Newark Faculty Council minutes

December 18, 2023

Present: Nermin Allam, Sherri-Ann Butterfield, Nancy Cantor, Barry Komisaruk, Brian Murphy, Mariya Naumova, Stephanie Newbold, Brandon Paradise, Anna Rivas, Jeffrey Robinson, Sergei Schreider, Pallavi Shukla, Elizabeth Surles, Miklos Vasarhelyi, Bonita Veysey

Brian Murphy [?] moved to approve the minutes, and Miklos Vasarhelyi seconded the motion, which was approved.

* Chancellor’s report, Nancy Cantor

Piotr Piotrowiak recently announced the award of a multi-year Beckman Scholars grant to support underrepresented students in STEM as research fellows. The undergraduate fellows will be mentored by Rutgers-Newark faculty.

* NFC Bylaws revision

As discussed at the November 20, 2023 meeting, the NFC Bylaws were reviewed for the purpose of identifying potential amendments.

Before the December 18 NFC meeting, the following amendment was approved by NFC secret ballot initiated by Barry Komisaruk on December 12, 2023:

Amendment to **VII. Amendments**:

Delete in its entirety the current provisions in “Article VII. Amendments,” and replace with the following:

Proposed amendments to the Bylaws shall be presented to the Council for review and discussion. Adoption of an amendment to the Bylaws requires a two-thirds vote of the Council approving the amendment. The voting process, secret ballot or otherwise, shall be determined by a majority of the Council present at a duly called Council meeting.

The NFC next moved on to discussion of additional amendments, which were shared with the NFC as an email attachment on December 15 by Ana Rivas (see attached).

Brian Murphy [?] voted to accept the bylaws with the proposed amendments. NFC discussion ensued.

**II. Election, Representation and Composition**

Point of clarification: do contingent faculty get to vote and if so, does that include graduate students and post-docs? Yes, contingent faculty includes PhD students, post-doctoral scholars, and lecturers who are teaching, if they are elected to the NFC.

Point of clarification: Could the NFC include up to a total of two contingent faculty, per “II. Election, Representation and Composition,” revised #6? Yes.

Additional amendment: In “II. Election, Representation and Composition,” #3, after “academic unit,” add “So, the maximum two lecturers who may be part of the council must come from different units.”

**IV. Officers**

Point of clarification: What is term of officers other than the Chair? Should there be a limit on the other ones? No, there is no term limit on the other ones. The roles of Vice Chair and Secretary have no term limit as long as they remain on the NFC.

Suggested edit: Move the definition of executive cabinet in “IV. Officers,” #2 to the top of the document for clarity, as the cabinet is mentioned several times before its definition. See parenthetical note that directs reader to section IV.

**Section V. Other Elections**

Point of clarification, #2: Discussion about the Newark Campus Advisory Board

Lynnette Mawhinney is the NCAB representative who represents the NFC. NCAB was established by legislative mandate at the time of the RBHS merger. The advisory boards are external groups to the Rutgers Board of Governors and Trustees, established to represent broader community interests. Rutgers-Camden also has one.

NCAB membership includes an appointee by the Mayor of Newark, a member of the Board of Governors, a Rutgers-Newark staff representative, a Rutgers-Newark faculty representative, a Rutgers-Newark grad student organization representative, a Rutgers-Newark undergraduate student organization representative, a representative from NFC, and external community partner representatives from Prudential, NJPAC, Newark Museum, and Audible.

NCAB meeting formats generally include a faculty member presentation, with students presenting once a year, as well as a Chancellor update and one Chancellor-level office staff presentation on various topics (e.g., enrollment). The NCAB meeting is a good way to promote RU-N in the community to anchor partners and helpful to see what students are planning.

Point of clarification: Should the NFC University Senator at large and the Newark Campus Advisory Board member have a term limit? No changes were recommended following discussion.

**VI. Committees**

Additional amendments to 1d: Change wording of “Count of Essex” to “Essex County.” Add at the end “and any other relevant external stakeholders.”

Additional questions, discussion, and amendments:

Does the Senator at large in “V. Other Elections,” #1 need to be a member of NFC? No, NFC just drives the election process.

There was further discussion about the composition of the NFC Executive Cabinet.

Additional amendment to “IV. Officers,” # 2:

The Executive Cabinet will optionally include the immediate past Council Chair. Delete “and three council members, elected by the full Council.”

At the conclusion of the discussion, Bonita Veysey [or possibly Stephanie Newbold; I was unsure about this.] moved to accept the bylaws as amended, and Brian Murphy seconded the motion, which was approved.

* Additional business:

There was discussion about the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights complaint against Rutgers and the *Star-Ledger* article regarding the same, which mistakenly identified Rutgers-Newark as the source of the complaint. Rutgers is one of 77 schools facing similar OCR complaints. The one against Rutgers originated in New Brunswick, but the Office for Civil Rights is considering Rutgers as a whole because they believe it’s systemic, even though the campuses differ substantially.

There was discussion about NFC offering a teach-in on first-amendment rights to clarify what speech is legally protected.

* Provost’s report, Jeffrey Robinson

The Provost’s Office completed the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey of the faculty. Next steps include forming a faculty task force to review the results and establish recommendations. Provost Robinson would like the NFC to appoint representatives to the task force for this purpose. Others will also be appointed by the Dean. The survey is recurring and will be completed again in a couple years.

* Executive Vice Chancellor report, Sherri-Ann Butterfield

The data gathered from a Rutgers University-wide climate survey on DEI is being analyzed and will be shared, both for the Rutgers-Newark campus and across the Rutgers system. A task force will be established to review and act on the results, and the NFC will be consulted. There was also a request for information regarding how Rutgers-Newark administrators can help faculty juggle all the things they need—between advising, support for students struggling with conflict, and other areas.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

Submitted by Elizabeth Surles, NFC Secretary 2-15-24