

Minutes for Newark Faculty Council
March 22, 2021
Via Webex

Present:

Nancy Cantor
Ashwani Monga
Sherri-Ann Butterfield
John Gunkel

Prabhas Moghe

Amber Randolph

Alexander Gates
Ana Rivas

Michael Barnett
Joseph Markert
Beryl Satter
John Kettle
Miklos Vasarhelyi
Frances Bartkowski
Krista White
Willie Ray Williams
Haesun Kim
Jiahuan Lu
Mary Rizzo
Tim Raphael

Prabhas Moghe:

I interface between President Holloway and Chancellor Cantor. I've been on faculty at NB for over 20 years. I know the struggles faculty face here. Holloway hoped to advance academic excellence; clarify and simplify the administrative complexity; and create a beloved community. Holloway wanted to elevate the Chief Academic Officer to bring people together for collaborations. We have four Chancellors for the four campuses. We have 29 academic deans. It's complex. How to aid academics on each campus? In Newark, how do we amplify academic aspirations? My job is to determine best practices on each campus and share them with other campuses.

We created academic strategy roundtables. We bring in guests to speak on academically relevant topics. Ashwani Monga is there representing Newark. We have one on research

strategy for research leaders on each campus reporting to me. All of our campuses are research intensive.

We deal with promotions and reviews also. We work with the libraries and with the institutes. We try to amplify the intersectionality between inclusiveness and academic excellence. We might create cluster hiring, target of opportunity, post-doc to faculty pipelines for diversity. We're interested in academic innovations also. We support innovation and entrepreneurship and are determining how to reward and support it.

We are discussing areas of academic investment. How can we create a collaborative pulse between the four campuses? Can we enable faculty to co-advise across campuses? We want to retain identities and strengths of each campus while also creating collaboration across campuses.

Question: Where does interdisciplinarity fit? Ex: Institute for Global Racial Justice (the Mellon grant). Can this include the humanities? How do we bring them in?

A: Henry Turner is on my team. He is a Shakespeare scholar. Contact him about integrative humanities. We've tried to tweak research council grants, so they bring various disciplines together. We are also considering how to reward interdisciplinary work in terms of promotion. We've started this already by rewarding publicly engaged scholarship, and innovation and entrepreneurship.

Q: It's easier to get an interdisciplinary program going with NJIT than it is within Rutgers schools. Can this be smoothed out somehow?

A: Please write up the aspirations and the impediments you've faced. We'll look for solutions. I'm especially interested in seeing collaboration between the graduate entities on the campuses. Think about which academic areas you want to grow – how we can use existing resources to do so.

Q: RCM does not incentivize collaborative or interdisciplinary endeavors.

A: RCM could be tweaked to incentivize interdisciplinary endeavors. The things that make money get amplified; service efforts don't. We need to determine how to fund service areas that can't be monetized (libraries, diversity inclusion activities, etc). How to make us stronger together rather than internally competing.

Q: We have a business school that's separate from the School of Business. Any thoughts on that?

A: We have a number of conflicting and overlapping programs like this. Students have no idea what school they're applying to. We need to simplify these relationships and programs. First

step is to simply lay out all the distinctive programs, so students can have clarity on what's available.

Cantor: Let's not go in direction of saying that we must consolidate exclusively. Some duplications are important and necessary. Collaboration is not the same as homogenization.

A: Some of our seemingly duplicative programs are actually quite different in their composition and context. Camden works with Philadelphia, for example, while the Rutgers Business Schools in Newark and NB have different focuses. Consider what can be merged and what should be separate.

Q: Please work to simplify our overwhelming bureaucracy, which gets in the way of getting approval for grants, etc.

A: Holloway said that when he became provost at Northwestern, faculty were afraid to go to that office because of all the complexity and red tape. He wanted it to become an office where faculty could go and get simple and predictable responses. That's our goal here.

Gates: Minutes of last meeting approved.

Monga: Campus update: we don't know for sure, but by the fall, we will be continuing with testing, and we expect and hope that all will be vaccinated by then.

Butterfield: We are waiting for authorization for a site for vaccines. We then need to wait for the vaccines. We have to follow state of New Jersey guidelines, not CDC guidelines. We send out emails as soon as we get updates. Please be patient.

Monga: We are still looking for funding opportunities for our doctoral students. Caregivers are a major concern. Most are women. Also issues with childcare and elder care. We've been studying the issues and looking for solutions. Teaming up with childcare companies to see if we can get it subsidized, for example. Perhaps we can have childcare within schools. We should discuss it in our departments. Maybe offer more evening courses to make childcare easier. Help faculty caregivers also.

Cantor: We've had surveys on caregivers' struggles, and how universities nationally are supporting caregivers (ex: use research money to support childcare). NFC gave a lot of feedback when we were considering publicly engaged scholarship; now we should give feedback on struggles of faculty with caregiver issues they face.

Monga: This isn't just junior faculty; it could be staff, senior faculty, grad students, etc. But we want to start with junior faculty, as they are under tenure clock stress. We have extended all junior faculty clocks one more year because of COVID.

Q: It's hard to get shots in New Jersey; it seems arbitrary, depending on who one knows more than anything else.

Cantor: We have authorization for a vaccine site in RN; we are just waiting for the vaccines.

Gates: There's a move for all the faculty councils from 4 campuses to meet. Michael Barnett and Gates are representing NFC. There will be a meeting tomorrow. We hope to meet with president when his schedule opens up. We will meet with Prabhas Mohge. We will report back next time.

Gates: We have one spot on Faculty Senate, and Galathera Kahanda, Associate Teaching Professor in Math and Computer Science, wants to run. A few days ago there were three people running, but now it's one person and one slot. [We voted and Kahanda is elected.]

Gates: The NFC website has been neglected for several years. Can we get volunteers to work on it? Last time attention was paid to it was 2017.

Q: Is there a person who keeps it up technically?

A: Yes, someone does the technical aspect; we just need discussion on the content.

Q: Where does information for website come from?

A: We have minutes of council meetings there. Maybe some information can be highlighted. Not clear that there's much interest in it.

Q: If our role is to be voice of faculty, we have to make the website more usable.

A: I can assign it to interested people, like April Benasich. I hope others will volunteer.

Gates: We did a poll for NFC. We got five responses (out of about 15 people).

Q: Is there a way to get the chairs to get a direct connection to the NFC, so that we are in more communication with the faculty in general?

A: Chairs get information through the deans.

Q: Are we redundant? Or do we get information from administration that deans don't convey to faculty?

Cantor: If we get the new website going, maybe faculty can be more interactive with us.

Gates: I tried to give NFC reports at the Faculty meetings, but it didn't work. We will try to make the website more helpful. Beryl Satter, Kirsta White and April Benasich will work on updating the website.

Q: What do we do for follow-up for questions that arise? Such as interdisciplinary programs?

Gates: Some of the issues have to be pushed "upstairs" to the university level. But we can let the chancellor know what the areas of interest are.

Q: Issues of interest to the whole university can be addressed through the university senate.

Gates: All of this can be put up on the website (various means by which change can be made and information conveyed). We hereby ask the senate to address why interdisciplinary work is hard to handle on the campus.

Minutes by Beryl Satter