

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes 2016-2017

Faculty Senate Retreat Minutes for September 3, 2016

Present: Profs. Maria Simpson, Nicole Caso, Greg Moynahan, Rebecca Thomas (*ex officio*), Peter Gadsby (*ex officio*), Dean D'Albertis (*ex officio*) Thomas Wild, Lauren Rose, Daniel Berthold, Deirdre d'Albertis, Jean Churchill, James Romm, Frank Scalzo, Kris Feder

The senate agreed to postpone program evaluations for the 2016-2017 year in order to facilitate the Middle States Accreditation Review as well as to review the program review process itself. The possibility of a faculty budget committee was discussed and it was decided that the executive committee should explore its necessity and feasibility. The Middle States working group's college mission statement was reviewed and agreed upon. Questions and minor inconsistencies in the Faculty Evaluation Document were discussed, and it was determined that the executive committee would review the document and if necessary form an advisory committee on it. The new Dean of Inclusive Excellence, Dr. Ariana Stokas, discussed issues pertaining to inclusive excellence and bias. Dean d'Albertis led a discussion of possible changes to the CEC review process. Finally, improvements to student access to faculty governance were discussed, particularly in relation to communication with the EPC and open meetings for the student body as a whole.

Respectfully Submitted,
Greg Moynahan

Should we evaluate the program review process? If yes, how?

A discussion of student access/input in the senate.

Ariana Stokas will join us at 11:00 to introduce herself and describe her position and any initiatives she is working on.

Questions/minor inconsistencies concerning the Faculty Evaluation Document, which needs review/possible revision this year. See document below.

A Consideration of the CEC evaluations. See document below.

We should discuss an agenda for the faculty led faculty meeting. One possible item is a discussion of the report being generated by the Academic Advising Review Committee they plan on revising the section of the Faculty Handbook relating to advising and to recommend new forms of mentoring for pre-tenure faculty on advising. They hope to bring a document to the general faculty for a vote this academic year.

Bard College Mission Statement

Bard College seeks to inspire curiosity, a love of learning, idealism, and a commitment to the link between higher education and civic participation. The undergraduate curriculum is designed to address central questions facing new generations, and reshapes traditional disciplines into multidisciplinary fields and programs. Students pursue a rigorous course of study reflecting varied traditions of scholarship, research, speculation, and artistic expression. They engage philosophies of human existence, theories of human behavior and society, the making of art, and the study of science, nature, and history.

Bard's approach to learning focuses on the individual and is structured around small group seminars to encourage thoughtful discourse. Faculty are active in their fields and stress the connection between life inside and outside of the classroom. They strive to foster critical inquiry, intellectual ambition, and creativity.

Bard acts at the intersection of education and civil society. Through its undergraduate college, distinctive graduate programs, its commitment to the fine and performing arts, and its network of international dual-degree partnerships, early colleges, prison education initiatives, and public engagement programs, Bard offers unique opportunities for students and faculty to study, experience, and realize the principle that higher-education institutions can and should operate in the public interest.

October 4, 2016

Present: Daniel Berthold, Jean Churchill, Kris Feder, Michael Tibbetts, Susan Merriam, Greg Moynahan, Nicole Caso, Maria Simpson, James Romm, Lauren Rose, Frank Scalzo, Thomas Wild, Deirdre D'albertis (ex officio), Peter Gadsby (ex officio), Rebecca Thomas (ex officio)

Senate Chair Mike Tibbetts led a brief report and discussion of the recent open Senate meeting, the goal of which was to describe the Senate and its individual committee functions to the invited student body. Since only two students attended, it was proposed that the Senate extend an invitation to the student leadership to invite the senators to any student government-led function for future sharing of ideas.

