

Faculty Senate minutes, Tuesday September 5, 2023

In attendance: Deirdre D'Albertis, Peter Gadsby, Mark Halsey, Eric Trudel, Lauren Curtis, Cole Heinowitz, Matt Mutter, Laurie Dahlberg (in part), Brooke Jude, Michelle Murray, Miles Rodriguez, Gideon Lester, Sean McMeekin

In its first meeting of the Fall semester, the Senate:

- Elected Eric Trudel as chair and Lauren Curtis as secretary
- Was notified that the SMC division's election of its divisional chair is currently still pending
- Was updated on the new concentration in Data Analytics (which has been unanimously voted by the Curriculum Committee, presented to the Board of Trustees, and now appears in the Registration Guide)
- Discussed changes to the Bard Research Fund proposed by the Faculty Resources Committee. The changes were welcomed and the Senate made suggestions for additional specificity of language in the call for proposals
- Discussed the College's stance on intellectual property. Mark Halsey's office has been working on a draft IPP (Intellectual Property Policy) as a long-term project. Faculty has a role to consult – this should be an agenda item for the next open Senate meeting. The Hessel Museum and Fisher Center have a particular interest in these issues
- Created an ad-hoc committee, with a representative from each division, to update the faculty in the fast-moving area of AI. Some parts of the College have developed policies (e.g. particular academic programs, the Graduate Center) but this is not the committee's role. Rather, it will keep colleagues informed and share information / best practices
- Discussed a proposal for a new "programmatic concentration" that will be brought to the faculty at the next faculty-led faculty meeting. Students have been asking for transcript recognition for work done outside their major; on this proposal, academic programs would choose (but not be required) to offer a track for students looking to concentrate in their field. The work would not have to be connected to the Senior Project
- Was updated on the new sabbatical policy and advised that DOC will soon share a revised sabbatical schedule. The Dean noted that the shift to more frequent sabbaticals increases the importance of the three-year plan for academic program planning
- Was updated on the increased number of transfer students this year, and the Dean requested that academic programs revisit their moderation requirements to make sure that transfer students have a path in the major
- Was reminded, and asked to remind faculty, that moderation papers are now due earlier in the Fall semester (September 13)

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Curtis

Senate Minutes Oct. 3, 2023

I. The Senate discussed items on its agenda for the coming months. These include:

- The Oct. 11 faculty-led faculty meeting
- A report from Felicia Keesing and Phil Pardi on Citizen Science
- The need to organize a series of forums to discuss further FERD changes, especially re: the question of promotion criteria
- The new Artificial Intelligence committee needs to be fully staffed with reps from each division
- The need for faculty involvement in the integration of the new UTS property into campus life

II. The majority of the 10/3 meeting involved the discussion of the **new proposal** that would allow programs to develop a second focus untethered to moderation and senior project.

-The proposal was presented by Rob Culp and Ethan Bloch; Mackie Siebens offered a perspective from Admissions and the EPC chair offered a student perspective.

a) The need for such a proposal emerged out of a situation in which students are sometimes doing joint or double moderations/senior projects in order to get **transcript recognition** for more than one discipline. But this often distorts or overwhelms the senior project in any one discipline.

-This generation of students is particularly concerned with showing range of expertise on their transcripts. It would strengthen our recruitment of students.

-The EPC reported that nearly 500 students responded to a student government survey (which is four times the response rate of any other survey they've sent to students); the response unequivocally supported the idea of "minors"

-The idea of the second focus is consistent with the interdisciplinary ethos at Bard.

b) Important features of the proposal:

- nothing about the structure of programs is changing.
- **OPT-IN:** Programs do not have to create a second focus.
- It would be a 5-7 courses; it would involve delineating a **subset** of courses already offered. So no new courses would be required.
- It is not connected to senior project; you don't need to moderate into it.
- It would be a matter of registrar oversight: have they or haven't they taken the courses?

c) Questions/Concerns:

Senate members discussed questions about the proposal that could be raised at the full faculty meeting: Would it be confusing to having two different kinds of “concentration”? (There is a limitation re: the registrar’s software and its limited “inputs.”) Would it impact advising? Would it put excessive pressure on course rosters? Would it ‘professionalize’ the Bard curriculum, or rather be an agent of the liberal arts ethos?

