

MINUTES OF
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
March 27, 2018

Prof. Jonathan Karp called the Full Faculty meeting to order at 11:49 am in UU Old Union Hall. He welcomed President Harvey G. Stenger and turned the meeting over to him.

President Stenger gave his report to the Full Faculty meeting attendees. See attached PowerPoint presentation for details. Presentation can also be found at <https://www.binghamton.edu/faculty-senate/docs/032718-stenger-presentation.pdf>.

After no questions, the Full Faculty meeting was adjourned.

The third Faculty Senate meeting of the 2017-2018 academic year was called to order by Prof. Jonathan Karp, Judaic Studies, at 12:12 pm.

1. Minutes

After no discussion, the minutes of the February 20, 2018 meeting were approved as submitted.

2. Announcements

Prof. Karp announced that there will be a campus speech event on April 11 in the Chamber Hall. Flyers will be distributed to every department. Suzanne Nossel will be the keynote speaker who will make a short presentation. She will then lead a panel discussion followed by questions and concerns from the audience. One topic of discussion will be to examine the positive uses but also the shortcomings of the First Amendment in addressing legitimate problems of systematic racism in American society (including on college campuses). How do we allow for freedom of expression while seeking to protect dignity and safety of different communities? Our motivation for doing this event was the awareness that issues have heightened since the 2016 election. We want to be prepared and begin discussion in advance. We may hold a second follow-up event in the fall semester which may focus directly on issues of hate speech. Prof. Karp noted that these concerns were brought up in our Senate planning meeting in September.

3. Curriculum

a. Masters in Data Analytics

Prof. Agarwal, SOM, gave an overview of the proposal. In December 2014, the School of Management, Computer Science, and Mathematics started to develop a data analytics major. They developed a letter of intent that was sent to SUNY along with syllabi. External reviewers came to campus to review the proposal and both reviewers endorsed the proposal. The proposal was also sent to several departments on campus for input and approval. Ours is the only program in the U.S. that has departments that are collaborating on this type of program which makes ours a really unique program.

Prof. Fernando Guzman, Mathematics, and Diversity Committee member, reminded everyone that a motion was approved in the February 6, 2016 meeting that all new programs should include a statement on how programs will address concerns about diversity and inclusion. This proposal does not address the diversity issue and how it will seek to recruit from diverse populations. There is no plan to proactively recruit female students or unrepresented groups. The Diversity Committee proposes that the

Senate send the proposal back to the School of Management to correct these missing statements.

Prof. Guzman also noted that there are a number of areas throughout the proposal where diversity could have been addressed and was not. Examples of these places are on page 12 and 49. Prof. Agarwal said he will share these concerns with the committee although there is an urgency to get this proposal through to SUNY. He asked that this body approve the proposal in principle subject to adding those words in suggested areas. If this is agreed to, the committee can bring this back to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) and the Diversity Committee.

Prof. Lisa Tessman, Sociology, and chair of Diversity Committee, finds this procedural suggestion acceptable and suggests that the committee work with the Diversity Committee.

Prof. Guzman, who is chair of the Bylaws Review Committee, noted that the Faculty Bylaws do not say anything specific about the proposed procedure, however it is not uncommon to give conditional approval and defer the final approval to the FSEC.

After no other discussion, motion was made and seconded for a conditional approval. Prof Les Lander, Computer Science, notes that this is the most productive way to proceed, to have the proposal committee and the Diversity Committee work together to revise the proposal. This body can accept approval with the understanding that the proposal would then be amended in line with the concerns of the Diversity Committee and then approved by FSEC. This was approved by a hand vote with 1 abstention.

4. New business

- a) SOOT – Prof. Karp noted we are continuing the discussion on suggestions on how the SOOT forms and procedure can be revised so they perform a truly accurate evaluation of instruction, become a useful tool for the evaluation of instruction in tenure and promotion cases, are fair and objective but also offer a basis for comparison, and allow some degree of customizing for individual departments and instructors. Currently the paper form does not allow for customization and written comments, but the written form has the virtue of getting a higher response rate as it is typically handed out during class time. The digital format has very poor response rate unless the instructor allows time in class. We have also heard there is an issue of bias in responses (gender and ethnicity) and have received literature from Prof. Kleinberg that shows that bias does exist. Michael Vermilyea from I/T was present and available for the discussions.

Prof. Les Lander, Computer Science, commented that the paper forms do get better response but noted that handling of paper is a problem. Comments are available in electronic version but the one downside of the electronic format is that the deadline is the last day of classes. Prof. Karp noted that this was also discussed and we have requested that I/T extend the deadline to the final exam date, not the last day of classes.