Chair of the PAC, James Romm, reported on the recent visit of Vice President for Administration and Finance Jim Brudvig who spoke to the PAC about college finances. Highlights of that conversation will be reported to the faculty at the next faculty-led meeting and include:

- Although surprised by Moody's downgrade, Brudvig was not worried. He offered that this does not reflect any change in how Bard has been operating for the last forty years.
- In order to remain competitive for students, Bard has to increase financial aid.
- The college is working on refinancing its debt to loans with lower interest rates.
- The composition of Bard's Board of Trustees looks very promising for stabilizing Bard's financial future, especially in terms of establishing an endowment.

The Senate considered inviting the President to speak to the Senate about these concerns, but it was decided that Mike Tibbetts would have a one on one discussion with the President. Chair of the

Executive Committee Greg Moynahan also suggested that he extend an invitation to Debra Pemstein to meet with the EC to give an update on the capital campaign.

The Curriculum Committee reported on the recent course review process, which included the first round of proposed courses to meet the new Difference and Justice distribution requirement. According to Susan Merriam, the new forms with added description seemed to work well. A question was raised about whether there was a need to track the number of D & J courses offered, specifically, whether there were enough to meet the demands of the student body.

Dean Thomas reported on the Council for Inclusive Excellence working group, who have been discussing issues around bias in the classroom. Conversation included the education of the faculty in terms of not only raising awareness of what bias can look like in various classroom settings, but also of helping the faculty develop intuitive responses to certain challenging situations. The working group has also been discussing protocols for reporting bias in the classroom. Dean Thomas mentioned that there is a website, accessible through the main Bard site, for the Bias Incident Response Team.

The agenda for the October 26 faculty-led faculty meeting was confirmed. In addition to committee reports, there will be a report from the Academic Advising Review Committee.

Finally, Professor Merriam reported on the Middle States Review. In its 3rd year, Professor Merriam said that the draft of the self study was nearing completion and would be sent to the Chair of the Middle States Review Team. The Team will come to the college for a week in February 2017.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Simpson

November 1, 2016

Present: Daniel Berthold, Jean Churchill, Kris Feder, Michael Tibbets, Susan Merriam, Greg Moynahan, Nicole Caso, Maria Simpson, Lauren Rose, Frank Scalzo, Thomas Wild, Deirdre d'Albortis (ex officio), Peter Gadsby (ex officio), Rebecca Thomas (ex officio)

Senate Chair Prof. Mike Tibbets opened the meeting and the minutes of the October 4, 2016 senate meeting were approved.

Prof. Tibbets introduced Vice-President for Development and Alumni/ae Affairs, Debra Pemstein. Vice-President Pemstein described the nature and responsibilities of her position and provided a summary of past fund-raising efforts, including the 2008-2016 capital campaign. She provided a summary of the current development climate and the strategy for building the endowment. She described the challenges of building the endowment in a deflationary environment and offered a positive outlook for the future with a goal of achieving a 50% giving rate for alumni. She discussed the publication of a policies and procedures manual by the Development Office that will provide guidelines for fundraising and grant-seeking activities.

Prof. Tibbets summarized his meeting with President Botstein when they discussed the financial status of the college. Three main points were made by Prof. Tibbets, the college is on good financial ground, there is a plan to refinance the debt of the college and the composition of the board of trustees includes members with personal connections to the college.

Prof. Greg Moynihan, Chair of the Executive Committee, described the plan for reviewing the evaluation documents and solicited input on the review process so that the executive committee could make recommendations to improve the process. A suggestion was made to make a comparison of review processes at other liberal arts colleges.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank Scalzo

December 6, 2016

Present: Daniel Berthold, Nicole Caso, Jean Churchill, Deirdre d'Albertis (ex officio), Peter Gadsby (ex officio), Susan Merriam, Greg Moynahan, James Romm, Lauren Rose, Frank Scalzo, Maria Simpson, Mike Tibbetts (chair), Rebecca Thomas (ex officio), Thomas Wild

Committee reports:

PAC. The PAC had prepared data on the percentage of tenured and tenure track positions by division in comparison with the total FTEs (faculty teaching equivalent) from 2006-2016. The PAC will be discussing the implications of these data and bring conclusions for later Senate consideration.

