

Newark Faculty Council Minutes
April 26th, 2021

Present:

Nancy Cantor
Sherri-Ann Butterfield
John Gunkel
Ashwani Monga
Amber Randolph

John Joergensen
Adam Kustka

Alexander Gates
Ana Rivas

April Benasich
Ashaki Rouff
Erich Toncre
Gary Farney
Haesun Kim
Jane Gilman
Jiahuan Lu
John Kettle
Joseph Markert
Mary Rizzo
Michael Barnett
Miklos Vasarhelyi
Beryl Satter
Ted Szatrowski
Carolyn White

Cantor:

Essex County Vaccination sites are available. Please make use of them. We are looking into how the fall requirement for student vaccinations will work (with exceptions for medical and religious reasons). Many institutions are now following our lead on requiring vaccinations for all students. We hope to populate the campus by this fall. Essex County College, K-Mart, Sears, and many other locations are now vaccination sites.

Monga:

Students are expecting to be on campus this fall, and are getting vaccinated for that reason, so we should expect to be teaching in person this fall.

Our furloughs should start May 16th. The faculty compensation program has moved forward; will start July 1. We also have more support for doctoral students. We are helping students who had covid—related delays. We got first round of applications (about 140 so far).

Butterfield:

In person classes are planned, but we expect to wear masks and observe social distancing (probably 3 feet, not six), and hand washing. We will have mask and soap dispensaries. Go to your office and see what you will need (if you have been away since March 2020). We will have testing protocol in place. You will need your ID with you at all times. Some buildings will be swipe card access only.

Q: What about ventilation issues? Also, will it be hard to get in at night?

A: We have been assured that ventilation issues are under control. I'll double check on that. As for evening rush, talk with your chair about it. We want people to be in person as much as possible. Our students are desperate for in-person teaching.

Q: What about janitorial procedures?

A: That will be in place, whether night or day.

Randolph:

Our staff has been examining classroom space. If you need requests for plexiglass etc. in your office, let us know. Ventilation filters are in place to be replaced regularly. They are also doing cleaning.

Q: Will students need proof of vaccination to register?

Butterfield:

Students are registering now, but there will be controls on students in September. They need time to get vaccinated, especially the international students. They will need vaccination just to come to campus (versus coming to class).

Q: We have several Ph.D. students still in China. They can't get the American vaccine in China.

A: We will vaccinate them when they get to the U.S. We are looking for housing for students while they wait for vaccination. This could be hotels in Newark.

There is an FAQ on vaccination that our students are getting.

We can't ask anyone if they've been vaccinated. We can't even ask each other. This is a HIPAA medical privacy violation.

Q: People in labs are doing weekly Covid test. Will that continue over the summer?

A: Yes, people will be tested weekly, into the fall.

Q: I asked those in my lab if they'd been vaccinated; I should not have done that.

A: Testing is state dependent. We follow their rules.

Q: Considering class sizes – my fall class could be large, and in close quarters. How will we accommodate that, with a 3-foot social distancing requirement?

Gunkel:

Seats will be marked off in classrooms at 3 foot intervals. Most classes will be at $2/3$ to $3/4$ capacity, but that could change by end of the summer.

Q: our department has very small classrooms. Below capacity might end up below required enrollments.

Cantor:

They will probably put you in different classrooms in order to accommodate the students.

Butterfield:

Check with scheduling to be sure it works.

Q: Will there be testing available every day?

A: Yes.

Gates:

Given the furlough, is our fiscal situation better?

Randolph:

Our university never declared financial exigency, though we were in an emergency. We remain in a fiscal crisis, given all the unknowns about enrollment. We also have a rising cost of fringe, from the state.

Cantor:

We did get federal and state aid, but we've used most of it for emergency funding for our students.

Randolph:

Over half of the \$50 million we got went directly to student. Another third went to student-related services. A much smaller amount went to help the university run.

Gates:

Is the money being evenly distributed, campus and university?

Randolph:

Each campus has gotten their share. We had to remind the federal government that we are a minority serving university.

Gates:

Our NFC website is not updated. Who will work to update it? We can start by contacting person who is the webmaster of the site. April Benasich will contact that person. Looks like it hasn't been updated since 2017 (at least in part).

Q: We haven't had one person responsible for getting the information on the NFC site.

Gunkel:

Copy me on efforts to get material on the NFC website.

Gates:

Faculty councils from other three campuses are trying to create a single faculty council for all of Rutgers, with several people on each campus participating. Mike Barnett and I have been attending all the meetings so far. There was an idea that we'd work directly with the president of Rutgers. This would work around the Senate. Then it mutated a bit. Now all the faculty councils will be seen as part of Rutgers, but we deal with campus leadership, and then with leadership of the Senate.

Q: This has not been voted on yet.

Gates:

We at Newark don't participate on the Faculty Senate to the same extent as other campuses do. We don't have a good mechanism for our campus to bring things up at the Faculty Senate. In addition to our two Faculty Senate senators, we don't have representation from SPAA, CLJ, etc – instead, most are from RBS. Many schools have no representation at all.

Q: Those of us who are on the Senate mainly work through committees. For example, we are dealing with preparing graduate students for teaching in the 21st century. We are working with grant funding and policy changes.

Q: Yes, most activity is through committees. Newark's not active because we're not giving charges to the Senate for debate. What are some topics for them?

