

# FAS Senate

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

FAS Senate Meeting

Thursday, January 17, 2019, CT Hall Rm. 201

**APPROVED**

## In attendance

Senators: William Nordhaus, Chair, Jill Campbell, Deputy Chair, Sybil Alexandrov, Howard Bloch, Marijeta Bozovic, Alexandre Debs, Emily Erikson, John Geanakoplos, Shiri Goren, Brad Inwood, Matthew Jacobson, Jennifer Klein, Ruth Koizim, Maureen Long, Rajit Manohar, Nikhil Padmanabhan, Charles Schmuttenmaer, Ian Shapiro, Theresa Schenker, Mark Solomon

FASS Program Coordinator Rose Rita Riccitelli

Absent: Senators – Arielle Baskin-Sommers, Ruzica Piskac

Guests: David Bercovici, Stanley Eisenstat, Alexy Federov, Michael Fischer, Karsten Heeger, Tamar Gendler, Juan Lora, Pericles Lewis, John Mangan, Dragomir Radev. Non-faculty: John Mangan

**Agenda and Senate actions in bold**

## FAS Senate meeting

### **1. Welcome from Bill Nordhaus, Senate Chair**

The meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Senate (FASS) was called to order at 4:02 PM by Chair William Nordhaus. Mr. Nordhaus welcomed Brad Inwood back to the FASS to serve as a senator during the spring 2019 term, replacing Maria Doerfler who is on leave and unable to serve.

### **2. Approval of minutes, FASS meeting, December 11, 2018**

Mr. Nordhaus presented the minutes from the December 11, 2018 FASS meeting for review and comments.

**The minutes as submitted were unanimously approved.**

### **3. Committee reports and next steps on Faculty Excellence Report implementation; and**

### **4. Privacy concerns: data collection through electronic systems (Workday, Canvas, MyChart, Turnitin)**

Mr. Nordhaus called on FASS committee chairs to report on their respective committees.

Ms. Campbell reported for the Peer Advisory Committee. The committee is investigating the advantages and feasibility for the University's appointment of an ombudsperson.

Ian Shapiro presented an update on Budget Committee activities. He reported that he and Mr. Nordhaus met with FAS Dean Gendler to follow up the FASS *Faculty Excellence Report*. He said that Dean Gendler agrees that there is a large salary gap between Yale's FAS and our competitors that needs attention; the Budget Committee has asked for a projection of the timetable for addressing the gap. Regarding the size of the FAS faculty, he reported that Dean Gendler agrees that they have been conservative in the past and plans are to increase the number of offers being made. He noted that they also talked about the FAS appointments in the Jackson Institute and Dean Gendler affirms that the FAS pool will not be tapped for resources for the Jackson Institute.

Matthew Jacobson reported for the Diversity Committee. The committee's primary project for the year is conducting an informal review of the faculty allocation process, the pool-slot system, and the work of the Faculty Resource Committee. The committee has completed most of their interviews with administrators and chairs and expects to provide an informational report on their findings to the FAS. The committee plans to meet soon with Larry Gladney, the new Dean of Diversity and Faculty Development for the FAS.

Mark Solomon and Alex Debs reported that the work of the Governance Committee is focused this year on three issues: transparency in changes to the Faculty Handbook, the University's access to faculty members' electronic files and communications, and review of the decanal structure. On the first, Mr. Solomon reported that he and Mr. Debs recently met with Jason Killheffer, Assistant Provost for Academic Integrity, who is responsible for entering changes into the Faculty Handbook. Mr. Killheffer was receptive to their request for tracking of changes, with notations stating when a change was made. (Currently changes are summarized briefly in the Handbook.) The committee is also looking into the conditions under which the University is able to access our electronic devices. Many find the statement of policy online very concerning; the committee is following up with the Office of the General Counsel to get a sense of the times and under what circumstances, in practice, this policy has been implemented.

Mr. Debs noted that we are approaching the five-year mark of the current decanal structure. The Senate has urged the President to form a committee this spring to review the changes and how well they have been implemented, particularly in relation to budgetary structures. He invited suggestions of faculty members for nomination to serve on the review committee, to be forwarded to the administration.

