



MINUTES OF THE C-FACULTY SENATORS COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2021

The New York University Continuing Contract Faculty Senators Council (C-FSC) met at noon on Thursday, September 9, 2021 via Zoom.

In attendance were Senators Abel-Bey, Brar, Chalas, de Leon, Gharibo, Grendell, Hornick, Illingworth, Jahangiri, Killilea, Liston, Maier, Maynor, McCarty, Mitnick, Nielsen, Patterson, Renzi, Spivakovsky, Taitel, Tourin, White, Youngerman; and Alternate Senators Bridges, Birdsall, Casey, Davis, Diamant, Ertel, Faber (for Dickey), Ferguson, Gandolfini, Hanna, Iams (for Yuan), Kleinert, Owens, Primm, Sahin, Schubach, Stevens, Sun, Tyrell, and Veitz Keenan.

ORIENTATION FOR NEW MEMBERS

Steering Committee Member Jahangiri presented an orientation on the University Senate and Full-Time Continuing Contract Faculty Senators Council (C-FSC). The University Senate is comprised of 141 members, which consists of 30 members of the C-FSC, 39 members of the Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty Senators Council (T-FSC), 39 members of the Student Senators Council (SSC), 7 representatives of the Administrative Management Council (AMC), 21 deans and campus vice chancellors, and 5 five senior members of the administration of the University. The monthly University Senate meetings are on a Thursday for two hours and consist of reports by each Council, a report from the President, and typically a general presentation. Votes take place on major university-related issues and only Senators or Alternates standing in place of a Senator may vote.

The Senate Executive Committee is comprised of the Council Chairs. This year the members include: President Andrew Hamilton, Chair of the NYU Deans Council Sherry Glied, Chair of the T-FSC Darcey Merritt, Chair of the C-FSC Ethan Youngerman, Chair of the Student Senators Council and Student Government Assembly Mehrin Ali, Chair of the AMC Mike McCaw, and General Counsel and University Secretary Aisha Oliver-Staley.

Jahangiri presented on the role of Senators and Alternates. Senators elect the Steering Committee members. Each Senator has an Alternate and in cases where a School only has 1 Senator, the Senator has 2 Alternates. In cases where an Alternate is serving in place of a Senator, they have voting privileges. As a collective, Senators and Alternates represent the interests of their constituents.

Both Senators and Alternates participate in Committees. There are 3 types of Committees: Council Committees, University Senate Committees, and University Committees.

The role of the Steering Committee is to set the agenda for the C-FSC, maintain communications with the other Councils, communicate with the President and the Provost via meetings each semester, assign the Committees, and collectively work to summarize and disseminate information to be shared to constituents.

Chair Youngerman added the Steering Committee and Council report collected concerns from faculty and articulated the appropriate channels to communicate concerns, including committee agendas, Council discussion, communication to University leadership, etc.

In response to a Senator's inquiry, it was noted that when the Council meetings move back into in-person format, hybrid options will be available, as they were in the past to accommodate the Abu Dhabi and Shanghai members.

In response to a Senator's question, Youngerman noted that Council members serve on 1-4 committees, depending on interests, availability, etc. The workload of Committee also varies based on agenda workload, with some committees meeting once per semester and others once per month.

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 May 25, 2021 meeting portion of the retreat were approved unanimously.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR: ETHAN YOUNGERMAN

See attached Document A.

Discussion, Questions, Additions

Steering Committee (SC) Meetings

Chair Youngerman stated in the newly developed C-FSC Bylaws, all meetings of the Steering Committee are open to C-FSC members except when an executive session has been called. The SC will inform the Council of the meeting dates, if any members are interested in attending.

Welcome Back Events

Youngerman noted Human Resources is hosting a series of welcome back events for faculty, staff, researchers, and administrators in September including an ice cream social, breakfast, cookout, and food truck fest.

Re-opening Concerns

Youngerman reported the Steering Committee received a report of an issue with security check-ins of daily screeners at Rubin Hall. The SC communicated the concern to the Provost's office and the issue was soon resolved.

