

Newark Faculty Council minutes
February 19, 2024

Present: Ed Bonder, Sherri-Ann Butterfield, John Gunkel, John Kettle, Barry Komisaruk, Mariya Naumova, Stephanie Newbold, Brandon Paradise, Anna Rivas, Jeffrey Robinson, Sergei Schreider, Pallavi Shukla, Elizabeth Surles, Erich Toncre, Tracy Tran, Miklos Vasarhelyi, Bonita Veysey

Miklos Vasarhelyi moved to approve the minutes from the December meeting, and Erich Toncre seconded the motion. Discussion on revisions followed. Bonita Veysey clarified that she abstained from the vote to accept the minutes from the November meeting, did not move to accept the amended bylaws, and abstained from voting on their adoption. A request to correct one typo in Jeffrey Robinson's report was made. Elizabeth Surles will make the requested edits and moved to accept the minutes with the changes. Bonita Veysey seconded the motion. The motion passed with one abstention.

Chancellor's Office Updates

- Provost's report, Jeffrey Robinson

The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey was sent to Rutgers faculty last year, and a working group of Rutgers-Newark faculty will be convened including membership appointed by the deans as well as five volunteers from the Newark Faculty Council. The group will review the survey results for the Newark campus and make recommendations based on those results, to be sent to Jeffrey Robinson and John Gunkel. The survey results deal with all aspects of faculty life including areas of strength and those of concern, ranging from health benefits to governance, etc. The group will take into consideration the timing of the survey, as it coincided with the strike, and look for how this may have affected the data.

Question: When will the group convene? The first meeting would hopefully occur before spring break, with a couple meetings after as well, so that the group's recommendations could be shared by the end of the semester.

Question: What is the time commitment? Three meetings will likely be around 90 minutes, so not burdensome (but important to be thorough).

Ed Bonder and Barry Komisaruk volunteered to join the group. Barry Komisaruk asked for NFC delegates to email him if they were also interested in volunteering.

- Executive Vice Chancellor report, Sherri-Ann Butterfield

All questions regarding the Life Sciences II building should be directed to Dean Mattis, who is the administrator with responsibility for the work on the building. A request was made for support from the Office of the Chancellor to facilitate improved communication in regards to this, as key faculty (e.g., Biology Department Chair) have not been consulted about the building program changes. Feedback will be shared with the Dean that communication challenges were brought up at the NFC meeting. Barry Komisaruk asked for a status update to be shared at the next NFC meeting.

Strategic planning: Data from the campus climate survey—which was completed in 2023 before, during, and after the strike—will be shared on a campus level on March 18. The data is focused on equity, and the rest of semester will be used to talk about the results and establish a plan for using them. The survey response rate was about 13%, and the data will roll into a strategic planning process. The Chancellor’s Commission on Diversity and Transformation will look at everything and consider what to do. Deans and individual schools will also look at the data and think about where improvements could be made. This process will continue into the fall. Departments should be aware of and prepare for this work, and NFC will also need to be involved. The work will be at the dean level, and it will be up to departments to get involved. The University Office of Equity and Inclusion is behind the process, and EVC Butterfield will also send the information to the NFC. The results can be shared a little more at the April NFC meeting, which would be added to the April NFC agenda.

Election of NFC officers

- NFC elections, committees and Executive Committee elections, nominations process, Barry Komisaruk

The NFC considered the role of its committees and their responsibilities based on the updated list sent by Ana Rivas. The majority of NFC delegates are ending their terms in June. Barry Komisaruk suggested postponing the discussion of standing committee roles and responsibilities until new NFC delegates are confirmed and convened. The NFC Executive Committee will need a Chair, Vice Chair, Executive Committee members, and standing committee chairs and members. Ana Rivas will coordinate the vote for the NFC Executive Committee based on nominations in May for Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and three Executive Council members. NFC delegates should send their nominations for these positions to Ana, and self-nominations are welcome.

Questions: What is the process for identifying new NFC delegates? Ana will reach out to departments, which will send a list of new NFC delegates.

When does Ana send email for departmental nominations? Ana will review the timeline, but definitely before May.

For current delegates who will remain on NFC, there will be a vote via email with instructions for the voting process. Once both nomination processes are complete—the departmental delegate nominations and the Executive Council nominations—there will be a slate for Executive Council nominations prepared for July 1.

Question: For delegates elected by units with multiple delegates, they should be staggered by three-year terms. The current list of Business and Law School delegates is problematic in this regard. Ana Rivas will check on the dates they started on NFC, make necessary corrections, and distribute the updated list. Erich Toncre’s term is supposed to expire in 2026, and Miklos Vasarhelyi in 2025.

New business

- NFC bylaw revisions

Discussion of John Kettle's recommended bylaw changes, distributed before the meeting, included the following:

1. Change terminology throughout the bylaws: Use "delegates" instead of "members" when referring to faculty who serve on the NFC, as faculty are elected to NFC, and use "members" when referring to delegates who serve on NFC subcommittees.
2. Add a process for election of the NFC Chair, which was not otherwise addressed in the bylaws.
3. Add a process for contingent faculty delegates to clarify how elections should be held with assistance from the Office of the Chancellor.
4. Clarifying the term calendar in the appendix: the term is July 1-June of following calendar year.

Elizabeth Surles moved to adopt the bylaws with John's amendments. Miklos Vasarhelyi seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Question: Does this vote follow the current bylaws, as fourteen NFC delegates must vote in favor of any motion for it to pass. (A two-thirds quorum is needed for a vote according to the bylaws.) NFC delegate attendance at the meeting was insufficient for a vote, so Elizabeth Surles withdrew her motion. The bylaw revisions would be tabled until the next NFC meeting or would be sent to NFC delegates for a secret vote by email, so that a 2/3 majority could vote.

Elizabeth Surles announced the new availability of the [Library Speakers Consortium](#) through Rutgers University Libraries, featuring live and recorded talks by bestselling authors and thought leaders aimed at a broad, general audience.

Erich Tonchre works with P3 Collaboratory, which offers a large number of webinars and programs to support teaching and pedagogy. He recommended that the NFC invite the P3 to provide a presentation on their resources at a future NFC meeting and recommended the SMART teaching workshop, which would be held on Monday, April 22.

Ed Bonder requested assistance with making travel arrangements for a job candidate.

Bonnie Vesey moved to adjourn the meeting, and Barry Komisaruk seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

Submitted by Elizabeth Surles, NFC Secretary 3-18-24