



Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

**Faculty Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 18 2020 3 – 5 pm**

Members present: T. Blackmond-Larnell; D. Borys; J. Brown; P. Caughie; I. Cornelius; H. Dahari; t. davis; M. Dentato; Q. Dong; J. Donoghue; J. Elsky; J. Holschen; B. Johnson; T. Jules; N. Lash; C. Martin; K. Moore; G. Moran; J. Nicholas; B. Ohsowski; J. O'Rourke; L. Pope; P. Rosenblatt; A. Shoenberger; S. Sullivan-Dunbar; W. Tangarife; G. Thiruvathukal; S. Todd;

Present *ex officio*: N. Gryzwacz; S. Uprichard

1. Call to Order and Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

Approval of the draft minutes from the October meeting is moved, seconded, and passed.

2. Discussion Item: Chair's Report.

Jules warns of dangers of relying on a small body of people to carry the burden for the entire council. Invoking the weak reputation of Council in the past, he proposes agenda item about attendance now that we're approaching the end of the semester. Another member echoes the importance of this, indicates that expectations are made clear when people invited onto the council. Members unable to attend occasional meetings should find substitutes for those meetings. Another member suggests that attendance is actually strong in their view. Jules expresses disagreement, suggesting that given the fact we have now filled almost all slots on the Council, the attendance is not actually so strong. Another member invokes their service on the council years ago, in which by their description the Council accomplished little, as one reason for whatever apathy exists. They talk about how overwhelmed people are right now, and how little credit is given for service on the Council. Jules replies that we are changing that. The member concludes by observing that many are here and they are willing to work, so we should move on with the agenda.

Jules asks members to hold Wednesday, December 9 open for another meeting, in anticipation of issues arising, especially with regards to planning for next term. He also asks members to block time on Wednesday, January the

14th for a half-day retreat. Jules anticipates that shared governance will be the focus – a presentation on the subject, and then perhaps working with one another in committees. At in-person retreats we have food, but given that this will be remote, he can send smiles.

Associate Provost Badia Ahad's proposal for an Ombuds program is the next subject of Jules' presentation. Ahad has been very attentive to the Council's concerns and, unlike others, highly responsive. Her proposal is aimed at setting up emeritus faculty to field questions and help resolve issues for faculty members. Jules emphasizes the poor operation of the grievance procedure. Ahad believes that an ombuds system would help give advice and counsel to faculty with grievances. Cases that could not be addressed in that way might end up in the formal system.

The presentation then shifts to Human Resources and the open enrollment period. Jules reminds members that we recently received an email about the open enrollment period, which was shorter this time than last year. He has finally received word that the Benefits Advisory Committee will meet, but had to go through the Provost to make this happen. This year's enrollment also requires us to go through the system – there is no automatic renewing of previous elections. The transition from Blue Cross/Blue Shield to Aetna was some time ago, so now might be the time to push for a reconsideration. There have been too many egregious things happening around insurance. Perhaps the time for a resolution has come; in the past he was skeptical about a vote of no confidence, but now he is not so sure.

A member who typed into the chat box is recognized and refers to a past ombuds system. Since there used to be one, we could learn from its successes or failures. In any event, the handbook committee should know about this proposal. A different member who also remembers the previous ombuds system says that it was not useful for faculty, though it was used by some staff members.

Jules expresses frustration about the Benefits Advisory Committee and whether it has been able to schedule a meeting; he notes that the pandemic has brought questions about health insurance to the fore. He receives many complaints and queries, including those indicating that responses from Human Resources are not particularly helpful.

A member returns to the subject of the ombuds program. They want something more concrete proposed, and wonder if this is a stop-gap measure until a real grievance procedure is in place, and how ombudspeople would be picked. They are troubled by the difficulty in scheduling a meeting of the Benefits Advisory Committee. Many faculty are finding they are stranding funds in health care accounts. Although HR talks about how this saved the university money, there is a lot of evidence that in fact those costs are being born by faculty and staff. Finally, they note that the Faculty Affairs Committee of the Council is planning a survey, along the lines of the one conducted last year by the American Association of University Professors Chapter.

