

Reports of CFSC Global Committee and Faculty Committee on NYU's Global Network, submitted by Sam Howard-Spink on 12/11/17

The CFSC Global committee held its second meeting of the semester on November 9 and its third meeting on December 7. In attendance were Chair Sam Howard-Spink, Scott Illingworth, Edward Kleinert, Pamela Pietro, Josh Paiz and Aysan Celik.

At both meetings the group received a brief report from the chair about the continuing repercussions of the denial of Abu Dhabi security clearances to two tenured professors, reflected in the agenda of the Faculty Senate on the Global Network (see below) through the Fall 2017 semester. As well as discussing different perspectives on the case itself and the need for greater awareness of the nuances of the situation – for example, there are disagreements among the faculty and Washington Square and AD administrations as to the relative importance of the two professors' religion, research work and social media comments with regard to the refusal to grant them security clearances – the committee also considered the debate over the distinction between “academic freedom” and “mobility” across the global network, and the need for continuing contact with faculty at the portals themselves in light of decisions by the Journalism Department to “boycott” AD moving forward without consulting local faculty or students. Also discussed were ways to increase mobility in the global network for contract faculty, and ways to provide stability and protection to contract faculty at international sites, particularly with regard to promotions.

The Faculty Committee on NYU's Global Network held meetings on 11/14/17 and 12/6/17, with Sam Howard-Spink in attendance. In the November meeting, the committee was joined by Mohamad Bazzi and Arang Keshavarzian, the professors who had their AD security clearances denied. The two gave talks on what had happened, clarified points of contention and answered questions, and offered their perspectives on the response from NYU administrators. At the December meeting, NYU AD's top administrators joined the committee via Skype to discuss the institutional response to the visa denials, and the efforts underway to see that protocols are put in place should such an event be repeated. Also at the December meeting, the committee chairs circulated a Draft Statement on Mobility in NYU's Global Network from the Faculty Committee. Attendees were invited to comment on the draft, which is anticipated to be finalized and made public by mid-December. The document contains an affirmation of a set of principles relevant to the broader questions of mobility in network, and suggests a need for greater administration transparency and clarity over issues related to visa application procedures, timely information regarding requests, communication protocols, and a review of the Global Mobility Report.