Mr. Nordhaus commented on the broader faculty privacy issues raised by the Governance Committee's work, noting that the technology of communications is outrunning our organizational ability to absorb and respond to the capabilities of new technologies. He feels the overriding issue is to learn what Yale's and outside vendors' abilities are to obtain our personal information without our consent or knowledge, with potential uses for their own purposes. He cited the examples of the "tracking" capabilities of the YaleMessage system; access to faculty gmail accounts; and the requisitioning of faculty library records. Yale appears to have no clear policy statement relating to access to faculty electronic devices and activity. He asked that the Governance Committee follow up on these matters.

Senators raised questions about whether Yale's contract with the "Learning Management System," *Canvas LMS*, gives Canvas a proprietary right to syllabi, course material selections, and other faculty work posted there, as well as expressing concern about Canvas's tracking of time spent by individual students on the site. Mr. Nordhaus noted that, although these issues are too large in scope for the FASS to

take on fully, the Senate can inquire whether Yale has formulated a policy about all of the issues surrounding privacy, and ask if there is a group that is looking into all of these concerns.

Shiri Goren reported on behalf of the Instructional Committee. The committee goals for the 2018-19 year include ongoing communication with the leadership of the Yale library; establishing prizes to recognize instructional faculty excellence; developing a non-coercive mechanism to allow instructional faculty to volunteer to serve on Yale College committees; and working with Jack Callahan, Senior Vice President for Operations, to create a position for a “faculty liaison” for issues related to operations. In addition, instructional faculty compensation still needs attention. Ms. Goren noted that Dean Chun was highly receptive to the committee’s suggestion of increasing the number of prizes for instructional faculty.

Charles Schmuttenmaer spoke for the Nominations Committee, noting that the committee has received a list of all FAS Faculty and the committee will confirm the information and begin the nomination process in the second week of February. After polling the faculty on whom they want to nominate, the committee will create the ballot in March; open voting in April; and have the process completed within two weeks. This year, he stated, the aim is to have the Executive Committee in place before Commencement. He noted that the Nominations Committee has the discretion to nominate someone who does not have the required five nominations. Mr. Nordhaus added a reminder on term limits: the term limit for Senate service is three consecutive terms, and for service on the Executive Committee, four consecutive years.

On behalf of the Elections Committee, Mr. Nordhaus addressed the balloting process, for which we have used Qualtrics. The next step, he said, is running the ballots through the single, transferrable vote algorithm, which was written by Jay Emerson in “R.” He said that he has been in contact with three universities—NYU, Chicago, and Stanford—who all use a single, transferrable vote and is waiting for further information. He noted a default option would be to use a manual count.

## **5. Proposal for change in FASS by-laws regarding preservation of audio recordings**

Jill Campbell presented a proposal for a change in FASS By-laws regarding preservation of audio recordings of FASS meetings for a trial period of one year. She read the proposed new language for By-law #14, Minutes and Recording (changes in bold):

*Meetings will not be recorded or live-streamed in order to assure full and frank discussion among those present in the room. The Senate staff director may audio-record meetings for purposes of accuracy, but these will not be distributed **or permanently preserved**. For a trial period of the calendar year 2019, audio recordings will be retained for archival purposes; they may be consulted by individuals by permission of the Senate Executive Council.*

**By a show of hands, the proposed change to FASS By-laws was unanimously approved.**

## **6. Discussion of public version of Faculty Excellence Report**

Mr. Nordhaus introduced a discussion on the public version of the *Faculty Excellence Report*. He recalled that at the November 2018 meeting, the Faculty Advancement Committee presented their full *Faculty Excellence Report*, which was adopted by the FASS, and that the FASS voted at that time to distribute the report by secure means (attachment to a YaleMessage) only to members of the FAS Faculty. He observed that, once it was decided to restrict distribution of the full report, it was always the intention of the FASS to have a publicly available version of the report, for which he has been preparing a draft. In this public

report, he said, he focused on the issues that are outside the control of departments and faculty, including salaries and FAS faculty size. John Geanakoplos praised the skillfulness with which Mr. Nordhaus condensed the report for public distribution, but expressed his own preference that the full report be released publicly.