CC. The Curriculum Committee reported on its recent lively and productive open meeting with the EPC and about 40 students; its conversations with Frank Corliss, the associate director of the Conservatory in order to open up closer lines of communication between the Conservatory and the undergraduate college and improve the experience of Conservatory students at the college in various ways; its ongoing evaluation of the process of program review; the status of the Big Ideas courses (the initiative is starting off very well); and its discussion of the perennial but currently particularly pressing problems associated with class scheduling and the weekly calendar.

EC. The Executive Committee is currently reviewing the FERC and CEC evaluation process and will bring a draft of proposed changes to the Senate in January. The EC also reported on its discussions on the question of declaring Bard a sanctuary campus and its drafting of a statement of community standards.

The Senate concluded its meeting with a discussion of various issues surrounding student retention and particularly the question of whether the retention rate for women first year students with a high GPA is significantly less than for others.

Respectfully submitted,
Daniel Berthold
Secretary *pro tem*

Minutes of the Faculty Senate Retreat

January 23, 2017

Present: Gregory Moynihan, Daniel Berthold, Nicole Caso, Jean Churchill, Deirdre d'Albertis, Susan Merriam, Lauren Rose, Frank Scalzo, Maria Simpson, Michael Tibbetts, Eric Trudel; Rebecca Thomas (*ex-officio*) and Peter Gadsby (*ex-officio*)

Bard's Policy for Assigning Academic Credits

The New York State Education Department requires Bard to have a credit-assignment policy that is endorsed by the Board of Trustees. Dean Thomas reported that Bard must inform the New York State Education Department of the policy regarding the relationship between the number of academic credits granted and the workload for a given course. The Senate unanimously approved the language of the proposed document, suggesting that it be shared with faculty and students and placed in the college catalogue.

Report on the Middle States Accreditation Self Study and Upcoming Visit

On Feb 26th, 2017, the seven member Middle States Review Committee, (MSRC), chaired by Catharine Hill, will arrive on campus. On Feb 28th it meets with the Senate; meetings with many other members of the Bard community will also be scheduled. The MSRC will present its findings on Wed. March 1st.

In advance of these many meetings, the Dean's office will distribute hard copies of the Middle States self-study to all members of the Senate, to chairs of the seven committees that comprise the student government; links to the self-study document will also be online. The Dean will establish times to discuss the document, which covers all of the many aspects of our college's presence: The Annandale Campus, the Bard Prison Initiative, its international institutions, its graduate programs, and Bard's many high school early colleges. Before the final campus visit, members of the MSRC will have visited many of Bard's larger network of schools, both domestic and international. The members of the Senate were urged to inform their respective Divisions about the self-study. Dean Thomas congratulated Professor Merriam on her "astoundingly great job" for the past three years leading the Herculean effort to create the 89-page Middle States Commission on Higher Education Reaccreditation Final Report.

Changes to the Faculty Evaluation Document

The Senate turned to several proposed revisions to the Faculty Evaluation Document that will eventually be brought to a vote by the full faculty. Many proposals on the list were accepted with little or no discussion. However, the Senate discussed two issues at some length:

1. The submission of letters sent to the evaluation file that have been written after the Divisional discussion and vote have occurred

It was agreed that the opinion of Bard's legal counsel will be very useful here, and will be solicited.

2. The evaluation process for promotion to Full Professor

Eleven other colleges' policies made available for Senate review, the Senate considered these questions:

-Should the requirements for an evaluation for promotion be the same as the requirements for evaluation for tenure?

-How many external evaluators are needed for this promotion, and who will they be?

-What should be the relative importance, in considering a question of promotion, of the three categories—Teaching, Professional Work, and Work Within the Community?