III: The Senate discussed the problem of the timeline for EPC reports. For pre-tenure evaluations in particular, student government is not able to elect EPC reps in time to deliver the reports in a manner keeping with the timeline in the Faculty Handbook.

-The Executive Committee is going to address this matter.

Submitted respectfully by Matthew Mutter, Associate Professor of Literature

Faculty Senate minutes, Tuesday November 7, 2023

In attendance: Deirdre D’Albertis (ex officio), Peter Gadsby (ex officio), Mark Halsey (ex officio), Eric Trudel, Lauren Curtis, Matt Mutter, Laurie Dahlberg, Brooke Jude, Michelle Murray, Miles Rodriguez, Gideon Lester, Sean McMeekin, Julia Rosenbaum, Cathy Collins, Stefan Mendez-Diaz.

In its third meeting of the Fall semester, the Senate:

- Discussed the need for new language in the faculty handbook clarifying the primary program / division for faculty hired into interdivisional programs. The Executive Committee (EC) will write up a draft paragraph.
- Received a visit from representatives of the FEDERC, Nicole Caso and Miriam Felton-Dansky, to discuss changes to be made to the faculty evaluation document now that the process of full-faculty consultation and vote is complete. The Senate approved a list of minor edits and agreed that other proposed changes (e.g. phrasing of the scope of the document, to cover faculty who teach in both the graduate and undergraduate college) be reviewed by the EC before being brought back to the Senate.
- Received a visit from Taun Toay, CFO, for updates on the College’s fundraising strategy, undergraduate recruitment, and capital projects. We are still in recovery mode from the pandemic (which impacted net income to the tune of \$14 million); in the short term, operations take priority over endowment. With current faculty-student ratio of 1:9, there is room to grow the freshman class and the cohort of transfer students. Undergraduate admissions are up more than 35%, and the recent decision to meet financial need for all applicants applying in the Immediate Decision Program (IDP) increases competitiveness in early admissions. The CFO and Dean emphasized the importance of faculty involvement in admissions and recruitment, especially with IDP.

One constraint to class size is dormitory space: 400 + beds across 4 buildings are currently being built on north campus, with a projected completion date of summer '25. Longer term capital projects include gym expansion (to include field house and mixed-use wellness center, relocating counseling and health services). The current vision for the new UTS campus (which comprises 150,000 ft² of buildings and outbuildings) includes creation of an arts campus, possibilities for graduate and perhaps also faculty housing, classroom space, and library expansion.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Curtis

Faculty Senate minutes, December 5 2023

In attendance: Deirdre D'Albertis, Peter Gadsby, Mark Halsey, Eric Trudel, Lauren Curtis, Matt Mutter, Laurie Dahlberg, Brooke Jude, Michelle Murray, Gideon Lester, Sean McMeekin, Julia Rosenbaum, Cathy Collins, Miles Rodriguez

This was an open Senate meeting; six other faculty members were present

In its final faculty meeting of the Fall semester, the Senate:

- Was presented by the Dean of the College with the new draft sabbatical policy, as agreed with the AAUP, to support implementation of the new faculty contract. There will be multiple opportunities for feedback; initial discussion focused on a) How to phase in and manage its impact on program staffing, especially for smaller programs, b) How to transition from a policy of priority based on seniority (as per current faculty handbook) to a sequence of priorities including junior faculty, faculty who have already delayed their sabbatical, and faculty close to retirement. In the case of the new one-off paid LOA for non-TT faculty, priority based on seniority should remain in place, c) Adding language that requires faculty to give advance notice about plans to delay the sabbatical, to help with planning. Suggestion – could Juliet Meyers (Web Services) create a tool for uploading 3-year program plans similar to the PAC tool?
- Was presented by Ethan Bloch and chair of the student EPC Vivian Hoyden with the revised proposal for “programmatic concentrations” / “**second focus.**” The Senate voted unanimously to bring the proposal to a full-faculty vote at the next faculty meeting, and voted 10-0-1 on the terminology of “**second focus.**” Points raised during the discussion included: a) Ensuring that students are kept track of by adding the opportunity to declare a secondary focus to current systems (the moderation form; the senior status form). Keeping track of working towards a secondary focus should be primarily the

