

FAS Senate

AN ELECTED BODY OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND
SCIENCES
YALE UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Arts and Sciences Senate Meeting

Thursday, October 24, 2019

4 PM – 6 PM

CT Hall, Rm. 201, 1071 Chapel Street

APPROVED

In attendance:

Senators: John Geanakoplos, Chair; Jennifer Klein, Deputy Chair; Sybil Alexandrov; Howard Bloch; Jill Campbell; Emily Erikson; Joseph Fischel; Alessandro Gomez; Shiri Goren; Valerie Horsley; Matthew Jacobson; Ruth Koizim; Hélène Landemore-Jelaca; Timothy Newhouse; Ruzica Piskac; William Nordhaus; Nikhil Padmanabhan; Theresa Schenker; Charles Schmuttenmaer; Paul Van Tassel

FASS Program Coordinator, Rose Rita Riccitelli

Guests: Tamar Gendler; Margaret Homans; Pericles Lewis; Winston Lin; Reina Maruyama; Stephanie Spangler

Absent: Senators – Arielle Baskin-Sommers; Ian Shapiro

John Geanakoplos, chair of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Senate (FASS), opened the meeting at 4:05 PM. He noted that there are no minutes to be approved from the FASS's first meeting on September 12, 2019 because it was a closed meeting, so he then introduced the first item on the agenda – reports from Senate committees.

1) Reports from Senate committees on their missions for the year. Standing committees will also report on how they plan to follow up on the recommendations from previous years.

Faculty Advancement Committee: Emily Erikson, Co-chair of the committee reported that the committee has met and discussed areas that the committee will focus on for this year, including: faculty excellence; faculty size; faculty service time; library issues; IT issues; salary gap of Yale faculty in comparison to their peers and other pecuniary benefits. It was also suggested that this committee continue to address faculty childcare issues.

Governance Committee: Chair Bill Nordhaus reported that the committee will focus largely on items carried over from last year, including: follow-up on the Presidential Committee on

FAS Governance to review structure set decanal structure created 5 years ago; consider issue of more budget autonomy for FAS; transparency in the faculty handbook.

Budget Committee: Chair Jill Campbell reported that the committee had an organizational meeting and its focus this year includes: to identify important budget issues; study all the information that has been made available for current and past years; request more information from the Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer Steve Murphy so the committee can understand how resources are being used; look into the CRC funding – money set aside for maintenance of buildings; look into the system of allocation and assessments and how different parts of the University are assessed charges for overall university funds; how to structure a more independent budget for the FAS.

Committee on Instructional Faculty and Academic Support

Co-Chair Sybil Alexandrov said that the two top priorities for this year are parental leave and phased retirement for instructional faculty. Also, they will look into resources for instructional faculty for going to conferences.

Diversity Committee: Co-chair Matthew Jacobson said the first priority of the committee was to meet with the new Dean of Diversity and Faculty Development, Larry Gladney, which they did. Other priorities for the committee are:

- Concentrate more on the sciences this year.
- Have a town hall event with chairs and representatives from departments to discuss about issues, problems and best practices.
- Have site visits in specific departments and ask if there is a need for the committee's help.
- Collaborate with Larry Gladney and work more closely with him on diversity issues.
- Focus on faculty services and make sure they are diverse.
- Larry Gladney is following up on recommendations from previous Diversity Committee reports.

Ms. Campbell noted that Mr. Gladney had been a member of the Senate at his previous institution, and Ms. Horsley noted that Mr. Gladney is focusing on diversity in searches being conducted.

Science and Engineering Committee: Co-Chair Nikhil Padmanabhan said that the committee will focus on the implementation of the *Science and Engineering Report* and what implementation will look like and how it will impact various departments. The committee seeks to understand what has already been done, what is planned for the future, and what the time scale is for each initiative. What will be the process for adding new initiatives as things change? How will faculty substantively be a part of the process? How much of the resources are used for strategic vs. core initiatives? How much goes into hires, research and teaching, how much goes into the FAS vs. other schools and what that balance looks like? The committee proposes to meet with Scott Strobel, Jeff Brock and department chairs to build up an approach for supporting science research in FAS. Following the meeting with Scott Strobel and Jeff Brock, the committee will reach out to all the science departments to let them know that this FAS Senate committee exists.

