

# GENERAL FACULTY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

January 06, 2010

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**Members In attendance:** Chair Stephen Eisenman, Chair-elect William Ocasio, Paul Arntson, Jian Cao, Jack Doppelt, Scott Durham, Anupam Garg, Andrew Koppelman, Seth Lichter, Ferdinando Mussa-Ivaldi, Babette Sanders, Helen Thompson, Sylvia Wang, Laurie Zoloth

**1. Greetings and Introduction:** GFC Chair Stephen Eisenman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

## **2. Approval of minutes of December 2, 2009 Meeting**

The minutes of the December 2, 2009 meeting were approved unanimously and will be posted to the GFC website.

## **3. Final Amendments of Governance Documents**

A motion was made, and seconded, to limit the debate on each amendment to ten minutes, with an additional vote to extend any discussion. General Faculty Committee members voted and the motion was passed.

### ***Amendment 1: Addition of Section 6 in the Senate Bylaws, Article 3 regarding the Executive Committee***

A motion was made, and seconded, to amend Senate Bylaws, Article 3 with the addition of Section 6 which states: *“A simple majority of the Executive committee may request a meeting of the executive committee, which consists of the chair, chair-elect, past chair, and the chairs of the standing committees of the Faculty Senate.”* The floor was opened for a ten minute discussion and a short debate ensued. General Faculty Committee members voted and the motion was passed.

### ***Amendment 2: Allowing administrators to be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Senate***

A motion was made, and seconded, to allow the president, provost and associate provost, to be made ex-officio, non-voting members of the Senate. The floor was opened for a ten minute discussion and a debate ensued. A motion was made, and seconded, to extend the discussion for an additional ten

minutes. The floor was reopened for discussion. General Faculty Committee members voted and the motion to allow the president, provost and associate provost, to be made ex-officio, non-voting members of the Senate was not passed.

### **Re-examining Departmental Representation**

Governance Subcommittee Chair, Paul Arntson, strongly recommended the GFC to re-examine departmental representation, and highlighted the issues associated with the current plan. Data for an alternative plan was presented and GFC members weighed in on the matter. After much debate, it was determined that this issue be brought before the Senate at the January 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting. On a separate note, the challenge in getting accurate data from the administration on the number of faculty members within programs and centers remains a problem. In light of this discussion, the following third amendment was presented:

### ***Amendment 3: Quorum to consist of all elected members rather than potential open seats***

A motion was made, and seconded, to change the following current language from: *“The quorum must be a majority of the members”* to *“A quorum consists of the majority of the elected members (not the number of seats that potentially could be filled).”* The floor was opened and a short discussion ensued. General Faculty Committee members voted and the motion was passed.

### **4. Final Vote on Governance Document**

A motion was made, and seconded, in favor of the acceptance by the GFC of the revised governance documents. The floor was opened for a ten minute discussion and several comments were made. General Faculty Committee members voted and the motion was passed unanimously.

The approved governance document will be presented to the faculty body at the January 28<sup>th</sup> University Faculty Senate meeting. If approved by the Senate, the GFC will work with the administration to present the governance document to the Board of Trustees for their approval of the statutes, and more specifically, the articles of authorization to establish a University Faculty Assembly and a Faculty Senate, to be included in the statutes of the university.

## **5. Reports of the Subcommittees**

*Budget Subcommittee Report:* Sandro Mussa-Ivaldi, Budget Subcommittee Chair, discussed the challenges facing the Budget subcommittee, including administrative barriers, greater accessibility to budget data, and faculty involvement in budgetary decision making. GFC members discussed these challenges in great detail and were encouraged to submit questions to the Budget subcommittee to be presented at the next meeting with the administration.

*Childcare Subcommittee Report:* Andrew Koppelman, Childcare Subcommittee Chair, has been communicating with the administration and is currently waiting for an update.

*Benefits Subcommittee:* Anupam Garg, Benefits Subcommittee Chair, talked about current benefits topics being examined by the Human Resources department, which include health plans for retirees and increasing wellness benefits for all NU employees. Anupam asked GFC members to volunteer, or to encourage others to volunteer, in joining the Benefits department in tackling the wellness benefits initiative. Additionally, GFC members requested the Benefits Subcommittee to investigate taxable benefits for gays and lesbians, improving the current tuition benefits plan, and increasing SPAC benefits.

## **6. Reports on the Trustees/GFC Meeting on December 5th**

Stephen Eisenman thanked everyone who participated in the December 5<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees meeting. GFC members shared their experiences and reflected on noteworthy meeting moments. As a follow-up to the BOT meeting, the GFC will invite President Schapiro to the March GFC meeting to talk about the University's strategic plan.

## **7. Report on the Ombudsman**

Laurie Zoloth is proactively communicating with the administration regarding the implementation of the Ombudsman program and is currently awaiting their response. She has discovered an elaborate Ombudsman Association training program, which should aid in the training of the new NU Ombudsmen.

## **8. Report on Traffic on Sheridan Road**

William Ocasio, Chair of the Campus Safety Subcommittee, is waiting for an update from the administration on the date of the upcoming city council meeting, at which traffic safety plans for

Sheridan Road will be discussed. William has expanded the Campus Safety Subcommittee membership to include staff, and faculty members outside of the GFC.

## **9. New Business**

*Travel Reimbursement Policy:* There is great concern over the overwhelming amount of time required to submit travel expense reports, from meticulously entering each expense to keeping every minor receipt and taping each corner of that receipt to a blank sheet of paper. Jian Cao has agreed to look into the matter further and will report back to the GFC on her findings.

*Posting the Faculty Survey:* Paul Arntson will proceed in making available the 2007 Faculty Survey results on the GFC website.

*IRB Issues:* A request was made asking the Research Subcommittee to look into the IRB issues currently surfacing.

## **Conclusion**

- The next GFC Meeting will be held on February 3, 2010 at 7:00 pm in Scott Hall room 201 (the Ripton Room).

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 pm.

Minutes Submitted by: Diana Snyder

Minutes Approved by: General Faculty Committee members