Prof. Olivia Holmes, English, asked if students can be reminded of existing biases when they are filling out the forms and ask them to be objective. Can we provide some type of statement to respondents of existence of some type of bias so they are aware?

Prof. Randy Scholtz, Classical and Near Eastern Studies, noted that he chaired a subcommittee that addresses these issues about ten years ago. Can OIR supply templates that are used elsewhere? Perhaps with a bit of research, we can find templates that exist instead of making any decisions now.

Prof. Kajta Kleinberg, Political Science, said that including a statement about bias may not help the students when they are evaluating. The SOOT questions that we have now have specific goals and some don't, and it seems we are evaluating learning instead of evaluating the teacher. Gender bias comes from these questions. The Social Work or Psychology departments may be able to help with these types of questions.

Prof. Sarah Gerck, Music, suggested we have a conversation on what role the SOOTs play in tenure and promotion cases.

Prof. Daniel Magleby, Political Science, said that some literature about implicit bias and priming effects is available. Including a statement with the SOOTs will exacerbate the problem by students reading this statement ahead of time, so this is not helpful. The structure of the institution using SOOTs is important but it is also important to understand how this data will be used and analyzed.

Prof. Natalija Mijatovic, Art, said that discipline bias exists in Art more so than in other disciplines due to the dynamics of the instructions. Some SOOTs do not fit in the learning process in Fine Arts.

Mike Vermilyea, I/T, said that customizing SOOTs to the needs of different departments is done now (Watson, School of Management) so we can differentiate by school. He is not sure we can customize based on department or instructor level. If it does become possible, it may take a lot of work to do so. We do have another tool (Qualtrics) on board that may help but it's in the infantile stage and we do not know the limits of its capabilities at this time.

Prof. Sumantra Sarkar, School of Management, said it may be an issue about having the students give feedback before they can see their grades. Prof. Pamela Smart, Art History, said there are campuses that use that procedure and results are publicly available but this would be a shift in our policy.

Provost Donald Nieman said that issues of bias are important to address. There are people with designing expertise who can focus on this and it is within our grasp to do this. The SOOTs is just one part of the evaluation of teaching for purposes of tenure and promotion, and there are guidelines in place for other types of evaluations not just SOOTs.

Prof. Tessman, Philosophy, commented that it is important to address bias. She suggests we form a committee to review this; membership could include someone from the current All University Personnel Committee and someone with expertise with reducing bias in evaluations.

Prof. Karp said we will try to come up with models and proposals on how to revise the evaluation process. Progress can be given at next Faculty Senate meeting. This is important to address in a timely manner.

After no more business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:54 pm.

Present: Christina Balderamma-Durbin, Anne Brady, Cassandra Bransford, George Catalano, Manas Chatterji, Zu Yan Chen, Kenneth Chiu, Leon Cosler, Weiyang Dai, Raviraj Deshmukh, Marvin Diaz, Nikolay Dimitrov, Jill Dixon, Patrick Doyle, Benjamin Fordham, Mark Fowler, Sarah Gerk, Joseph Graney, Kevin Hatch, John Havard, Brendan Hennessey, Noah Henry, Stephanie Hess, Sharon Holmes, Olivia Homes Moroni, Mattias Iser, Andy Jean-Baptiste, Barry Jones, Jonathan Karp, Changhong Ke, Katja Kleinberg, Adam Laats, Kristina Lambright, Leslie Lander, Alistair Lees, Stephen Levy, Harold Lewis, Carl Lipo, Richard MacKenney, Daniel Magelby, Claudia Marques, Marcin Mazur, Natalija Mijatovic, Carol Miles, Richard Naslund, Donald Nieman, Vladimir Nikulin, Carolyn Pierce, Sumantra Sarkar, Andrew Scholtz, Pamela Smart, Harvey Stenger, Dana Stewart, Ruth VanDyke, Adrian Vasiu, Erin Washburn, Lea Webb, Hong Zhang, Harald Zils, Melissa Zinkin

Excused: John Starks, Alexi Zentner, Yan Zhang

Absent: Nancy Abashian, Laura Anderson, Serdar Atav, Anne Bailey, Elizabeth Casteen, Eric Cotts, Daniel Thomas Davis, Patricia DiLorenzo, Deborah Elliston, Heather Fiumera, Leslie Gates, Arianna Gerstein, Christopher Hanes, James Jentsch, Hyeyoung Kang, Richard Lee, Brett Levinson, J. Koji Lum, Anthony Meder, Nagendra Nagarur, Nkiru Nzegwu, SB Park, Qi Wang