Mr. Geanakoplos indicated that the full FASS Senate would have to vote to ratify the new FASS Science and Engineering Committee. Mr. Jacobson therefore made the motion for the FAS Senate to create the FASS Science and Engineering Committee. Charles Schmuttenmaer

seconded the motion. A vote was taken and it was unanimously approved to create the FASS Science and Engineering Committee.

Undergraduate Admissions and Education Committee

Co-chair Mr. Geanakoplos said that the committee was formed last year in response to faculty concern that most faculty were unaware of changes that have taken place in undergraduate admissions. Consequently, the FASS would like to understand the process, and recent changes in admissions and perhaps have more voice in how it is done. After consulting with FAS Dean Gendler, Mr. Geanakoplos also had a conversation with the Yale Chief Counsel, Alexander Drier, in the General Counsel's Office to discuss some extenuating legal issues. Committee members decided for this year to concentrate on aspects of the preparation of the students who are admitted. This focus will help the FASS understand the students' needs so we can provide them with sufficient support in areas that they may not be prepared in, such as writing essays. Our goal to look at the question of whether the students at Yale have sufficient support to thrive as we intend them to. We also would like to find out what role faculty can serve most effectively in admissions. JG noted that very few faculty participate in this process and the committee would like more faculty input in the process of admissions. He noted that the committee will change its mission statement to reflect these goals. Joseph Fischel asked how the admissions process affects the choice of majors, and Ms. Goren said this is an area that will be studied by this committee and also how majors can support different kinds students. Ms. Horsley said the biology departments got together and restructured their first-year course. There is a study underway on how students who come to Yale without preparation perform in the course; hence we may be able to get some relevant data from this investigation.

Outreach, Nominations, and Committee on Committees: Charles Schmuttenmaer reported that the committee needs three non-senators to join the committee and he asked for suggestions from the FASS for people from each division to fill these three slots. The main focus of this committee is to educate people about the FASS by giving presentations at department meetings. The Committee on Committees part is to suggest people to add to University committees and this committee will continue to do this. The Committee has currently been asked for suggestions for two FAS committees from Dean Gendler. Dean Gendler noted that the committee only need to send suggestions and the FAS Dean's Office will contact the individuals from that point on. Jennifer Klein suggested having a series of teas or lunches to talk with people about the FASS.

Peer Advisory and Ombudsman Committee: Ms. Campbell asked for someone from the sciences to join the committee. She said that the committee will continue to be a resource for faculty to come to with sensitive issues. They will also continue to follow-up on the recommendation from last year that the University establish an Ombuds Office that will cover all members of the University, and not just faculty but also students and staff. She noted that the office will exclude the Medical School because they have their own Ombuds Office. She noted that the committee is in the process of setting up meetings with the FAS Dean to address the Ombuds proposal.

Elections Committee: Mr. Geanakoplos said that Michael Fischer is going to serve as co-chair and that we are looking for someone to step forward to serve as co-chair with Mr. Fischer. Mr. Schmuttenmaer said there should be an ad hoc committee to work on election

procedures and nominations procedures, and to write down criteria for each of these committees.

Given the announcement that the current Provost is stepping down, FASS members should provide suggestions concerning what we are looking for in a Provost and convey these to the President. Mr. Geanakoplos said that he feels it is very important that the Provost concentrates on the core mission of the University and recognizes that while there are always trade-offs, the Provost has a lot of freedom to move money around; history doesn't dictate where the money must go. Thus it is critical that the new Provost, in conjunction with the President, keeps his/her eyes on the core mission of the University. Ms. Horsley said she hopes that the new Provost has experience managing a team and will be one who is a leader who understands how to empower others to lift up the University. Mr. Nordhaus said there are two areas that he wants to emphasize – one is to focus on the core mission and the other is that we have a Provost who respects the maturity of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences as an institution and is willing to move ahead with a FAS that has budgetary and institutional authority. Mr. Jacobson said that he was on a committee to select a Provost at his alma mater (a small college), and one of the traits that the committee wanted in a provost, and one he thinks is valuable for Yale to consider, is to have a person who is genuinely interested in learning about all the parts of the University, especially the parts that he or she may not be familiar with.