Other Senators expressed their views on a range of aspects of the public report, including the importance of highlighting information about the Yale salary gap information; the lack of attention to instructional faculty members' concerns in the report; and the omission of points about research funding and graduate student support in the condensed public report. Several methods of encouraging faculty to return to the full report when the short public report is released were discussed. Mr. Nordhaus invited Senators and guests to submit further suggestions to him for revision of the public report; and he proposed distributing the revised version for final approval from the FASS by electronic vote.

### **7. Proposal for an open-format Faculty Forum, spring term 2019**

Mr. Nordhaus announced that at the suggestion of Senator Alex Debs, the FASS plans to hold an open-format Faculty Forum in the spring 2019 term. The proposed date is Wednesday, March 27, 2019 from 4-6 PM. More information will follow.

### **8. Presentation on Science Initiative from Jeff Brock (Mathematics), Dean of Science; with discussion by the Senate**

Mr. Nordhaus introduced Jeff Brock, Dean of Science, to discuss the *University Science Strategy Committee Report*, and the implementation of that report's recommendations.

Dean Brock observed that the report impacts the full campus. While the report identifies priorities that follow from urgent problems in the world, it also affirms the pursuit of fundamental knowledge and the impossibility of predicting where the next breakthrough will emerge. He said that the Physical Science and Engineering Area Committee (PSEAC) response to the report calls for creating "an enduring environment for scientific excellence that draws us together and that we believe in fundamentally"; he believes Yale already seeks to do so. He reviewed the cross-disciplinary priority areas identified in the report: data science, neuroscience, quantum computing, inflammation science, evolution and the environment, and artificial intelligence. He noted that machine learning and artificial intelligence are increasingly brought into laboratories to pursue questions in many different scientific fields. A number of structural and organizational priorities are highlighted in the report, including support for junior faculty and development training. Commercialization and entrepreneurship around science will be encouraged. Other areas that he feels are vital are to support include staff scientists, data science, research cores, and instrumentation. He personally will work to improve the communication about Yale scientists' research both within the campus and externally. As the Dean of Science, he oversees stewardship of the science departments in the FAS, including strategic planning in departments; balancing core departmental needs and pursuits; and leveraging communications to build large-scale projects.

Mr. Nordhaus introduced four senators to speak on the science initiative:

Maureen Long (Geology & Geophysics) noted that this is a very exciting and critical time for the sciences at Yale, that scientists here feel that identifying new resources is important and crucial work, and that the report does a great job of framing priorities - graduate student support, diversity across the STEM pipeline, support for instrumentation development, and support for core facilities. She raised the question,

however, of how the report and its recommendations will be used. It may serve as a way to drive efforts at finding new resources, a way of framing priorities, perhaps getting donors excited, and as a reference for the development office to use to attract donors. She said one could also look at this report as a strategic plan for science at Yale - a roadmap for how to use current resources, articulating priorities for hiring and spending that are taking place now. In her view, using the report in the second way would be damaging, particularly for science in the FAS. She noted that in many ways this was a top-down report and that the committee was not representative of science at Yale and was not constructed to be that. Therefore, to use this report as how to direct resources for science in FAS would not be good. Ms. Long said that she would like to know more about how the plan is to be implemented, and would like to see more participation of FAS faculty in that process, with bottom-up support from the faculty and the needs of the faculty as the primary driver. She hopes that the university will communicate to the faculty on the implementation of the report and seek input from the faculty about implementation. She hopes that Dean Brock can advocate for that strong faculty voice. She concluded by quoting PSEAC's recommendation: "The overarching recommendation from PSEAC is that the effort in the implementation phase is not solely concentrated in the five priority areas but creates an enduring environment for scientific excellence where fundamental science can be nurtured."

