

Minutes of NFC, December 15, 2017

Attendance: TBA

-The minutes of last month's meeting were approved.

-We decided that the minutes should include only people's positions, not their names (we will give names of people addressing the Newark Faculty Council).

-The Rutgers University Senate places the NFC as an agenda item at every meeting thus allowing time for the NFC chair to deliver comments. However, if the chair is not available and believes that there are matters that should be shared with the Senate, a representative of the NFC can deliver the chair's comments and John Kettle, who is on the Faculty Senate, has volunteered to do so when this happens. Thus far, the University Senate has never requested that we connect with them or sent the NFC any indication that we are on the agenda, but the NFC will connect with the Senate on relevant matters henceforth. The goal will be to inform the Senate of issues we've taken stands on (for example, the NFC response to VP Barbara Lee's request for comments on the Draft Proposal of the Task Force on Evaluating Teaching entitled: *A Proposal to Improve the Evaluation of Teaching at Rutgers University*, was sent to them).

-A new Newark Faculty Council (NFC) website is going up; it will have our minutes and agenda on it. We can let the entire campus know once it's up and running.

-We have already sent in our report on Teaching Evaluations (in Dec. 2017, when they were due).

Bonny Vesey addressed the NFC about teaching evaluations. She noted that we'd like to do this "ground up," starting with what the departments propose as appropriate teaching evaluation methods. She noted that there's an inherent conflict in our purpose – are evaluations for promotion? Or are they a development opportunity for faculty? Also, evaluations help our graduate students, and faculty who want to leave, by giving them a portfolio they can take with them. Vesey noted that there can be problems having peer observers sitting in on the class (potential conflicts of interest). However, external reviewers can be expensive, as it is a labor-intensive process. She suggested that departments use STARS resources, which are well funded.

Nancy Cantor spoke next. She noted that we've put resources into P3 in order to enable this kind of work to happen. We should make use of it. She also suggested using AQ.

A faculty member offered a word of caution about peer evaluations, noting that at CUNY they use peer evaluations every semester. After 14 years, many feel they've become useless. They are labor intensive; require a huge amount of work; in the end, everyone is "wonderful." No one wants to be critical of their colleagues. Also, the Faculty Senate says don't use student

input. But this is too much. The students need a say – despite the problems with their responses.

Nancy Cantor noted that all data shows that student responses are incredibly biased. So, we need a better way of getting their voice in – beyond the SIRS evaluation.

Bonny Veysey suggested that we look at student success rates as a way of getting at good teaching. She also suggested looking at classes with high withdrawal rates. What's going on there?

Nancy Cantor noted that the Teaching Evaluation Councils are still doing drafts of the evaluations, which need to be tailored to each faculty unit. They won't have a final draft until we've really weighed in.

Veysey said that teaching evaluation plans must have coherence across the university – we don't want to get in the weeds. Instead, the liaisons (usually chairs of their school college committees) can keep track and inform us about what's happening at the departmental level. We will share what the plans look like.

One faculty member suggested that departments be given statistics on drop out rates so they know where they need to improve. They can give bottom-up suggestions on how to properly evaluate their faculty.

Another said that there is a lot to be learned from AQ about teachings. Ask the students what they need; it really helps.

A third suggested having student majors give an exit interview about their experiences with the department. These are the students who have had success. Ask them which teachers were helpful. Also, do a mid-semester review. Consider also asking the students about their experiences a few years later, when they've had a chance to reflect.

Arcelio Aponte, Vice Chancellor, CFO, addressed the group.

-We met with reps from Apple two years ago about having a full service tech store in Newark. About a month ago we opened one up in the Haynes building. It's in partnership with Rutgers and Apple. Apple supports the store because we have Apple-certified technicians in the store. We can offer products to Rutgers people and to the public. This started a discussion about why Apple should be in Newark more broadly. We met with them at their headquarters last February. We've developed a strategy: 1) The Newark City Coding Initiative. A network of partners in Newark; goal is to design an eco-system that will expand knowledge of coding and create a culture of coding in Newark. We're working with Shabazz High School and a charter school in Newark and with developers (Teachers Village developer), Rutgers Continuing Education, and more. By developing centers of coding throughout the city, residents, students/parents will all have a place to go to be trained in coding and technology. Eventually we can put Apple units in their hands. Code.org highlights that there are 20,000 jobs in the state of NJ

that need support in coding. Can we get Newark residents these jobs? Internships? Careers in computer science?

Nancy Cantor:

- I was skeptical since I'm not a tech person. But the people at Apple were impressive. There is a lot of creativity involved. Careers aren't narrowly defined as computer science. Graphic Design, etc. also involved; creation of apps, not just the programming. Steve Jobs said that computer science was a liberal art.

Aponte: Apple wants to engage youth and people of color in computer science, coding, tech. What better place than Newark? We won't only target our brightest students at Science High. Rather, we want to engage the full spectrum of our city. Shabazz High School has had challenges – we want Apple to work there. Work in our tougher areas, including New Community Corp. and Georgia King Village areas. The goal is to assess what's needed in such areas and then help build capacity. Apple gave us a full-time developer to determine the needs and capacities of Newark for Apple. We need a pool of trainers in coding. Apple is now doing a training at Express Newark – a “train the trainers” teaching program. Their national trainers are here, for the next six months. They will teach the teachers at Shabazz and elsewhere. Apple's excited and is providing technical resources. They provide a curriculum for free, K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. They are also interested in helping us diversify the use of Apple within the university curriculum.