- 2) **Mr. Geanakoplos introduced Stephanie Spangler, Vice Provost of Health Affairs and Academic Integrity, who shared the results from the *Association of American Universities (AAU) Report on Sexual Climate*.** Ms. Spangler said that Yale participated in AAU's survey last spring, along with 32 other institutions on Sexual Climate, and noted that Yale also participated in a similar survey in 2013. She said that the purpose of the survey was to get a sense of the prevalence of sexual misconduct on campuses and students' attitudes on the climate on our campus and their confidence in the resources that we have available to address sexual misconduct. She noted Yale students were very engaged in participating in this survey. Ms. Spangler gave specific details on the results of the survey and noted that anyone can access to the full report at <https://provost.yale.edu/title-ix/yale-report-aau-campus-climate-survey> She noted that Yale has not made much progress in this area and that the rates of misconduct are still high in spite of the fact there are resources available and are being utilized. She said our students really feel connected to the Yale community and take their well-being seriously, even though the results are not as positive as we want them to be. We want to have an advisory body that involves faculty and not just students and asked the Committee on Committees to take this under consideration.

Mr. Geanakoplos convened a discussion on the Freedom of Expression at Yale-NUS College focused on the recent course cancellation. He said the FASS received 400 pages of material associated with this issue. In the summary of what was sent, he said that a Yale-NUS course was cancelled just a few weeks before it was to begin. Colleagues of the instructor were concerned it was cancelled for political reasons and therefore constituted a violation of freedom of speech. In response to the outcry over academic freedom, President Salovey appointed Pericles Lewis, Professor of Comparative Literature, Vice President for Global Strategy and Deputy Provost for International Affairs at Yale, to investigate the matter. Professor Lewis had also served as the first

president of Yale-NUS. Mr. Lewis filed his report which indicated that Yale-NUS handled the matter awkwardly, and perhaps even badly, however reached the right conclusion: the course lacked academic rigor and potentially put students in a harmful situation. A standing committee of Yale faculty on Yale-NUS, which includes two FASS senators – Shiri Goren and Charles Schmuttenmaer – endorsed the report. However, Mr. Geanakoplos went on to note, from the material forwarded to FASS, that critics said that the part of the course that potentially endangered students had already been removed from the posted syllabus, that the Yale NUS administration could have simply postponed the course on the grounds that too much had changed at the last minute instead of cancelling it on the grounds of academic rigor, and that the subsequent attack on the instructor by the minister of education in parliament seemed to confirm the political nature of the decision. Mr. Lewis was asked to speak for 10 minutes on the subject, and he offered information on what transpired. He mentioned that Yale-NUS has been a haven of free expression over the years, has allowed academic freedom, and takes it very seriously. He offered details on his report and how he arrived at his decision - that both the invitation to teach the course and the subsequent cancellation were handled poorly by inexperienced administrators but he still felt the final decision was valid. He did confirm that the course segment had been advertised and students were able to sign up to take the course, however he also said that although it was advertised, it had not received final approval by the curriculum committee. He feels that there was miscommunication in many phases of the process that led to confusion in the process of the cancellation of the course, as he informed by Yale-NUS and Yale. Mimi Yiengpruksawan, Professor of History of Art at Yale, was introduced by Mr. Geanakoplos to address the FASS regarding the course cancellation and treatment of the instructor at Yale-NUS. Ms. Yiengpruksawan noted that she has been at Yale since 1990, tenured in 1998 and has served Yale as Chair of the Council on East Asian Studies, as Director of Yale Silk Road Seminars, and as Director of Undergraduate Studies, History of Art. She said that she felt it important for her to address the situation of the recent course cancellation at Yale-NUS as she strongly disagrees with the decision and the process by which it was carried out. She addressed several areas cited in the transcript that suggested it was cancelled for reasons of political censorship and indeed deprived academic freedom. She also said that because Mr. Lewis is at Yale and is the former president of Yale-NUS, his report could not be considered an independent review of the situation. She also feels that political pressure played a role in the decision. She recommended that a completely independent and external review of the course cancellation be conducted as soon as possible; that the University respond to the attacks by Singapore's Minister on the arts and on Mr. Aflian Sa. Mr. Geanakoplos thanked Ms. Yiengpruksawan for her comments and opened the floor to comments from non-senators. The inaugural Dean of Faculty at Yale NUS (Charles Baylin) spoke. He said the narrative of bureaucratic bumbling, poor communication, and unsupervised junior staffers struck him as very plausible and resonated with his experience there. He rejected the narrative of "oppression" and "government interference and pressure", claiming that it was not consistent with his understanding and experience of the institution .

