



NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Faculty Advisory Committee on NYU's Global Network

February 4, 2014 (8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.)

Meeting Notes

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN MEETING

Eliot Borenstein, FAS (Russian & Slavic Studies) *Co-Chair*
Una Chaudhuri, FAS (English) *Co-Chair*
Joyce Apsel, Global Liberal Studies
Jennifer Carpenter, Stern School of Business
Andrea Chambers, SCPS (Design-Publishing)
Patricia Corby, College of Dentistry (Bluestone Center for Clinical Research)
Lucinda Covert-Vail, Division of Libraries
Richard Foley, Administrative Liaison to the Committee (Vice Chancellor for Strategic Planning)
Don Garrett, FAS (Philosophy)
Paul Glimcher, FAS (Neural Science)
Liliana Goldin, Silver School of Social Work
Natasha Iskander, Wagner Graduate School of Public Service
Victoria Morwitz, Stern School of Business
Fred Myers, FAS (Anthropology)
Charles Newman, Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences (Mathematics)
Olugbenga Ogedegbe, Langone School of Medicine (Population Health)
Robert Rowe, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development (Music & Music Education)
Gail Segal, Tisch School of the Arts (Graduate Film)
Joshua Tucker, FAS (Politics)
Nancy Van Devanter, College of Nursing
Joanna Waley-Cohen, FAS/NYU Shanghai (History)
Niobe Way, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development (Applied Psychology)

Report on Meeting

The meeting began with co-chairs Eliot Borenstein and Una Chaudhuri welcoming Provost David McLaughlin as a special guest for the day's discussions. Provost McLaughlin was invited to answer questions that had emerged from earlier committee meetings regarding how best to actualize partnerships between NYU New York, NYU Abu Dhabi, NYU Shanghai, and the various global sites. The committee had sent Provost McLaughlin a set of specific questions and topics in advance. (See the February 4 meeting agenda on the committee's website.)

Provost McLaughlin thanked the committee for the opportunity to join the morning's discussions and recognized the hard work of the committee. He noted that the global network can only be successful with a strong faculty presence and that the Provost's Office is actively working to move more of the oversight of global programs into the hands of schools, departments, and faculty. He noted that the Faculty Advisory Committee on the Global Network is itself one crucial step in this direction.

Provost McLaughlin then gave an account of the evolution of the global network, which he said would help the committee members understand his answers to their questions. He observed that NYU has improved dramatically over the past two decades as a major research university. One of its most important distinguishing features is its location in New York City, which has helped it immeasurably to recruit top faculty and students. In order to sustain this momentum, however, the University needed an additional distinguishing mark. In Provost McLaughlin and President Sexton's view this additional distinction can and should be provided by the global network. Crucially, however, the global network can only play this role of adding significant academic value to the university if it is developed in accordance with the standards and expectations of a great research university.

Provost McLaughlin emphasized the commitment to this model of research excellence on the part of NYU's academic leadership as well as of the international partners we are working with to develop the two portal campuses.

Before going on the address the ways in which the global network would become a real part of NYU's mission as a research university, Provost McLaughlin noted that the global network already adds other kinds of value and resources to the university: in addition to helping NYU compete for the best faculty and students, it allows overall student enrollment at NYU to increase (always an important consideration at a tuition-driven institution like ours) without increasing the number of students in New York, with its space issues. In addition, our Abu Dhabi and China partners have provided the University with financial aid resources as well as a significant amount of funds devoted to research.

According to Provost McLaughlin, connectivity is the key principle for ensuring that the global network becomes a vital part of NYU's mission as a major research university. Connectivity should be developed not in order to benefit or optimize any particular portal campus or site, but to enhance and optimize the overall network. Provost McLaughlin reiterated that this goal is best promoted by putting the development of the global network in the hands of schools, departments, and faculty, the prime mechanisms for doing so being: for the sites, oversight committees and pathway programs; and for the portals: collaboration with New York schools and departments, especially at the level of faculty recruitment, advancement, and academic interaction. Provost McLaughlin emphasized that given the relatively small size of the portal campuses, the only way they can become major research campuses is by being connected with NY schools and departments.

Co-Chair Eliot Borenstein raised a concern from faculty that the models for connectivity had already been settled; he asked whether there were opportunities for revision. In response, Provost McLaughlin said that there were such opportunities, and added that as both campuses mature, it is especially likely that revisions will be needed.