student's responsibility; it is an additional opportunity to receive transcript recognition, not a graduation requirement; b) The need, in general, for more admin support at the divisional level for student tracking, especially for larger programs; c) The importance of programs implementing straightforward, user-friendly requirements for the secondary focus, as well as clear communication in advising documents and program websites. The Senate acknowledged and expressed appreciation for the careful, important, and far-sighted work of the student-faculty team who led this new initiative.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Curtis

Faculty Senate Minutes, February 6 2024

In attendance: Deirdre D'Albertis, Peter Gadsby, Mark Halsey, Eric Trudel, Lauren Curtis, Matt Mutter, Laurie Dahlberg, Brooke Jude, Michelle Murray, Gideon Lester, Sean McMeekin, Julia Rosenbaum, Frank Scalzo, Swapan Jain (visitor), Michael Sadowski (visitor)

In its first meeting of the spring semester, the Senate:

- Was reminded by the Registrar that the deadline for moderation papers is now earlier in the semester, and that student submission of the short papers is online. Other online upgrades include the ability to read the papers online and a record of which faculty serve on the moderation board.
- Voted unanimously in favor of the draft Intellectual Property policy presented by Mark Halsey (which has become pressing since it is required e.g. by the Dept of Education and by grant-making bodies). One revision was made to the wording of the policy for clarity – a preamble stating that specific contracts and agreements supersede the college's policy.
- Continued its discussion of the new sabbatical schedule and policy, presented by Swapan Jain (AAUP) and the Dean of the College. Additional edits were suggested which a) clarified that pretenure faculty requests to combine a sabbatical with a LOA should be prioritized, and b) sharpened language around "teaching load" and "teaching semester" to clarify that faculty making use of course releases are still on-campus and engaged in other faculty work as per their contract. A new draft will be circulated; if approved by vote, the new policy will be added to the 24-25 faculty handbook.
- Decided on a timeline for the Curriculum Committee to approve individual programs' new Second Focus requirements in order to implement for Fall 2024. March 15 is the

deadline for programs to communicate their interest in offering a Second Focus; March 25 is the deadline for submitting their proposed requirements.

- Was updated by Michael Sadowski about best practices for students recording class for disability accommodations and access. Erin Braselmann, Dean of Accessibility, and her staff will visit divisional meetings to discuss the issue in more detail.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Curtis

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes , March 5, 2024

Present: Eríc Trudel (chair), Deirdre d'Albertis, Cathy Collins, Brooke Jude (reporting), Miles Rodriguez, Olga Voronina, Sean McMeekin, Peter Gadsby, Frank Scalzo, Matt Mutter,

Announcements:

1. AI committee, with representatives from all divisions, are meeting weekly, hoping to put a report together for the end of the spring semester

Agenda

1. Discussion of the agenda for 3/13 Faculty led faculty meeting
 2. Discussion of the current curriculum committee agenda item to evaluate course caps for various levels of courses, to see if there is agreement of the numbers that could be used as college guidelines. ET recommended for the curriculum committee to come up with a proposal to bring to an upcoming senate meeting
 3. Mark Halsey proposed converting the current CaFE forms to online. Following discussion this received verbal approval from the senate members. Will bring this to the full faculty.
 4. Discussed a concern brought by a student group for faculty to help support those struggling with mental health. Recommended that the group meet with the Executive Committee, EPC and Student Affairs Committee
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Faculty senate minutes, April 2 2024

In attendance: Eric Trudel (chair), Cathy Collins, Lauren Curtis, Laurie Dahlberg, Brooke Jude, Gideon Lester, Sean McMeekin, Michelle Murray, Matthew Mutter, Miles Rodriguez, Julia Rosenbaum, Frank Scalzo, Deirdre D'Albertis (ex officio), Peter Gadsby (ex officio)

Announcements from DOC and committee chair:

- CAFÉ forms will be fully online by this fall.
- A reminder from the Dean, who recently attended the Board of Trustees meeting, that the President will give a report and take questions at the April 10 faculty meeting about the College's financial priorities and planning.
- The next Senate meeting, May 7, is an open meeting. The CFO will join to answer questions; a reminder that the Senate may request reports from other administrators as and when this would be useful.