At this point – 6 PM – the FASS reached the end of its allotted two-hour meeting time. Mr. Geanakoplos asked for a motion to extend the meeting time from 6 PM – 6:15 PM. Mr. Schmuttenmaer moved that the FASS meeting be extended by 15 minutes. A vote was taken and it was voted to extend the meeting by 15 minutes and those who needed to leave, did so. Ms. Campbell spoke next and noted that she was involved in the early talks on forming Yale-NUS. She noted that when Yale formed an agreement to support Yale-NUS it put its reputation on the line for what we stand for in terms of freedom of expression and a liberal arts education.

And, she said, Yale having engaged in this venture, we have an obligation to consider what the consequences are for people in Singapore. She said we are not innocent of the consequences of the actions of Yale-NUS and its attempt to clear itself of having caved in to political pressure and censorship. Ms. Campbell supports asking for an independent review of the situation, along with the other recommendations proposed by Ms. Yiengpruksawan. Mr. Schmuttenmaer spoke next and noted that he signed off on the fact that there was no academic freedom impinged upon. He also noted that the instructor Aflian Sa, in all of his comments, did not mention academic freedom, and it appears that his reputation has not been affected by the course cancellation. Mr. Schmuttenmaer believes that there has been no obstruction of academic freedom. Mr. Lewis said that he has had much experience with the Singaporean ministry and that he does not feel that there was any pressure from the ministry to cancel the course. He also reiterated that he does not agree with the way the situation was handled, however agrees that the right decision was made. Ms. Yiengpruksawan noted the reality is that we do live in a political and competitive world, particularly among universities, and people put stock in Yale as a liberal arts institution, and if Yale cannot stand up for what it believes, and that includes defamation of someone, then it cannot live up to its own name. In this case, she feels we must consider the reputation of Yale and of Yale-NUS, and therefore she is asking for a strong review of the matter by means of an external review by those outside the Yale and Yale NUS community. Mr. Lewis suggested that the FASS reach out to the Yale-NUS faculty for more information. Mr. Gomez asked if the revisions that were asked for had been made, would we not be here discussing this issue today. Mr. Lewis said yes. He also said that the question was raised if a student protest should be part of the curriculum and be given academic credit for such an activity. He also noted, and it was his understanding, that the course centered around engaging in activism rather than the study of activism. Ms. Klein said that she feels the course was quite provocative, and structured in a provocative way. Her question, however, was about fall-out – that the course instructor was subject to a public vilification for anti-national activism, he was framed as a repeat offender – and Yale’s report bolstered the Minister’s public attack and thereby put him in a potentially dangerous position. And, she asked, what are we to do about it? Mr. Lewis said he does not want to minimize the danger, but feels it has been somewhat exaggerated. He said the instructor is still a very popular play-write in the community, and was angry at first but does not seem to be angry anymore based on subsequent correspondence. The 15-minute extension of the meeting ended, and with that, Mr. Geanakoplos adjourned the meeting at 6:15 PM.