

Faculty Senate minutes, 23 March 2022

Special session to discuss the University's responses to the war in Ukraine

Senators present: Brent Cochran (GSBS), Misha Eliasziw (TUSM), Leila Fawaz (Fletcher), Janet Forrester (TUSM), Fulton Gonzalez (A&S), Olympia Karacosta (TUSDM), Carl Kirker-Head (Cummings), Jette Steen Knudsen (Fletcher), Cynthia Leveille-Webster (Cummings), Anne Mahoney (A&S), Michael Malamy (TUSM), Kris Manjapra (A&S), Melissa Mazan (Cummings), Mitch McVey (A&S), Elena Naumova (Friedman), Kevin Oye (Engineering), Aikaterini Papathanasiou (TUSDM), Erin Seaton (A&S), Agnieszka Trzcinka (TUSM), Mai Vu (Engineering), Parke Wilde (Friedman), Henry Wortis (GSBS), Chantal Zakari (SMFA)

Also in attendance: Caroline Genco, provost; Mike Howard, executive vice president.

Monica Toft, professor of international politics, Fletcher; Oxana Shevel, associate professor of political science, A&S.

Skyler Goldberg, *The Tufts Daily*

Senators not attending: Remco Chang (Engineering), Tom Dannenbaum (Fletcher), Sonia Hofkosh (A&S), Nicole Holland (TUSDM), Nirupa Matthan (Friedman), Ellen Pinderhughes (A&S)

Called to order 8:00 by President Jette Steen Knudsen.

Minutes of meeting of 9 March approved by acclamation.

Provost Genco described current actions:

- Tufts stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.
- Working to identify students (also faculty and staff) who are directly affected, for example who have family or friends in Ukraine.
- University faculty sharing expertise in interviews or talk show appearances.
- Support for scholars, including post-doctoral scholars, to be provided jointly by the schools and the Provost's office.
- Co-ordinating with other area schools to place scholars.
- Diana Chigas seeks a Senator to help, working with Scholars At Risk.
- The partnership between Fletcher and MGIMO, now severed, was our only active academic partnership in Russia. Its rectors had publicly supported the war and Tufts could not support that.

Executive Vice President Howard discussed investments and divestment:

- Of \$2.5 billion in endowment, about \$5.7 million (about 0.2% at the end of February; this has probably decreased since then).
- We hold no Russian securities directly, only through 4 investment funds (out of over 80 funds we are invested in).
- Russian securities markets have been closed for several weeks so it is difficult for funds managers to sell those stocks, though they are trying to, and we are encouraging them.

- General sense that the financial industry wants to divest from Russia, and that “no one wants to hold Russian securities at this time.”
- Concern for the broader economic effects of the invasion and how this may affect the endowment.
- He has told the Trustees and their investment committee that the goal is to divest from those Russian investments; normally we do not make public statements about specific investment holdings but he will consult with Craig Smith (chief investment officer) about saying this publicly, or at least telling the community that we have no direct investments in Russia.

Professor Toft briefed us on Russia’s actions and apparent goals:

- What Putin did is wrong, and the world-wide response is gratifying.
- Russia “an insecure great power with an insecure leader.”
 - Russia felt disrespected when it was removed from G8.
 - Expansion of EU also considered a potential threat.
 - Expansion of NATO, similarly.
 - How much would it cost to act as if Russia was an equal?
- Willingness to use force
 - Putin more willing to use force than Gorbachev or Yeltsin were.
 - Debate about whether he permitted or enabled the 1999 apartment bombings (after he’d already been named next president).
 - Track record in Georgia, Syria, Crimea.
- Assumed Ukraine would be “an asymmetric fight”
 - Over-estimated strength of Russian military (though it does have the capacity to “obliterate” Ukraine).
 - Under-estimated professionalization of Ukrainian military.
 - Cannot control the air.
 - Problems with supplies.
 - Old-fashioned equipment, as opposed to the precision guided missiles and so on that US has.
 - Situation may get worse as Russia gets more desperate.
 - May not hold to the old taboo on using tactical nuclear weapons (but talk about this might also just be saber-rattling so far).
- Clear strategy: make sure countries that border Russia are militarily weak, and not aligned with the west.
- Is there a way to let Putin save face, feel he has some sort of victory?
- Sanctions work but take time — during which Ukrainians are dying.
- Can the Russian population be persuaded that they should have a different leader?

Professor Shevel briefed us on Ukraine’s goals:

- Russia wants to annihilate Ukraine as a sovereign state; sees a democratic Ukraine as a threat, particularly as the two nations’ cultures are so closely related.

- Ukrainians believe they can win, and refuse to concede anything.
- Fight for existence.
- Ukraine wants to join NATO, or at least a security guarantee; can't keep Russia out by itself in the long term
- Putin's talk of "Nazis" in Ukraine is ridiculous and simply wrong.
- Possible ways Tufts can support Ukraine
 - Stipends and housing for students who may not be able to go home this summer.
 - Use our global centers, like Talloires, and other partnerships to help scholars from Ukraine who want to stay closer to home rather than coming to the US.
 - Perhaps visiting appointments allowing scholars to teach a 1- or 2-SHU course remotely from where they are?
 - Informal consortium of area-studies centers that we could join; fund-raising efforts.
 - Co-operation with "Ukrainian Global University," an initiative of the Kyiv School of Economics that allows students to study at western schools but still get a degree from their Ukrainian university, keeping both academic and emotional connections.
 - May be difficult to bring people here if they're not authorized to work in the US; how can we facilitate visas?

Other suggestions:

- Public forum for Tufts, to share information and raise awareness.
- List of whose labs or research groups are open to visiting students or scholars, for Tufts internal reference.
- Until fund managers can sell the Russian securities, perhaps devote income from those investments to support of Ukrainian students and colleagues. Once they are sold, revenue from the sales could also be used this way.
- Perhaps Tufts could match employees' contributions in this area.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23.