



# NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

**Faculty Advisory Committee on the Global Network**  
**Thursday, October 1, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.**  
**President's Conference Room (Bobst Library, 12th Floor)**

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## *Meeting Notes*

### **MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN MEETING**

**Eliot Borenstein**, FAS (Russian & Slavic Studies) *Co-Chair*  
**Una Chaudhuri**, FAS (English) and Tisch (Drama) *Co-Chair*  
**Sylvain Cappell**, Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences  
**Jian Chen**, NYU Shanghai  
**Kevin Coffey**, NYU Abu Dhabi  
**Peter Gollwitzer**, Provost's Council on Science and Technology  
**Dale Hudson**, NYU Abu Dhabi  
**Matt Kleban**, FAS (Physics)  
**Ritty Lukose**, Gallatin School of Individualized Study  
**Teboho Moja**, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development)  
**Yaw Nyarko**, Provostial At-Large Appointment  
**Christopher Packard**, Liberal Studies  
**Vincent Renzi**, C-FSC  
**Ron Robin**, Provost's Advisory Group  
**Matthew Santirocco**, Liaison with University Administration  
**Gail Segal**, Tisch School of the Arts  
**Mal Semple**, Global Sites  
**Paul Smoke**, Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service  
**Lisa Springer**, School of Professional Studies  
**Joshua Tucker**, FAS (Politics)  
**Hirokazu Yoshikawa**, Faculty Advisory Committee on Academic Priorities  
**Niobe Way**, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development

**Guests:** Hervé Crès, Dean of Social Science, NYU Abu Dhabi  
Robert J.C. Young, Dean of Arts and Humanities, NYU Abu Dhabi

## MEETING SUMMARY

### Discussion of the Provost's Search

Co-chairs Una Chaudhuri and Eliot Borenstein opened the meeting with a discussion of the recently announced search for a new provost for NYU. The two members of this committee who are also serving on the Provost Search Committee, Una Chaudhuri and Sylvain Cappell, had requested time on the agenda to conduct one of the "listening sessions" that the search committee is currently scheduling and running around the University. Chaudhuri began by sharing information about the composition, schedule, and methodology of the search committee, saying the current phase included seeking the University communities' views on the position, the provost's role, and on the desirable characteristics of the ideal candidate. A second and extremely important element of this phase of the search is soliciting nominations widely, and encouraging colleagues to think creatively about excellent internal and external candidates for this important position. Members of the committee were encouraged to send their nominations to [provost.search@nyu.edu](mailto:provost.search@nyu.edu), and to encourage others to do so.

In advance of this listening session, Chaudhuri had sent out the following questions as a way to start the conversation:

- *What do you see as NYU's biggest academic challenges?*
- *Where can the provost make the most difference in the next ten years?*
- *How would you know if we hired a terrific provost? What would you expect to notice?*
- *What experience do you think the provost should have had?*

A member emphasized the importance of faculty's role in the search process. The search committee will eventually present an unordered list of several names to the president for consideration, though there will also be an opportunity for every member to express his or her preferences or opinions.

A member asked whether faculty should contact nominees before nominating them, and the consensus was that nominees might be more open to considering the position once they learned that they had been nominated rather than in advance of a nomination.

A member noted that it might be advantageous for the Provost to be hired from within NYU, since President-Designate Hamilton is coming from outside. Another member suggested that a provost hired externally might provide a fresh perspective, while receiving guidance from a strong and experienced team of insiders.

Other members expressed a desire for a provost who views faculty as allies, partners, and resources to the administration; who understands the unique challenges NYU faces as a university with a global presence; and who holds a strong and distinctive vision about the value and structure of a globally networked university. Another member emphasized the need for greater communication and connection among faculty globally. This should be a primary goal of the new provost.

Other members added that, in addition to bringing faculty together across sites and integrating the portals, we needed a provost who will break down the silos on the Square and encourage better bridging across the New York campus.

One member emphasized the need for an academic leader who possesses the capacity for understanding and applying the kinds of standards by which creative work is assessed.

Another member suggested that the committee deliberate carefully about which of the two main prevailing models of provostship we want for NYU: a chief academic officer, or a deputy president. Each represents distinct advantages and disadvantages.

Another member would like to see a broadening of the definition of the global network to include all the places NYU faculty members and students work and collaborate, beyond the portals and sites. It would be helpful if the new Provost supported new and going partnerships in these other locations.

A member emphasized the importance of searching out candidates who are women and/or people of color for greater diversity among NYU's administration.

**Listening session on NYU Abu Dhabi: Robert J.C. Young and Hervé Crès**

NYU Abu Dhabi Dean of Arts and Humanities Robert J.C. Young and Dean of Social Science Hervé Crès participated by videoconference.