Q: We raised issue of Newark participation in the Senate a few years ago. The Senate Executive committee was not interested. I met with them and felt that they were contemptuous of Newark. We considered a presentation at the end of the Senate meeting, but when we tried,

people left before we had a chance to do so. On our campus, we can't find people to run for the Senate. On the NB campus, the elections are hotly contested.

Q: Newark also has a limited student participation on the Senate. Last year, there were zero students from Newark participating.

Q: John Kettle is one of the At Large representatives of the Senate; he can represent Newark.

Q: We can do better, given that everything is now on Zoom. Senate deals with questions /issues from everywhere. Under McCormick, we had a presidential advisory panel, with three faculty from each campus. It was very effective. It helped the president deal with issues. We brought up provost issues also. We should continue with this. It's not a new invention. Barchi didn't use it, but we had it.

Newark and Camden faculty councils are not the same as the NB faculty council, which meets for hours on Fridays. But now, with Zoom, we can get more done. The one advantage of in-person meeting gives us access to administrators, enabling us to make some personal contacts. But otherwise, Zoom meetings are working well.

The Newark campus report is always called, but never presented. This is a bit embarrassing.

Push for a presidential faculty council, which is not something new, but something revived. It's a way to get university-wide insights.

Senate has committee reports posted for every meeting. We can add on to this.

Gates:

Where did issues come from under the old presidential advisory panel?

A: They came from various locations. Ex: we dealt with older system of travel money. We got some changes made. We always met for lunch before the meeting to be sure our presentation was balanced.

Q: We have so many levels of government. Hard to see how they all fit together. We had been talking about faculty, not campus issues. University Senate is not a faculty senate. We don't have an independent faculty voice.

Q: University Senate only deals with university-level issues. They construe this narrowly. Health of the Newark campus could be seen as an issue for the university – but the University Senate doesn't see it that way. Do we need more communication with University Senators who are from Newark? Can we facilitate this? This is very do-able. I'm on Senate and I'm rarely asked. Can this be institutionalized?

Gates:

We don't usually make university-level recommendations here in the NFC. Can we use the NFC to deal with university issues as well? We can carve out part of our meeting to do that.

Q: There is a ton that goes on at the University Senate, but an individual senator can only do so much. Most work happens in the committees. We don't hear about a lot of what is going on, since we're all on only one committee each.

Q: Would you be willing to sit on the Executive Committee of the Senate?

A: If drafted, I would serve. I'd rather someone else did it.

Q: Were we even aware that we have this space for representation? Just look at the website of the University Senate. There are places available where we can pose our issues. Know the representatives, and speak with them. See what charge each Senate committee is looking at. You can interject in that way.

Gates:

The Rutgers Councils will be meeting with Senate Executive Council. If we have issues – which NFC should discuss – should they be brought to the Rutgers Faculty Council, and then brought to Senate Executive Council that way? Or do we go through the senators?

Q: Senate handbook says that the chair of each council should be the liaison. That person is supposed to report to the senate in general. We often hear from the Camden and NB representative, but not from Newark. This would take two extra days a month out of your time as head of NFC (to make these reports to Senate and to Executive Council).

Gates:

Are these reports about issues? Or are they about what's going on on campus in general?

Q: They usually deal with issues. It doesn't need to take a lot of time. When I was on Faculty Council, I didn't want to speak without an OK from the chair. The report can be gleaned from the NFC minutes.

Q: Chair of NFC should give the report, but it can be delegated to anyone. The format of the report can be anything – it is wide open.

Gates:

If we have issues – either generated by us, or by others, and it's a university level problem – do we as NFC want to have a certain time in our monthly meetings to discuss issues we want advanced to the University Senate?

Q: Why not write a short paragraph on what we're doing each month? It will give us contact and continuity with rest of the university.

Gates:

A few years, there was suggestion that we have some remote Senate meetings. It was a difficult process.

Q: Can we have 10 minutes of free time at end of NFC meetings to have open discussion about things we might want to put forward to Faculty Senate?

Q: We had a discussion about Infosilem; how faculty was not consulted. The Executive Committee created an ad-hoc committee to meet with creators of Infosilem. NB Senate members on Exec Committee brought it up. So, there's already a mechanism in place if someone from NFC is on Executive Committee.

Q: We are trying to recreate a lot of lost wheels that exist but have stopped spinning. Can someone put together a list of mechanisms that we can use?

Q: But wasn't Gates considering a new mechanism?

Gates:

The new mechanism was to have each Faculty Council meet with Exec Committee. There are 2 mechanisms either way to get issues to Exec Council. For NFC to bring up issues, we need to get on one or both.

Q: I can simply write a letter to Exec Committee to get things considered.

Q: Issue of Infosilem is good example of how we can bring up important issues that may seem campus-wide, but are actually university wide.

Gates:

Can we have 10 minutes at end of meeting to discuss issues – and hear from Senate on what they are doing as well?

Q: Whatever we raise can be advanced to the Senate, just to let them know how we are doing. This keeps our presence known at the University Senate level.

Gates:

We can put this at the end of each meeting – how we will interact with the University Senate.

Ex: The problem of sub-awards for Newark faculty who don't have full access to university-wide grants, etc.

Q: We will have a Newark report to present to Senate on what we've been doing.