Rajit Manohar (Electrical Engineering and Computer Science) said that he agrees with what Ms. Long said and added that he also agrees with what Dean Brock said – that science is about discovery. However, he noted, when you read the report, it is mostly about technology, and so the report is not actually about just science. He noted that at a Town Hall meeting in Engineering to discuss engineering's reaction to the report, there were mixed reactions - people who had recently come to Yale were excited about this opportunity, and the people who have been at Yale for many years viewed it as an extremely negative document and feel that Yale does not care about engineering. He noted that there is an entire continuum from pure science to pure applications, with a huge range of areas in between, and said it is not obvious from this report what Yale wants to do. He feels that it is important to realize that there is a spectrum, and that investments be made across that spectrum, and there is a unique opportunity to integrate the School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS) into the intellectual fabric of Yale. He noted that SEAS does not feel like it is an integral part of Yale, especially among long-time faculty. Mr. Manohar quoted Millikan – "One of the chief innovations to human progress arises because of the extreme slowness with which the advances in knowledge become translated into action for the benefit of society as a whole. There is no step more important for the removal of that inhibition than that of providing for intimate contact between the leaders in the fields of pure and applied science." He ended by saying that he feels that Yale has a unique opportunity to do this, and if we can do it, Yale would be one of the places to be if you want to have an impact in science and engineering.

Charles Schmuttenmaer (Chemistry) seconded the comments from both Ms. Long and Mr. Manohar. He said that he feels the implementation is key and understands that not every proposal is going to happen. He thought the crosscutting investment parts were the most exciting – and the grad student support is absolutely necessary. He recommends eliminating tuition or make it minimal. He noted that the diversity issue has been a key concern of the FASS for a number of years and the administration does not always keep pace. He said that core facilities are going to be very helpful with small user fees. He observed that this report is very heavy on medicine, noting that six of the 14 committee members are affiliated either jointly or fully with the Yale School of Medicine and one with Public Health. About the implementation, he said he feels that mandated collaborations are a bad idea. He is not opposed to organically forming collaborations, just to "forced" collaborations. He recalled *Science, the Endless Frontier*, the 1945 report by Vannevar Bush, which exemplifies how American science came into preeminence after World War II.

He underlined that basic research is a long-term process and ceases to be basic if immediate results are expected on short-term support. He is confident, from Yale's report, that there is a long-term commitment to this initiative.

Mark Solomon (Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry) agreed with Mr. Schmuttenmaer's comment that the report seems to focus largely on the medical side. It does work well, however, for the basic biology departments. He agrees that graduate student support is key and noted that the biology departments do better than most science departments regarding graduate student support. He also said that core facilities provide space to do what cannot be done in an individual lab or in a small cluster of labs – it is just too expensive – and said that core facilities help everyone. He mentioned cryo-electron microscopy, which takes big money and can make a huge impact. It has already been set up at Yale, so he considers it as a core facility, although it may not be considered as part of the current initiative. He noted another area that is not being considered – integrative data science and the effort on computer science plus “x”; he feels this would benefit all of the science departments. One of the things that he feels will have the biggest benefit is suggestions for organizational structure changes such as interdisciplinary appointments, noting that the sciences lag behind in this area; computing and data management support; professional staff scientists; and research communication. Mr. Solomon observed that at a Town Hall he attended, this report was received with mixed feelings, which he thinks may come from one looking at the bullet points instead of reading the details of the report, and the fact that it is a top down report. The implementation, he said, has to be bottom up. He pointed out that in his area, it does not dictate what gets done and rather it is more of enabling technologies, which works for him, and with fundamental research versus applied research, which works for his area of the university.

Mr. Nordhaus invited Dean Brock's reactions to the comments offered. Dean Brock said he was grateful for the thoughtful commentary. He said he feels that the process of thinking through the connection with engineering is vital. He closed by affirming that it is really critical that we continue to engage in this kind of discussion across the sciences and across the university in a truly consultative process. He expressed his hope that the chairs and the leaders of the science departments will continue to voice their reactions and thoughts about how things are moving forward.

Mr. Nordhaus observed two things that are inherently top-down at a university: development of infrastructure and the provision of resources. He noted that there are certain areas where Yale's infrastructure is very weak. He also underlined again the unpredictability of growth areas in research fields. He then invited comments from other Senators and guests. Responses included a query about the relationship of Central Campus to West Campus in this initiative; a hope that smaller projects will be supported alongside the big initiatives proposed by the report; a concern about why the medical voice is so heavy in the report if the essence of science is discovery and creative inquiry; and a question about whether there is a plan to review and evaluate the progress of the initiative in five years.

## **9. New business**

Mr. Nordhaus asked if there was any new business. There being none, he adjourned the meeting at 6 PM.