

**University Faculty Senate  
Minutes of Meeting  
September 13, 2017**

The University Faculty Senate met on September 13, 2017 at 8:00 am in Cabot 702, Medford campus, with remote locations in Boston and Grafton. Present in Medford were Senators Antonia Chayes, Brent Cochran, Fulton Gonzalez, Eulogio Guzman, Jeffrey Hopwood, Robert Jacob, Vida Johnson, Nirupa Matthan, Melissa Mazan, Mitch McVey, Lynne Pepall, Pearl Robinson, Jes Salacuse, Lelan Sillin, Chris Swan, Roger Tobin, Lawrence Weiss, Norbert Wilson, and Henry Wortis. Present via WebEx or phone were Senators Boris Bacanurschi, John Castellot, Janet Forrester, Roger Galburt, Will Masters, Ali Muftu, and Roman Schumann.

Present from administration were Provost David Harris, Vice Provost Kevin Dunn, Vice President for Human Resources Julien Carter (by phone), and Provost Office Coordinator Lisa Bloom.

After accepting the minutes from the June 21 Senate meeting, the first order of business was a proposal from AS&E to amend the bylaws governing the Faculty Senate by increasing the number of AS&E representatives from seven to eight in order to accommodate a designated SMFA representative. Lynne Pepall gave an overview of the proposal and reported that the faculty feel strongly that the designated seat is important so that the SMFA feels like and is seen as an integrated part of the university, and because of the geographical separation of the campus. It was noted that the three-school majority vote rule would still stand.

After a motion by Larry Weiss which was seconded by Mitch McVey, the Senate unanimously:

VOTED: To accept AS&E's proposal to increase its representation from seven to eight members in order to accommodate a designated seat for an SMFA representative.

Second on the agenda was a letter from Professor Paul Hattis of the School of Medicine on behalf of the School's Faculty Grievance Committee relating to the closure of departments at the University. The letter pointed out that there is currently no grievance procedure in place at Sackler. Jes Salacuse suggested that there is a need for a university-wide grievance process, as well. Roger Tobin raised the question of a university ombudsperson; David Harris answered that there is money approved for such a position in the FY18 budget. John Castellot asserted that every school should have a grievance process, and that he would like to see the Senate develop guidelines for a standardized program closure procedure that includes faculty consultation. There was also a discussion of the need to ensure that the ombudsman is independent of the authority or censure of administration. Jes Salacuse closed the discussion by saying that Professor Hattis' letter is important, and that both issues will proceed through the relevant committees for study and eventual recommendations to the Senate.

The next item of business was a proposal of a standing committee structure for the Faculty Senate, presented by Lynne Pepall (see attached proposal). The focus group is recommending 5 committees, each with a membership of 8 (4 senators, 4 faculty-at-large):

1. Nominations
2. Faculty Affairs
3. Budget Planning and Development
4. Research and Scholarship
5. Educational Affairs and Policy

**Nominating Committee:** Kevin Dunn pointed out that the Senate has power to nominate, but not appoint: the language of the proposal should be adjusted to clarify this. Vida Johnson asked if it is necessary to have four senators on each committee, considering staff and time constraints of participants. She also wondered if problems would arise when, as an elected body, the committees are staffed with unelected faculty. After some discussion, the Senate concluded that committees would start with just senators, and then they may expand up to eight members with additional faculty-at-large. David Harris asked for clarification about proposal language regarding nominations for search committees for school deans. It was concluded that the Senate's role is to nominate pan-university, as opposed to school-specific, representation.

There is a time-sensitive need for faculty representative nominations for the Trustees meetings this year. The Trustees are asking for three people – one for each of three committees. The approach in previous years has been for each committee to have two representatives – one from AS&E, and the other rotating among the other schools. Melissa Mazan expressed concern that if the Senate accepts the Trustees' requested reduction in faculty representation, it could set a precedent that is difficult to remediate later. Jes Salacuse asserted that there should be at least one Senate member on each committee.