Young noted that the current system of student circulation and curricular coherence between NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU New York is working well. It has been a challenge in Abu Dhabi for students in the sciences to take required courses, but lots of work has been done in establishing equivalencies and enabling students to take other courses, and the situation is improving. NYU Abu Dhabi students have circulated to NYU New York and the global academic sites to take their science courses.

Young noted that many New York faculty seem to expect similar mobility for faculty among the global network, based upon their desire to travel to Abu Dhabi to teach. He emphasized that NYU Abu Dhabi has certain specific curricular needs to fill, and that it is not always possible for them to offer teaching opportunities for all interested New York faculty. Crès concurred that faculty in New York are not always conscious or aware of the curricular needs of NYU Abu Dhabi.

Chaudhuri suggested that faculty circulation is best managed by units (departments or schools) rather than by individuals. In this way, New York departments need to develop a better understanding of their counterparts at the portal sites.

Young noted that some faculty believe teaching in Abu Dhabi is their right, and NYU Abu Dhabi is expected to provide students, regardless of whether there is a need for the faculty member in question. This often happens in departments with the fewest students. He emphasized that New York faculty are welcome if they are needed.

Chaudhuri asked whether there is a way for New York faculty to develop a clearer understanding of Abu Dhabi's needs. She believes that this is an issue of structure, and is frustrating for both individuals and units. Young replied that the question of who travels to Abu Dhabi should go to deans, who understand budget restrictions better than individual programs. In the past, affiliate positions have had to be cancelled due to lack of funds.

Borenstein noted that the problem on this end is a lack of understanding of the “pathway” to teach in Abu Dhabi, which is a broader systemic issue. Chaudhuri pointed out that this ties into the issue of connectivity among campuses. More and more faculty and departments in New York are becoming enthusiastic about teaching and researching in Abu Dhabi.

Crès said that the situation is complicated by the fact that NYU Abu Dhabi is conducting many searches, some of which do not come to fruition as expected, leaving holes to be filled in the curriculum. In Social Sciences, he is asked to select faculty in September or October for the next academic year. They look for five to ten new professors per year and make ten to fifteen offers, but frequently do not know who will accept until the spring.

He said his division is undertaking a thorough review of the curricular staffing process, in order to establish a more systematic process and a more efficient way to express their needs and benefit from the expertise of those in New York. The first stage of the review is underway and involves faculty at NYU Abu Dhabi. A second phase, next semester, will involve NYU New York deans and chairs, in conversation with NYU Abu Dhabi deans and program heads.

Chaudhuri expressed her hope that, in the second phase, the NYU New York Chairs will be asked and encouraged to discuss this process in depth with the faculty of their departments. She noted how important it was for all New York faculty members to have access to information about the portals from within their units, rather than having to seek it individually.

In response to a question about “both/and” decision-making (that is, having both NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU New York involved in hiring and assessment of faculty, Crès said that prospective faculty for NYU Abu Dhabi are sensitive to whether they will be considered part of the NYU “family,” a connection they find attractive. However, the challenge he faces in recruiting is that they have to move quickly in the market, where there is stiff competition for the best faculty, and the doubled search process (having candidates come to New York first and then to Abu Dhabi) risks slowing things down. NYU Abu Dhabi is experimenting with a “flipped” model in some current searches, having candidates first pass muster in Abu Dhabi before their candidacy is assessed by the New York counterpart unit.

Young noted that there will not be many searches in Arts and Humanities this year, but that it has nevertheless been challenging to get enough New York faculty to serve on NYU Abu Dhabi hiring committees. In at least one case, this problem arose from a lack of positive and smooth communication between NYU Abu Dhabi and the NYU New York unit. Chaudhuri confirmed that this committee would like to find ways to ameliorate such situations and find ways to facilitate better understanding and cooperation.

Young and Crès expressed the hope that faculty in New York would understand that Abu Dhabi has very few students when compared to New York, with little capacity to host many people. Also, unlike the situation when the campus opened, they have now appointed a goodly number of standing faculty, reducing their need for affiliated faculty to cover the curriculum.

Crès has flown to New York and spent time with faculty. He feels that the flow of information goes well, except for questions of strategy. NYU Abu Dhabi feels NYU New York is apprehensive about how they spend their capital. NYU Abu Dhabi feels this must be addressed and that they need to make clear that they can be trusted to spend wisely and advance the global network, even though their approach may be different from that of NYU New York.

A member encouraged Young and Crès to continue to promote dialogue between NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU New York, and not to give up on faculty exchange. While there may still be some extreme feelings both for and against the global network, there is also an increasingly nuanced understanding of these issues among NYU faculty.

Another member recommended to Young and Crès that they should inform New York departments as early as possible if there is to be a change to the hiring process (such as the “flipped” interview schedule mentioned before). Crès noted that NYU New York units are fully involved in the planning of every search, including any changes in schedule.

The co-chairs and committee members thanked Deans Young and Crès, warmly, and the meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.