Other committee members reported a concern about whether NY faculty members were sufficiently informed about the needs and goals of programs at the portals to make informed decisions about—or to contribute meaningfully to—faculty recruitment there. Provost McLaughlin responded that the need to understand the portals' programs made it crucial for NY departments to be involved from an early stage of the recruiting process—the formulation of search plans; the identification of fields—as a way to build this necessary common understanding of the differences and similarities between programs in the same discipline at different locations.

A question that followed from the previous exchange related to the role of NY departments in shaping the curricula at the portals. Provost McLaughlin said there was no question of NY departments exercising “control” over portal programs. One committee member pointed out that the Provost's current position (that no one could be hired on a tenure-track line at one of the portals without first being accepted as an affiliate with a NY department) appeared to grant NY departments a great deal of control. There followed a discussion about the tension between the need to foster connectivity and the need to preserve the academic and curricular independence of the portals.

Provost McLaughlin pointed out that at present search committees for hiring faculty at the portals have to include New York faculty because neither Abu Dhabi nor Shanghai have sufficient faculty resources to mount searches independently, but as they build up a critical mass of faculty, the New York faculty presence on search committees can be scaled back. He added, however,

that in his view there should always be some New York faculty on search committees at the portals in order to ensure continued connectivity.

The committee then asked for some clarifications of the “both/and” memo distributed by the Provost, in which he discusses what he sees as a key mechanism for fostering connectivity: the requirement that all tenure-stream faculty have an affiliation with a New York departments, and that the “minimal condition” for the such an affiliation is the New York department’s expressed judgment that the individual would be eligible to teach their graduate students. (This document is currently available on the committee website).

One question asked was whether New York programs, once they have established an affiliation of the kind described above, have the right to revoke that affiliation if they see fit to do so. Provost McLaughlin acknowledged that they do have the right to revoke affiliations at any time. He added that if a faculty member is already tenured at a portal and their affiliation is revoked, the University would work to identify a new departmental affiliation for that faculty member. He observed, however, that revoking an affiliation would probably be a rare occurrence.

Asked whether this mechanism for connectivity places too great a constraint on the hiring priorities of the portals, Provost McLaughlin affirmed that the portal campuses should lead in developing their academic priorities. To the question of whether a portal might lose a candidate they really need because of a lack of interest on the part of the relevant NY department, Provost McLaughlin pointed out that because the NY campus is very large and diverse, except in very rare circumstances the portals should be able to find an academic unit in New York to partner with in identifying faculty hires that meet their needs.

Co-Chair Una Chaudhuri asked why, given the underlying goal and principle of connectivity, the requirement for a NY affiliation was restricted to tenured and tenure-track hires only, and did not include arts faculty who typically are on contract-stream. Provost McLaughlin agreed that there should be such a requirement for arts professors, and it was oversight of the “both/and” document that this wasn’t made clear. He said he thought it would also be desirable for other contract faculty at the portals (other than Arts Professors) to have NY affiliations, but that this would not always be required.

Along the same lines—that is, thinking about portal faculty in relation to non-FAS norms and practices—members of the committee expressed the concern that faculty from schools other than FAS were unaware of the proposal made by FAS deans about the establishment of a new faculty title/status called “global faculty” to mark the kind of affiliation designed to foster connectivity. They said that some faculty at those schools worry that—given the size of FAS—other schools might be expected to adopt this model without the benefit of full discussion. Provost McLaughlin reassured the committee that the FAS document

is still just a proposal, and it was never intended to apply to other schools. Any rules applying to other schools would first need to be decided upon and approved by those schools. Members of the committee, however, observed the possible confusion that might result from every school and portal having its own set of rules. The committee also urged the Provost to find better means of keeping all schools and deans as fully informed as possible about any proposals that were being considered by some schools.

The discussion then moved to two final points: Tracks for graduate students of NY departments to spend time studying with faculty at the portal campuses, and administrative oversight of the global network. Concerning tracks, Provost McLaughlin reported that Biology, Chemistry, and Engineering have already developed track models with NYU Abu Dhabi, and Neuroscience is currently considering such a model with NYU Shanghai. Because each discipline requires its own form of education and training, the Provost said there is no inclination to insist on a single model for what these tracks should be. Instead, the idea is to defer to individual programs and schools working with the portals to decide what works best for them.

Concerning administrative management of the portals and sites, some committee members said it was unclear which point people faculty members should communicate with regarding academic issues in the global network; they wondered whether there should be a single academic point person for global. Provost McLaughlin responded that he was skeptical of any academic position for the global sites being separate from the Provost Office and the schools. Such a position could conflict with his goal of moving oversight of the global network into the hands of schools and departments.

The meeting concluded with Provost McLaughlin thanking the committee for their time and offering to make a return visit to continue conversations about the issues associated with the global network.