Date: November 24, 2020

From: Scott Illingworth, Committee Chair

REPORT
The Community Standards Committee met on November 19th, 2020 to hear a report from Craig Jolley regarding student conduct processes in response to COVID rules violations.

Craig shared that, after significant violations early in the semester, there has been a substantial drop off in reported cases as the semester went on. Most reports of violations are coming from fellow students. Of the several hundred COVID rules violation reports/referrals, just over 40 students have faced fall semester suspensions. About half of those occurred in the first few weeks of the semester. There are none currently pending. Many of the remaining students received lesser consequences like written assignments and warnings. These amount to about 400 students with lesser violations. Craig went to some effort to make clear that students receiving suspension were engaged in hosting or attending large scale gatherings or events where there was a flagrant violation of the university rules and public health guidelines.

The Office of Student Conduct is also working to assess demographic information about reports for violations to guard against possible bias in reporting or the administration of sanctions.

The committee is also working a few other issues of note that will come before the council and senate this year. These include:
- A possible amendment to senate rules of procedure regarding the updating of the Student Conduct Policy to help clarify what changes can be made directly by the committee
- A change allowing the community standards committee to alter the Protest and Dissent Policy
- An update to the Protest and Dissent Policy
- Our annual review of the Student Conduct Policy

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Illingworth
This committee continues to work on revising the student evaluations of teaching survey, fueled by the CFSC report which noted concerns about patterns of bias in responses and usefulness of the feedback even assuming no bias. The committee also continues to work on a wide range of recommendations that look not only to revising the survey itself but also to its uses.

In particular, the committee is looking at ways to encourage higher survey completion rates, and potential policy changes if rates do not improve (e.g. delaying grade releases by a few days to encourage completion). The committee is also examining ways to help faculty make productive use of feedback from students. In response to evidence that faculty in some schools do not look at such feedback, the committee is also looking at ways to encourage written reflection on feedback. Such encouragement and support are being balanced with worries about departmental overreach and concerns that support not feel punitive. The committee is also examining ways to make the data more accessible to students themselves. Notwithstanding all of the above, it’s worth noting that a consistent theme of committee meetings has in fact been to de-emphasize such data altogether in the hopes of emphasizing other data on teaching (e.g. self-reflection, peer observation, etc.).

The current hope is to pilot survey questions for the Spring 2021 semester.

Respectfully submitted,
Ethan Youngerman