Following a motion by Lee Sillin and a second by Jeff Hopwood, the Senate unanimously:

VOTED: That AS&E should nominate one person for each Trustee committee now, and the Senate will nominate at least one person per committee, to include AS&E representation.

**Faculty Affairs Committee:** This committee would work closely with a future ombudsperson. Chris Swan observed that there would be some overlap with the University Committee on Teaching and Faculty Development. Lynne Pepall suggested that the Senate committees would do well to form partnerships with existing university committees that have overlap of purview. She will send a list of existing committees to the Senate members. Roger Tobin suggested that language be altered to reflect that Senate committees are empowered to meet with or receive information from relevant university parties.

**Budget Planning and Development Committee:** There is no current university-wide committee on this topic that includes faculty representation. Fulton Gonzales pointed out a need to have relevant university budgeting officers involved in the committees, and the Senate concluded that the officers could be invited to meetings as they are needed.

**Research and Scholarship Committee:** This committee would work in close collaboration with the Office of the Vice Provost.

**Educational Affairs and Policy Committee:** Roger Tobin observed that the last sentence of the description for this committee seems to be a different scope from the rest of the charge, and wondered if it should be its own separate committee. Nirupa Matthan mentioned that the committees working group had envisioned each committee creating sub- and ad hoc committees as needs arise, so this topic could still remain under the Educational Affairs and Policy Committee umbrella. Pearl Robinson supported the campus climate/inclusion issue be in the domain of the Educational Affairs and Policy Committee.

Lynne and the committee group will revise the proposal as discussed for adoption at the next meeting. Jes Salacuse would like Senate members to begin thinking about which committee they would be interested in joining.

Next on the agenda was a presentation by VP for Human Resources Julien Carter concerning changes in the Tufts retiree health insurance policy. Julien noted that the last major revision of the plan was in 1993, and the new plan is designed to address a projected shortfall of \$12 million in future expenses for the university. It is structured in two parts, for those over 65 and those under 65, and consists of a set of Medicare exchanges which increase the selection of plans available and are projected to also save retirees significant premium costs. Vida Johnson asked whether the new plan will have

region-specific advice for retirees throughout the US, and Julien confirmed that the exchanges do have regional data. He added that additional information will be available after October 15.

In response to a question from Roger Galburt about how the new providers were selected, Julien explained that Tufts employed a brokerage firm to evaluate options and then purchasing made a decision based on a number of factors, including a high customer satisfaction rating. Discussion among Senate members indicated that faculty are very unhappy with this change, and that the majority of the customer reviews for One Exchange on the web express a high level of dissatisfaction. Vida Johnson then asked about how faculty and the university's retirement and benefits committee were consulted. Julien responded that he reached out with information to the Senate Executive Committee earlier in the process. Melissa Mazan noted that the SEC did not have any opportunity for input, that they were informed of the change after it had been finalized. He is very interested in collaborating with Senate committees going forward. David Harris added that initial consultation was not possible due to the fact that the Faculty Senate was still being formed at the time that this process was underway.

In response to a question from Brent Cochran about similarity of plans between the old and new coverage, Julien said that the new plans won't be exactly the same, but will be comparable. Lynne Pepall mentioned that she is receiving concerns from faculty, and Julien suggested that they be directed to him. He also told the Senate that there will be a series of informational presentations, and that he is happy to come to any department meetings to present.

After a motion by Lee Sillin and second by Norbert Wilson, the Senate unanimously:

VOTED: To form an ad hoc committee within the Faculty Affairs Committee to examine the new retiree insurance plan and work with Julien Carter.

The final item on the agenda was a brief discussion about publicizing the existence and work of the new University Faculty Senate. Jes Salacuse stated that there will eventually be a Senate website to assist with visibility, but in the meantime, he is relying on Senate members to put the word out in their units. The topic will be slated for further discussion on the next meeting agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Mazan  
Secretary of the Faculty Senate