Items of business:

1. Program take-up of the new second focus: 21 programs have signed up so far. The Senate agreed to make an exception to the wording that only "programs" may offer a second focus, in order that the various language programs (which, together, are officially the umbrella "program" of FLCL) may do so individually.
2. Discussion of the 2-credit tango offering sponsored by the President and listed as an ELAS course. The course is not cross-listed with Dance; the Senate unanimously passed a motion affirming a program's role in determining its own curriculum.
3. Discussion of College-wide norms around course caps. The Curriculum Committee submitted draft guidelines that convey norms and expectations for class sizes. Senators made suggestions to the wording (in items 5 and 6) and suggested that the Registrar include some of this information when communicating with faculty ahead of registration.
4. The revised faculty evaluation document has now been finalized. It was noted that no substantive changes have been made to the section on promotion to Full Professor. The Senate consensus is that, rather than return this to immediately to a full-faculty discussion, for now we prioritize the role of CFCD and discussion in the divisions and individual programs. One suggestion was made for the future, that promotion be decoupled from the tenure process in terms of its timeline.
5. Concern was raised about the difficulty of reaching a quorum in some divisions for evaluation discussions and votes. The Senate unanimously approved a wording suggestion proposed by the EC in the faculty handbook to help alleviate this.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Curtis

Faculty Senate minutes, May 7 2024 (open Senate meeting)

20 faculty members present. Present *ex officio*: Deirdre D'Albertis, Peter Gadsby, Mark Halsey.
Present for a segment of the meeting: Taun Toay, CFO.

Announcements

-- Erika Kaufman is taking over as the new interim director of the Language and Thinking program.

-- Starting in Fall 2024, Citizen Science will take place during the fall and spring semesters, not during January (it is a graduation requirement but remains a not-for-credit program).

Senate business

-- The Senate voted in favor of CAFÉ forms moving online in the fall (all except one in favor). Faculty discussed the accessibility benefits of online evaluations and the importance of maintaining a culture of taking 10-15 minutes to do evaluations in class, to maintain a healthy response rate. It was suggested that this latter practice be recommended e.g. in new faculty orientation and in email communications from Mark Halsey's office.

-- An update from the recently-formed AI committee was circulated.

Open senate discussion

-- The CFO updated faculty on the College's ongoing response to Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) about their divestment demands. He discussed the limitations that NY State Executive Order 157 places on institutional decision-making and placed the current divestment conversation in the context of his office's history of interacting with students around investment policy and transparency (e.g. the establishment of a socially responsible investment committee, current DEI goals for investment strategy). He stressed that the College supports students exercising their rights as citizens. He also noted that student demands for greater support for displaced students are in line with the administration's long-term goals (e.g. of endowing a fund for displaced students). This led to a broader discussion of ongoing campus protests, with several faculty and administrators emphasizing the importance of modeling and fostering an environment of learning, freedom of expression, and mutual respect in the current divisive climate and in contrast to what is occurring on other college campuses.

-- The CFO also updated faculty on current financial projections, including the nature and timeline of planned budget cuts. He anticipates a \$10 million cut in annual operations over the next six months (no specifics as yet; he does not anticipate significant changes to program budgets although some budget lines may be consolidated and some programming may be affected). Going forward, the goal is to increase earned income from a larger class size (\$15 million annually, out of an anticipated \$25 million in needed annual budget growth). Current projections for the incoming first-year class look healthy in meeting these goals (the ideal class size is around 600; the goal is for an incremental increase). He also noted that there was a record number of deposit deferral requests this year. The CFO gave updates on capital projects: new student dorms will open in Fall 25, which does not just open up more beds but also allows older dorms to be vacated and undergo renovation. In terms of the endowment match campaign, \$150 million remains, with a deadline of the end of the next calendar year.