Sherri-Ann Butterfield:

-I try to increase use of tech in the classroom. I learned a lot about how to use Apple as a result of the two-hour training they offer. We are going to pilot with two courses in the spring. At HLLC, Kim Holton and Shawn Mitchell will do a pilot program using more advanced technology. There will be more pilots in the fall. The goal is to make ourselves better instructors and researchers, and to improve our students' research ability. There are also ways to use technology so that we can reduce cheating on exams. We should also use our connections with Apple to help the city of Newark. When Apple went to work with Shabazz, the teachers there cried; the Apple people were blown away. How do we connect more with Shabazz?

Veysey:

-This dovetails with Open Access material. Some say all have to buy an expensive textbook, but often we only use, say, 40% of the textbook. We can we level the playing field by using open access resources instead.

-Part of our university focus with Apple is dovetailing City of Coding with teaching App development. Apple is telling us what resources are needed; how it's working at other universities. Can we create an interdisciplinary minor embedded in Arts and Sciences – not necessarily in math and computer science? We should create a synergy between disciplines. More imagination is important. Along with the technical skills we can teach entrepreneurship, arts and design, etc. - a full package so that students will have what they need to develop apps.

Arcelio:

-Apple told us about how students elsewhere have developed apps to improve student life on campus. This is giving us a national view. We can use app development to solve our problems on campus.

A faculty member noted that we should include the humanities in this proposed interdisciplinary major. It can include a course on ethical problem solving, and not just creative problem solving. Another noted that we need to bring in an analysis of power and control in technology.

Veysey:

-Anderson University in Georgia, a tiny liberal arts college, intentionally embedded their coding program in liberal arts. This needs to be philosophically open. It's not just for students; it should be open to staff and faculty as well. A physical plants person wrote an app for work orders; now everyone can log in and receive work orders in real time. Opportunities are endless. Kids especially have improved literacy skills if they start with coding. The investment is supporting other skills.

Cantor:

-The Apple people want a "robust examination" of all aspects of technological education. We want the "City of Coding" idea to be embedded in the broader community and not just be an interesting course or a technological improvement at Rutgers-Newark.

Aponte:

-We're working with Audio, Prudential, Verizon – we're not the only anchor. NJPAC, Newark Public Library also involved. Apple's worked with individual universities before, but they haven't ever done it on one city in a complete way. Newark is prime for this kind of investment in people, time and effort, without compromising Newark identity.

A faculty member noted that NJ STEM Pathways is already happening. We have Newark STEM Coalition. They'd be very interested in this. They've already organized people you need to reach. There are 30 partners in the Newark area.

Aponte:

-This has taken off in the last couple of months. Now we have a good team. We just updated the Mayor last week.

A faculty member raised the question of intellectual property rights. Aponte noted that we need more research on this.

A faculty member noted that the initiative could be extended to grade schools in Newark, as there are already seven-year-olds who are coding.

Cantor:

-We're starting at Shabazz; and looking at feeder schools to Shabazz also. 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Shabazz are part of Victoria Target Neighborhood Institute. They have money to invest in upper Clinton Hill.

Veysey:

-We're targeting Teachers Village, but are trying to reach teachers across the city. Apple teaching starts birth, basically. Teachers are pedagogical guides, not traditional teachers.

Aponte:

-The agenda is still being formed. Someone who worked with Girls Who Code is advising us.

Butterfield:

-ACUE addresses teaching, but we haven't been having campus wide discussion about our commitment to teaching. We should take this show on the road.

A faculty member mentioned the Collaboratory seed grant which pulled together a program of big data and humanities. In April they will be hosting people running data/ humanities programs.

Butterfield:

-Addressed our initiatives to help hurricane-damaged Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands. We put out an application to let students harmed by the hurricane a chance to study at RN in the spring semester only (we're not poaching – just giving them a chance not to lose spring semester). Thus far 2 are coming. We provide housing; their grades will transfer back to their home institutions. We're asking the deans to let them in late. Also, "We Share" does solar suitcases. We are partnering with them. They provide energy and are mobile. Teachers in SPAA are trained in creating those suitcases. They will train others to put the suitcases together.

The NFC chair proposed a motion: The Newark faculty Motion supports the initiatives of the Chancellor's office in tech, Apple, coding, and in students from PR and VI registering here. The motion was passed.

Cantor:

-Updated us on a new alliance of higher education leaders for immigration reform. They have a national steering committee out of George Washington University. They are contacting all their congressional representatives. They are pushing for DACA reform to get passed as part of the continuing budget resolution. There is a lot of bipartisan report. The Koch Brothers defend DACA too. Nationally DACA's been pushed under the rug. About 150 DACA students are being departed each week. By March, 1500 could be out weekly. The US Postal Service has screwed up processing the renewals. The Alliance is pressuring for in-state aid, professional licensing,

etc. We have a RU Dreamers Club here at RN. We're hiring a coordinator for RU to organize services for DACA students. Nationally we are at the table.