Another member suggests that Ahad's proposal for the ombuds program is reasonable and takes into account the difference between situations that could be addressed by this and those that would need a formal grievance

procedure. As for HR, they argue that there is no polite way of putting it; it is “a dumpster fire.” This member points to the low quality and great inconvenience of the mandatory trainings and the lengths to which Jules had to go to even get an email responded to. Numerous comments in the zoom chat box from Council member convey frequent problems with the trainings, the time they take, and technical glitches. Jules responds that he has expressed complaints about the volume of the trainings to HR, and that he has received numerous faculty complaints about this.

3. Discussion Item: Robyn Mallett, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Planning, Chair of Loyola’s Anti-Racism Initiative, on Loyola’s Anti-Racism Initiative.

Mallett joins the meeting, indicates that she wants to share information about the Anti-Racism initiative, invite us to pose questions. The Provost pulled together this group over the summer. Mallett describes planning process, trying to work across the university with students, faculty and staff involved. They have found that people don’t know of many initiatives, or that some measures are inconsistent with one another. Started ambitious in terms of brainstorming. They asked themselves “what are our visions if resources weren’t limited?”. If this had been intended as a cosmetic program, Mallett, says, it would have been finished some time ago. Now the project is moving into its second phase, developing more concrete plans. Goal III of the Initiative (Enhance Diversity in Academic Affairs) is all about academic affairs. Mallett glosses Racial Justice Examen and its many aspects. She encourages Council members to become members of the committee steering the examen within our academic unit. That would allow us to ensure colleagues in academic unit are taking this seriously. Mallett then opens the floor for questions.

One member expresses excitement and relays the fact that they signed up for the examen. They are the only non-white member of their department, and also not tenured. They ask about ways to push their colleagues – they are likely to be the loudest, but also want to be effective. Mallett emphasizes that this is a critical question and hopes that those working with individual units will have something to say about this. The member expresses appreciation for this effort and the fact that there will be a liaison and some kind of training, since many people involved in this do not study race, gender, or really any aspect of diversity.

Another Council member asks if training is being offered to centers and administrators, or just in academic units. They also ask about the language – they heard “inclusion” and “diversity,” but also “anti-racism” and wonder if the mission could be clarified. Mallett indicates that it just academic units that are now being brought into this program, not centers or the Jesuits. The member offers the friendly suggestion that centers could benefit from training, that problems happen outside academic departments, and that administrators should be trained as well. Mallett indicates that the Provost’s office will be receiving training. Comments in the chat box ask whether the medical-side faculty are being invited. Mallett indicates that the call was sent to all deans,

but that when Deans send out to faculty is up to them; certainly medical –side deans have received the examen and have been asked to complete it, though it may not have been distributed to departments and faculty yet.

Another member indicates that they have not seen this call yet, and is a bit concerned, given that the deadline for the first response is in January. Mallett indicates that in smaller schools, Associate Deans might be taking on a larger role. A different member indicates that faculty behavior and attitudes are real problems in the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty and asks how Council members as individuals, or the Council as a whole, can help besides joining committee. Mallett emphasizes the importance of joining those committees is the key way. Members could nominate others to participate. Some problems cut across departments, resources and ideas could be pooled.

4. Action Item: Resolution on Shared Governance and Academic Decisions.

Jules notes that the shared governance task force is in gestation and should have report by December. He acknowledges a draft resolution, which reads as follows:

Whereas the Academic Continuity Working Group of the Management, Policy, and Command (MPC) Structure recently announced the extension of the W deadline into December; whereas, this is an academic matter; whereas, the generally accepted principles of shared governance hold that academic matters are the purview of the faculty; whereas, Faculty Council was not consulted in this decision; therefore, be it resolved that the Faculty Council objects to making substantive academic decisions outside of the university's established shared governance bodies, and calls for removing authority to make academic decisions from the Academic Continuity Working Group (ACWG) of the MPC.

Jules indicates a desire to have a discussion about this language, which is a response to the Provost's announcement of an extension of the withdrawal ("W") policy via email the previous week. Jules' conversation with the Provost indicated that this was an extension of spring decision, which was made with consultation with the Council. The Executive Committee wanted this up for general discussion, in order to determine whether a resolution was warranted. The substantive concern is the idea that as an instructor, you spend all of this time working, giving students feedback, then there is a 'W' at the very end.