The Executive Committee will consider how, or how much, to revise the evaluation procedure for promotion to Full Professor. The faculty is reminded, when addressing Bard's evaluation process, to keep in mind the crucial goals of promoting and maintaining a diverse faculty.

Report of the Academic Advising Review Committee

Members of the Senate, affirming that advising is an integral part of the experience at Bard, praised the quality and thoroughness of the Report of the Academic Advising Review Committee. We considered how best to respond to the contents of the report and to move forward. Several ideas were discussed, including:

1. The invitation of Jennifer Triplett, Director of Academic Advising, and perhaps other essential staff of The Center for Student Life & Advising, to meet with the Senate to discuss the report
2. What to do about the faculty who submit mid-term grades too late for them to be of any help to the student, the academic advisor, or the Dean of Students Office staff
3. How to make more information available sooner to advisers regarding students who are academically at risk
4. Whether and how to revise the Criteria Sheet format
5. How the College can better support the work of academic advisers
6. Can the academic calendar be tweaked in order to facilitate more designated advising hours, especially in the first two months of the semester, and especially for First-Year students?
7. The possibility of highlighting "specialty advisers" (e.g. pre-law, pre-med)
8. Whether the quality of a professor's academic advising should be considered when she or he is being evaluated, and if so, how might that happen

Before we adjourned to brave a snowstorm, two last topics were introduced:

- 1) The need to improve communication about the many Bard College network activities that are occurring locally, nationally, and internationally
- 2) The design of the Bard Commencement Ceremony

The Senate considered, briefly, the challenges experienced by those who march as well as members of the audience, and pondered what might be done.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Churchill

February 21, 2017

Present: Michael Tibbetts (Chair), Susan Merriam, Jean Churchill, Thomas Wild, Daniel Berthold, Maria Simpson, Greg Moynahan, Deirdre D'Albertis, Rob Culp, Lauren Rose, Eric Trudel, Dean Rebecca Thomas, Chris Feder, Nicole Caso, Peter Gadsby, Frank Scalzo

We discussed a preliminary proposal from the executive committee to provide monetary

compensation for program chairs, tiered according to the size of the program. This led to suggestions for alternative forms of compensation such as a fast-track to sabbatical and/or course releases. The big issue for tenured faculty, according to many senate members, is time. Others mentioned a side issue of junior faculty not having enough time. Additional comments and issues raised are included the list below:

- The increased size of programs adds work for faculty
- There is little oversight of program directors
- Faculty receive compensation for some activities but not others.
- Faculty should be appointing program chairs, rather than the administration.
- Comparisons with other institutions in terms of compensation and faculty governance.
- How to persuade people to get involved in faculty governance after tenure.
- How to achieve equity for faculty across the college.
- How to fund a broader initiative than a simple monetary compensation.

We closed the meeting with perhaps more questions than answers.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Rose

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

In attendance: Mike Tibbetts (chair), Kris Feder, Frank Scalzo, Jean Churchill, Greg Moynahan, Daniel Berthold, Maria Simpson, Lauren Rose, Eric Trudel, Nicole Caso, Deirdre d'Albertis, Peter Gadsby, and Rebecca Thomas.

Professor Merriam reported on Bard's 2017 Middle States Commission on Higher Education review, noting that the visiting team's assessment of the College was very positive. She explained that the commission provides two kinds of instruction in their reports. A "suggestion" constitutes advice intended to improve some aspect of the institution, but not formally pursued by MSCHE. A "recommendation" constitutes a stronger form of instruction, and is formally reviewed in terms of progress made by the institution. Bard received only one recommendation in the report, that "The College should improve its documentation for articulating and assessing student learning outcomes in the majors in order to continue to improve consistency and increase value across programs."

The Senate discussed possible approaches to the recommendation, ranging from a more complex, multilayered approach, to a simpler form of record keeping, similar to the moderation report.

The Senate agreed that the Curriculum Committee is the appropriate body to follow up on this matter.

