

MINUTES
Faculty Affairs Committee
November 9, 2020
Zoom

Voting Members Present:

Deborah Elkis-Abuhoff
Xiang Fu
Michael Heiss
Rina Hirsch (Chair)
Maureen Houck
Kris Lotier
Kevin McElroy
Brian McFadden
Rebecca Natow
Jean-Paul Rodrigue
Sylvia Silberger

Non-Voting Members Present:

Margaret Abraham (Sr Vice Provost for
Academic Affairs)
Elisabeth Ploran (AAUP President)
Holly Seirup (Dean, HPHS)

Guest:

Herman Berliner (Provost)

Absent:

Elisabeth Schlegel

1. The meeting was called to order at 11:04 a.m.
2. Minutes from the October 12, 2020 meeting were unanimously approved.
3. Rina Hirsch reported to the committee that EdTech presented to the Special Committee on Educational Technology about the transition from Zoom cloud storage of videos to Kaltura media. All recordings that have recorded to the Zoom cloud have been backed up on each faculty's respective Kaltura media (in the Hofstra portal). All future recordings will only be available through the Zoom cloud link for 14 days after recording; however, as soon as the recording is completed it is automatically transferred to Kaltura media. EdTech is working on putting together a one minute video illustrating to faculty how to imbed these videos into their Blackboard courses. Elisabeth Ploran indicated that this will actually improve the user experience for students because faculty can include the videos in the appropriate modules in their courses.
4. Michael Heiss requested that more information be provided to faculty regarding Blackboard features that are disappearing (e.g., revisions and peer editing), suggesting that perhaps EdTech work with faculty over the winter break to acclimate them to the changes. Rina Hirsch emailed Mitch Kase about this concern after the meeting. Michael spoke to Paul Carson about the big upcoming changes that are coming to Blackboard Ultra. Paul said the faculty will receive information about the changes and tutorials about new features/changes to existing features.
5. Herman Berliner responded to the committee's first agenda item related to possible censure of the administration regarding the lack of faculty inclusion in the adoption of the EthicsPoint system. He indicated that censure doesn't make sense because the provost's office stepped into a process that it did not itself start for the sole purpose of protecting faculty interests. He went on to discuss how EthicsPoint is a preferable system to have in place relative to what was happening previously, whereby students would email anyone

and everyone including the President's office with complaints. Margaret Abraham also reinforced Herman's line of thought.

- a. Michael Heiss and Kris Lotier discussed the document they put together to emphasize the committee's desire to be part of future faculty impacting decisions. They emphasized that the point of the document was not to criticize EthicsPoint, but rather to put on record that going forward we would like faculty to be a part of decisions that affect faculty.
- b. Elisabeth Ploran also clarified that though Herman and Margaret indicated that they were in communication with faculty leadership regarding EthicsPoint and that it was communicated at two Full Faculty meetings, at no point was faculty leadership, a member of FAC, or other faculty invited to be a part of the process for selecting/implementing EthicsPoint. Elisabeth indicated that she was simply informed that it was being implemented.
- c. Kevin McElroy indicated that a good compromise would be to put in writing (not in the form of a censure) that the FAC would like to be part of the decision making process as issues affecting faculty arise in the future. Others on the committee agreed with this.
- d. Maureen Houck indicated that she thinks the idea of censure is not right in this circumstance and that the administration did the right thing by seeking to protect the faculty.
- e. Michael Heiss clarified that the purpose is not to be punitive because we do agree that EthicsPoint is good in this case, but rather to prevent initiatives that affect faculty from circumventing the shared governance process. In particular, with a new incoming administration, having this in writing would let them know what faculty expectations are.
- f. Rebecca Natow asked what the goal of putting this in writing would be. Rebecca indicated that the administration didn't appear to be in violation of any policy. She also asked what the process would look like. Would it go to SEC, senate, and full faculty for a vote? What would that mean? Rina Hirsch followed up by emailing Bill Caniano after the meeting to clarify the process. Bill indicated that it would go to SEC and then Senate. If Herman agrees with it, he will bring it to President Rabinowitz; otherwise, it would go to Full Faculty for a vote, and then to President Rabinowitz if voted through.
- g. Elisabeth Ploran responded to Rebecca Natow's question about the goal referring to the administration looking to past practice to justify actions in the past. She indicated that it becomes a slippery slope if you let the administration do something that has not been past practice, opening the way for similar deviations from past practice in the future.
- h. The committee agreed to revisit the document drafted by Michael Heiss and Kris Lotier at the next FAC meeting. Michael and Kris will revise the document based on the discussion from today's meeting and send a revised draft to the committee

one week prior to our December 14 meeting so that the committee has adequate time to review it. The item will be discussed and voted on at the December 14 meeting.

6. Elisabeth Ploran gave a brief update that the administration and the union have come to an agreement regarding peer observations and that once the final document is signed it will be discussed on Wednesday, November 11 during the union meeting. There has also been an MOA regarding CTRs for this Fall 2020 semester and they are close to an agreement regarding CTRs for the Spring 2021 semester. Margaret Abraham agreed that these agreements should be finalized soon.
7. The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 pm.