One Council member stresses both the substance of this issue and the process by which it was handled, which was by an appointed committee rather than shared governance structures. Another member says they are unsure about the wisdom of this decision, but sees the process as a real problem. They have received several complaints about this announcement since it was made. We do not want a committee that consists mostly of non-faculty to be making this kind of decision, and have been consistently saying so since last

Spring. The first member to weigh on this says that they have heard statements from constituents that this does burden some faculty, if not as much as the higher enrollment limits imposed outside of the usual process of shared governance.

The Provost responds that he wants to address the issue of the MPC. He shares our frustration, and in fact wrote the President Rooney and Vice President Tom Kelly calling for end of ACWG and asking whether we need the MPC at all. President Rooney thinks we do not need the MPC anymore. She thinks that this was important in beginning, but thinks the time has run its course. There will be a meeting soon to discuss this. He will keep us posted.

A Council member conveys that their whole school sent out notice to students about upcoming (initial) deadline, then university changed deadline a few days later. They underscore importance of number of students enrolled in their classes as an NTT person, 5 more in each section meant 20 more student total. It is a problem to have administrators do this without talking to anybody teaching a course. It is also question of advisors – they are overwhelmed. Tough to keep up with advice; doesn't understand why that decision would be made in this fashion

The motion is moved and seconded, and passes, with 20 for, 1 opposed, and 1 abstention.

5. Committee Reports.

The Chair of **Faculty Affairs** indicates that a meeting will be scheduled soon. They are focusing on the question of the trainings from Human Resources – their technical aspects, as well as quality and relevance. Aetna and possible transition out of that is another big question, including the idea of a survey. Another issue is when NTT lines are converted to tenure track, something we need policies on. There are a number of other issues. Another priority item is salary information for 2020.

One member asks a question about why the call to add questions for Smart course evaluations ended up in junk folder. That is a problem, and a running joke among faculty. Another member indicates that they never received any email, not even in junk folder. A third member echoes this concern and indicates that they wrote directly to the Director of Institutional Effectiveness suggesting that the message be resent and the deadlines extended. A different member points out proximity of drop deadline and the course evaluation deadline. Jules reaffirms the importance of this question and wonders if students withdrawing will be able to evaluate. The member who raised this questions notes that this has been discussed before, and is fraught with questions of equity. Another member clarifies that the drop deadline comes after the course evaluation deadline.

A message is read from the Chair of **Academic Affairs**, who is teaching a class at the time of this meeting. Their committee's report is as follows:

The Academic Affairs Committee met over the last week. We divided up responsibilities for addressing all of the issues that you

raised during our committee chair meeting. One member is now in contact with David Slavsky about the FAS survey. We will be discussing these results at a future meeting and relaying anything we find about faculty council's representation in future planned changes (we have yet to hear of any planned changes). Several members are staying on top of the library mold issue and will provide us with periodic updates. Another has volunteered to reach out to Professor Dana Garbaski about any planned changes in the core curriculum and faculty council representation on the Board of Undergraduate Studies. Finally, the chair is in the process of drafting a letter to the Provost requesting information on how the administration plans on handling student evaluations of faculty online teaching during the pandemic. Our committee felt that administration should consider a policy reducing the emphasis on student evaluations during the pandemic, given the unprecedented nature of the sudden shift to online learning. Once that letter is done, it will be forwarded to all to see if it something the faculty council agrees with—in which case, we can potentially send it to the Provost before the end of the year.

Additionally, we have heard from Winifred about scheduling a time for a meeting with the Benefits Advisory Committee. Once that committee meets, I will provide the faculty council members with an update. In the meantime, folks should feel free to communicate any action items related to benefits to Allen or me. We will make sure to raise any issues brought to us during our future meeting.