Council Meeting Format

The Council discussed the format for fall semester Council meetings, noting Council members' interest in being in person, commuting challenges, and health concerns. The Steering Committee will send a survey to Council members regarding preference for in-person attendance versus remote attendance. It was noted they would work with IT to enhance the capabilities of the Colloquium Room to support a hybrid attendance.

The Chair's Report was accepted into the minutes.

WEATHER RELATED CONCERNS

Chair Youngerman noted the concerns of faculty and students, particularly those commuting from a distance, regarding the day-of communication on the opening of the University after Hurricane Ida. It was noted that the University typically follows the decision made by the Department of Education on public school closings. However, the public schools were not yet open at the time of this weather event.

Senators also questioned how snow days would be handled in the future, i.e. if classes would switch to remote and no cancellations would take place. Senators also inquired how decisions would be made if the Department of Education decided to close public schools for a snow day, which affects childcare for faculty members.

REOPENING CONCERNS

A Senator questioned if there would be a pivot to remote learning if a certain number of NYU members tested positive for COVID. A Senator expressed concern regarding positive cases in the classroom and also unmasking in the classroom while eating and drinking.

A Senator expressed concern regarding recording in the classroom. It was noted the administration is not mandating Zoom recordings. In the email from the Provost to all faculty, there was a menu of possible responses to student absence.

A Senator reported testing will continue on a sample of NYU individuals. The University is also monitoring hospitalizations and the percentage of COVID cases. She commented faculty should feel safe going back to the classroom, noting NYU's high vaccination rate and masking protocols.

It was noted that all NYU members can, at their own discretion, get tested once a week.

A Senator commended the University for their efforts in working through specific COVID protocols for Tisch and Steinhardt, particularly in the performing arts departments.

A Senator inquired how students unable to use electronics due to religious observances can gain access to the buildings since the daily screener process is electronic. It was suggested students could show their vaccination card. Youngerman stated the SC will look into this particular case.

He encouraged Senators to continue to bring specific issues to the attention of the Council.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

See attached Document B.

Discussion/Questions on the following submitted reports:

Faculty Benefits & Housing

Committee Chair Renzi reported that there will not be a major rise in medical plan premiums this year. Medical and prescription benefits costs are projected to rise just 1.5% for 2022. He reported NYU's Employee Assistance Program, powered by Optum, now offers an expert, on-campus mental health counselor available to provide assistance to faculty and employees.

Renzi also reported the University's Retirement Plan Investment Committee meets next week. The Benefits Committees of the C-FSC and T-FSC will have a joint meeting with Trish Halley, Assistant Vice President, Global Benefits on the HRA Retiree Medical Plan.

Reports at Meeting:

There were no additional reports at the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Resolution to Amend, Replace and Clarify the Grievance Procedures Pertaining to (C-Faculty)

Grievance Committee member White inquired on the status of the resolution passed by the Council regarding grievance procedures. She noted the recent updates to the Faculty Handbook did not address the recommendations. Chair Youngerman noted the Faculty Handbook updates reflected changes to the bylaws. The Provost office will be reviewing the grievance procedure resolution.

Salary Compression

Chair Youngerman reported the University accepted the Finance & Policy Planning Committee's recommendation to increase the minimum salary for full-time continuing contract faculty to \$70,000. However, they did not agree with the proposals for assured salaries of \$5,000 and \$10,000 above the minimum salary after employment of five years and 10 years, respectively. They stated salary increases based solely on longevity are incompatible with NYU's philosophy that annual increases should be based on merit.

Senators discussed how this decision impacts salary compression issues. The Finance Committee will continue to work on this issue and discuss proposing a meritorious evaluation of long-term faculty's work.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made by Council members.

COMMITTEE BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Council members participated in committee breakout sessions to elect chairs, create meeting schedules, and articulate fall agenda items

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM.

