

Faculty Council Minutes: March 11, 2016

Council members present: Charles Swencionis (Ferkauf), Abraham Givner (Ferkauf), Will Lee (YC), James Kahn (YC), Gabriel Cwilich (YC), Neer Asherie (YC), Marina Holz (SCW), Alex Citanna (SCW), Ruth Bevan (YC), Moshe Krakowski (Azrieli)

Also in attendance: Selma Botman (Provost) and Moshe Straus (SSSB)

The FC approved the minutes from the January 29, 2016 meeting.

Charles Swencionis (Speaker, acting also as Parliamentarian) asked Selma Botman to address the gap between his understanding of faculty governance and hers. He asked whether faculty governance is limited to academic matters or, as the Faculty Handbook states, its purview is broader. Selma Botman did not address the question, but asked who approved the Faculty Handbook as she was unclear whether the Handbook had been formally approved by all parties. Several council members explained to her the chronology of the approval and confirmed that the Faculty Handbook had indeed been approved by the faculty, the legal department, the President and the Board. Furthermore, Middle States had been informed of its approval. When she asked about making changes to the Handbook, Charles Swencionis reminded her that she is free to initiate revisions, but that these would be subject to approval by the faculty.

The Finance Committee (Jim Kahn, Gabriel Cwilich and Avri Ravid) reported on its meeting with Jake Harman, Josh Joseph and Selma Botman. Charles Swencionis—who also attended the finance meeting—and Jim Kahn conveyed their disappointment with the limited information offered and lack of transparency. Gabriel Cwilich pointed out that the information shared about the separation from Einstein was useful. He urged the Executive Committee of the FC to continue discussing financial matters with Selma Botman and she welcomed these meeting, offering separate meetings for faculty who teach in the morning and in the afternoon. Charles Swencionis noted that a meeting is scheduled for later this month.

In response to questions by FC members, Selma Botman conveyed the following points:

1. A&M had asked the Office of Academic Affairs to cut its budget by \$12M. She refused and implemented \$7M in cuts, which were mainly in personnel (retirement, voluntary departures, separation). There will be no further cuts this year or next.
2. The current deficit for YU is \$38M representing the difference between total income (tuition, philanthropy, endowment and overhead from grants) and total expenses.
3. There is a Hiring Committee (Jake Harman, Josh Joseph and Selma Botman) that reviews every full-time or tenure-track appointment to monitor personnel costs.

Abe Givner asked Selma Botman whether any progress had been made on benefits for retiring faculty. She is working with HR on phased retirement for emeritus faculty, but asked Abe to remind her of the previous specific requests.