Ad-Hoc Handbook Committee. Jules indicates that the committee held its first meeting recently and have codified a process through which the entire handbook will go, starting with getting the current draft to the provost's office. The Provost's office will bring concerns and questions, to occupy the next few meetings. Will then start with other items needing addressing. He notes that they have representatives from most of university, but not all units. The committee may need more from medical side, since the representative they have is clinical and there are scheduling issues in terms of rotations. So there is now a process. Jules refers to the resolution from last meeting. The committee is waiting to hear from the Provost's office about how they view changes; will either make adjustments or have larger discussion about points of disagreement. When the Shared Governance Task Force report comes in, will generate amendments consistent with that. Once agreement is reached, changes to the handbook will come back to faculty council. Then would open to a wider zoom/town hall for faculty at large, to take guidance. The legal side would be involved throughout. Vice Provost Badia Ahad wants this done by end of Spring semester, which is aggressive. Jules has confidence in our working relationship with Ahad, so we can get through this.

One member indicates that representation from many schools is important, especially the Law School given the involvement of the university's

legal department in this matter. They also want to know about what people from Arrupe in the past have wanted from the handbook. Another member discusses a colleague in Arrupe and their ideas on the subject.

By-Laws and Constitution. This is a work in progress. Jules has sent the revised By-Laws and Constitution to the Chairs of the Shared Governance Task force so that they can see the direction in which we want to move. He is waiting to hear back from them. Jules is also raising issue with Badia; with her approval, thinks can send on to approval. Again important because in the past, the administration hasn't signed off on Council bylaws; we would like the president to sign off on this. Jules is hopeful for a change of name to Faculty Senate. We are waiting for shared governance report. Shared Governance Task Force. This is at the third iteration, seems to be agreement. It only needs to be codified for comments and feedback. Jules wants the Council to give close read, has tried to represent interests of Faculty Council. These changes will have consequences for us.

Communications committee: The Chair of this committee indicates that the evaluations for the Deans of the School of Environmental Sustainability and the Quinlan Business School are ready, and will go out to the faculty the following week. There will be a few weeks for these to be filled out, then the committee prepares a summary. The Chair indicates that the Council is doing more communication from list-serve, and getting requests to use it. One member points to a recent request for us to get greater participation in responses to a survey on diversity. The importance of drafting a November newsletter is discussed.

6. Action Item: Shared Governance and NTT and Untenured Faculty.

Jules indicates that this is an issue that he has raised with the Provost. Here is the resolution drafted:

Whereas the Faculty Council believes strongly in the concept and practice of shared governance, which requires a cooperative and collaborative relationship among governance bodies and members of the administration, and yet recognizes that, as the representative voice of faculty, the Council may, from time to time, need to take public positions in opposition to actions by the administration;

And whereas the Faculty Council seeks and values representation by faculty of all ranks and statuses, including nontenure-track and untenured faculty who may feel more vulnerable than tenured faculty;

And whereas the Faculty Council values the contributions and time commitment of its diverse members and depends upon all members feeling empowered to speak and protected in their speech;

Be it resolved that the Faculty Council affirms that its members deserve respect and recognition from the administration for their service on the Council and should never be reprimanded or penalized for any position they take as a faculty representative.

Jules asks how do we include non tenure-track faculty on the Council, and especially its Executive Committee, especially as that Committee become more assertive? Jules thinks that it is useful to have such faculty on that Committee and asks if some of this should be addressed in handbook? Also trying to meet with Vice Provost Ahad about this. A few years back, the University Senate passed a similar resolution. This resolution builds upon that and calls for similar things. The idea is to send this to the President and Provost, but also to the deans. He acknowledges that looks different to different people. A Council member affirms the importance of the recognition of diverse voice and of recognition of service on the council and such.

One member indicates support of the intent of the resolution, but thinks that it misses the chance to connect the question to academic freedom. The protections of academic freedom extend to faculty member participation in shared governance structures. Another members expresses the hope that these protections would appear in the handbook. The Provost underscores the importance of this issue, but expresses uncertainty about where the retaliation is coming from. If he knows, he can help. Right now the motion is vague and he does not quite understand what we are talking about. Freedom of speech is essential and these issues are caused by a power differential.

Another member says that the language feels a bit self-serving, as it is all about the Council. Other members agree. The resolution is tabled.