

Report from the Faculty Advisory Committee on NYU's Global Network

Dear Colleagues,

The new Faculty Advisory Committee on NYU's Global Network has met five times since it was established in April 2013.

The charge of the committee, as articulated at our first meeting by the committee's liaison to the university administration, Dick Foley, is "to assess the academic state of NYU's global network (the 11 global sites plus portal campuses in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai) and make recommendations to the President and Provost for improvements, including recommendations for how best to integrate the global centers with schools and programs in New York and one another."

We see this as an opportunity for increased faculty involvement in the vision and strategic planning of our university's global initiatives, including an opportunity to seriously reassess and possibly reframe some of the global network's current forms and directions. We also see our role as being conduits and advocates for the needs of all NYU research scholars and students—graduate and undergraduate, at the Square or elsewhere—as this multi-faceted initiative evolves.

From our discussions at the first two meetings, we have developed a **preliminary list of topics and areas** for our work, and have begun gathering **information and materials** on those topics. That list of topics and those materials, along with **minutes of our meetings**, are posted on the committee's webpage, which can be found here:

<http://www.nyu.edu/about/university-initiatives/faculty-advisory-committee-on-nyus-global-network.html>

Among the materials on the site are several items that could answer some of the questions that are, we believe, often asked about the global network (including questions about organizational structure, scope, planning, and contracts). We invite you to peruse them, and to let us know about any other informational materials or official documents related to global that are of interest or importance to you.

We have had two visits to the committee thus far: on April 29th, Linda Mills, Vice Chancellor for Global Programs and University Life, gave us an overview of the global network, and answered questions about her efforts to engage departments and units more deeply and systematically in developing the global network going forward. Linda said her goal at present is to move from a "site-director-driven" model to a "department-driven" model for developing curriculum at the 11 study away sites. To that end, she has been working with the Deans of the schools to invite departments to identify sites that they are interested in being specially connected with. Departments were asked to respond to this invitation by the end of this semester.

The committee has anecdotal evidence that this process of consultation did not work as well for all departments as it should, largely because the tight timetable that accompanied it did not permit deep departmental discussion. We are committed to ensuring that this situation is

remedied, and **that all NYU departments and units have on-going and appropriately supported opportunities to consider and propose their preferred modes and models of interaction/integration with the global network.** By “appropriately supported” we mean not only with as much information as the departments need in order to become more meaningfully involved, but also with sufficient staff/administrative/financial support to alleviate the additional burden of work that meaningful involvement will require.

A second visit was from the Deans of Humanities at the two portal campuses, Judy Miller (NYUAD), and Joanna Waley-Cohen (NYUSH). (Joanna is also a member of this committee). Among the many subjects discussed was the important one of the relationship of departments at the Square with the faculty members being hired at the portals. This relationship begins with the searches for these faculty members and continues with regard to affiliations, possible teaching at the Square, and possible involvement of faculty from the Square in review processes later. All this needs to be studied closely and regularized, and will be a major focus of the committee’s work going forward.

A key principle that emerged in discussions during and after the visits is the need to balance regularization with flexibility, especially in the early years of site and portal development. The culture of NYU has never favored a “one-size-fits-all” approach. While the global network certainly produces a need for more legibility across—and more seamless movement between—academic units everywhere, it also provides an opportunity to create distinctive programs, building on the great variety of strengths, interests, histories, and cultures of our different schools, departments, and international sites.

The co-chairs of our committee also had a meeting with members of the Faculty Senate Council’s GNU Committee. We resolved to work together closely, to gather and share information, and to determine which areas each of our two committees should work on so as avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of efforts. We plan to meet periodically, as well as to stay in touch through the three colleagues who are on both committees.

At our last meeting, we decided to establish a number of subcommittees that will continue to meet over the summer. They are:

1. Subcommittee on curricular collaboration between NY and the portals
2. Subcommittee on the development of curriculum at the sites
3. Subcommittee on graduate programs and faculty research in the global network
4. Subcommittee on departmental involvement in growth of the global network
5. Subcommittee on student enrollment and experience in the global network

As a faculty committee, we understand our focus to be the quality of NYU’s academic programs, wherever they may be.

- We will therefore work to ensure that the education offered at our global portals and sites is of consistently high quality, and that we can confidently recommend them to all our students.

- At the same time, we are deeply committed to safeguarding and enhancing the quality and integrity of our existing academic programs. We will therefore be alert to any signs that the “tail is wagging the dog,” and that the development of the global network is having negative impacts at the Square.
- Finally, since the quality of academic programs depends largely on the quality and working conditions of their faculties, we will work to ensure that all our faculty colleagues, wherever in the global network they work, receive the fair treatment and appropriate protection that is necessary to achieve academic excellence.

We warmly invite your comments and suggestions for our work going forward. Please e-mail either of us directly or through the committee’s webpage.

Eliot Borenstein and Una Chaudhuri, Co-Chairs
e-mails: eb7@nyu.edu, uc1@nyu.edu