CFSC Chair's Report September 7nd, 2021

1. **Senate Executive Committee (Chair Only), 9/2/21, 10.30am.** President Hamilton noted that it appears that COVID will be an ongoing (eg endemic) challenge. Dr. Ciotoli pledged a continued flexibility and willingness to change policies if facts on the ground (eg community spread) require it. NYU will begin posting metrics for the semester next week, including overall case counts and % positivity. 97% compliance among registered students (98% among domestic and 95% among international) (less than 1% have been granted an exemption). Faculty: 98%; admin: 98%; union: 93%. NYU will “do whatever it takes to facilitate boosters.” Testing program: discretionary testing for anyone who wants it at least once a week; random sample of vaccinated group each week as well. Pressed about the possibility of testing the whole community instead of just a sample, Dr. Ciotoli noted that the PCR test has a 99.5% specificity (and that was his being generous), which would mean 350-400 false positives a week. At the moment, they don't think that level of disruption is worth it.

Asked about a hypothetical faculty member, confronted with 5 out of 15 students absent in their Monday class, being able to decide for themselves that the Wednesday class should be conducted via Zoom, Gigi Dopico stated clearly that NYU trusts faculty. We want the class to be in person, she explained; and we are aiming, always, for continuity. But there is a level of trust. Gigi also reported that the Office of Global Services has already received over 5,000 arrival papers from i20 Visa students, so it seems like international students found ways to get to New York.

The First University Senate meeting will be on zoom; then the November meeting will be in person (unless there's a major change in public health).

Finally, members expressed frustration about the lead time faculty and students (particularly commuter students) were given about Hurricane Ida, particularly given 8am class times for many (the University-wide email went out at 6.50am that morning). One of the difficulties, it was explained, was that NYU *usually* mirrors what the DOE does in terms of, say, closing school because of a snow storm; but public school wasn't in session.

2. **CFSC Steering Committee Meeting, 8/10 and 8/18.** The current Steering Committee met in executive session to elect our council leadership and staff CFSC, Senate, and University committees.

- 3. Meeting with Facilities re: Fall Classrooms (2020 Steering Committee), 7/14.** “Last year’s” Steering Committee met with Linda Chiarelli, Senior Vice President for Capital Projects and Facilities, members of Linda’s team, and Dr. Ciotoli, to discuss faculty concerns around classrooms and other facilities issues as part of the planning for the Fall “return.” We sensitized the facilities team to the reality that many C-Faculty don’t have a private office and, separately but relatedly, that faculty eating spaces was a concern (i.e. many colleagues don’t have a private office in which to eat). We pressed for more technical information to be available to faculty regarding classroom ventilation, spacing, etc. We also pressed for continued work on meeting the unique needs of certain subjects and schools, including performing arts. Finally, the facilities team explained that increasing air filtration in a given room often means making that room less comfortable, temperature-wise, because it means bringing in more outside air (which isn't cooled during hot times or heated during cold times). For colleagues who complain of air temperature in their classrooms and assume that such a temperature problem implies *a ventilation problem as well*, this understanding might be helpful.

Committee on Faculty Benefits and Housing
Report to the C-FSC meeting of September 9, 2021

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

Vincent Renzi, chair

On June 17th, I attend the quarterly meeting of the University's Retirement Plan Investment Committee, together with the observers from the AMC and the T-FSC, which was the first since the implementation of the streamlined array of retirement plan investment options.

Michael Ferguson and I met jointly with our T-FSC counterpart committee on June 22nd for the annual review of proposed medical benefits premiums for the coming calendar year, together with Patricia Halley, Assistant Vice President for Global Benefits, and James Archer, from the University's benefits consulting firm, Willis Towers Watson.

Medical and prescription benefits costs are projected to rise 1.5% for 2022; there is continuing uncertainty, however, about possible additional costs due to the novel corona virus pandemic. These might be direct costs, e.g., for vaccinations and boosters, and for Covid-related care and after-care, and indirect costs due to medical care that was deferred during the pandemic.

Later in the meeting we were joined by Bob Talbot, Optum's new on-site employee assistance program counselor.