Professor Moynahan explained the changes to the Faculty Evaluation Document to be presented to the full faculty at their meeting on April 12. Professor Moynahan noted that for the most part changes to the document were minor and clarifying, with the exception of the case of promotion to full professor. In this instance, the EC is proposing to lower the number of outside evaluators from 3 to 2. A number of faculty noted that while the changes to the document were acceptable, there should be clarification concerning expectations for promotion to full professor. Professor Moynahan and others agreed that this is an issue that should be addressed.

Professor Feder presented the proposal for Middle Eastern Studies to convert from a concentration to a program, which both the Curriculum Committee (4-0) and the Planning and Appointments Committee (3-1) approved. The Senate recognized that the program was defacto approved through the committees, and reviewed some of the concerns raised in discussions about the conversion.

1. Programs should not be run or staffed by untenured faculty. Professor Caso clarified that Tabetha Ewing is now co-director of MES.
2. We should be attentive to the problem of program proliferation.

New business:

Professor Trudel asked the Senate to discuss a letter to be circulated concerning the Hannah Arendt Center “Living Room Conversation” event to be held on May 3. Dean Thomas noted that the letter was no longer in play.

Deirdre d’Albertis reported on Bard’s participation in the Calderwood seminars—writing intensive courses to be taught in a consortium with Wellesley College and one other institution.

Professor Tibbetts asked if the Senate would like to invite Dean Halsey to discuss the CAFÉ forms at the next meeting. The Senate agreed that this would be helpful.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Merriam

Tuesday, April 18, 2017

In attendance: Mike Tibbetts (chair), Kris Feder, Frank Scalzo, Jean Churchill, Greg Moynahan, Daniel Berthold, Thomas Wild, Lauren Rose, Eric Trudel, Nicole Caso, Deirdre d’Albertis, Peter Gadsby, Rebecca Thomas, Mark Halsey and Ariana Stokas.

Mark Halsey, Vice President for Institutional Research and Assessment, came to the senate meeting to speak about what kinds of data one can get from the CAFE forms and how they are useful.

- We have been gathering the information on CAFE forms in a database over the past 6 semesters and can use the available technology to request different configurations of the material as we deem fit for our evaluation, programmatic, and curricular purposes. As a community, we need to put some thought into what kinds of data can be most useful to us in terms of what we would like to compare over time.
- VP Halsey encouraged us to break out of the single course mentality we have left from the SOTC forms and take advantage of comparative abilities with larger sample sizes to analyze groupings such as: all of the 100-level courses, all of the 200-level courses, etc. Aggregates for programs, for tenured and non-tenured faculty. Comparisons across divisions, across time. We can look at the median, the distribution, ask for graphical data.
- Fallacies in approach to data: looking at an individual course is not very helpful. Categories for “overall rating of the course” and “overall rating of instructor” are too vague. This

ambiguity produces a lot of implicit prejudices that have nothing to do with learning in class.

- Discussion among faculty is needed to identify what we are trying to get at. Must establish a clear notion and there should be standard data highlighted for all divisions. What does “better” mean when we look at teaching?
- Think about questions we want to ask of data, why we are asking them, and how to pose them.
- How might we encourage written comments along with numeric input?
- We need to decide on a norm for all data assessments. We need to decide who has access beyond DEs. Faculty themselves should be able to benefit from them and request them from whatever office holds the reports.

Ariana Stokas, Dean of Inclusive Excellence was our second invited guest. She came to talk about the upcoming “Living Room Conversation panel” organized by the HAC (Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities).

- Alternate events are being planned to be held concurrently with the panel of the Arendt center as a way to protest against it.
- Constructive protest is encouraged. Disruptions and shouting down invited speakers is not permitted as standard campus policy.
- Conversations are ongoing with student leaders on how best to organize constructively.
- Impact on the community: In the future, we all need to be mindful of safety and security and to consult the academic calendar to be mindful of students when scheduling events.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Caso
