

St. John's University
New York
University Senate Meeting
Monday, September 30, 2024

University Center, Suite D, and Microsoft Teams Virtual

Present: Dr. Sophie Bell, Prof. Gina Calabrese, Dr. Alina Camacho-Gingerich, Dr. Eunhye Choi, Dr. Barbara Cozza, Dr. Joan DeBello, Dean Teresa Delgado, Katrina Diano (student senator), Dr. Nancy DiTunnariello, Dr. Almerinda Forte, Dean Caroline Fuchs, Dr. Granville Ganter, Dr. Smita Guha, Prof. Lucy Heckman, Dr. Azzedine Layachi, Dr. Ming Hui-Li, Prof. Martha Mackey, Dr. Gary Martin, Dr. Simon Møller, Dr. Omar Montana, Prof. William Murphy, Dr. Aaron Muth, Dean Maciek Nowak, Samuel Ortner (student senator), Prof. Maria Pirrone, Christina Quartararo, Prof. Emma Quinn, Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, Jasmine Rosario (student senator), Dr. Susan Rosenberg, Rev. Brian Shanley, O.P., Linda Shannon, J.D., Dr. Marina Sorochinski, Dr. Lequez Spearman, Prof. Jacob Todres, Dr. Joan Tropnas, Dr. Ahmad Vakil, Dr. James Vorbach, Dean James Wolfinger

Excused: Dr. Ivan Abel, Shannon Bassaragh (student senator), Dr. Sandra Beysolow, Dr. Ching-nan Chao, Dr. Zachary Davis, Rev. Patrick Flanagan, Dr. Dianella Howarth, Dr. Luca Iandoli, Sarah Kelly, J.D., Dean Anne Lin, Jeffery Rada (student senator), Rev. Aidan Rooney, Dr. Joseph Serafin, Timothy Stopyra (student senator).

Absent: Dr. Charles Clark, Dr. Stephen Llano, Dr. Alejandro Quintana, Prof. Anthony Sabino, Dr. Mostafa Sadoqi, Keaton Wong, J.D.

Also Present: Sean Brown, Dr. Roberta Hayes, Dr. W. Jean Kwon (Teams), Joanne Llerandi, Dr. Jackie Lochrie, Lucy Pesce, Dr. Heather Robertson, Dr. Joseph Trainor, Prof. Benjamin Turner

Introduction and Opening Prayer

The meeting began at 3:22 p.m. After a brief welcome and introduction, Dr. Møller invited Dr. Sophie Bell to recite the opening prayer.

Approval of the Minutes of April 15, 2024.

The minutes from the meeting held on Monday, April 15, 2024, were unanimously approved as distributed.

Committee Election Topics

- The results of the spring 2023 Call to Nominations and College elections had been sent out to all on September 25, 2024, in the form of University Senate and Senate Committee member lists
- All Committees were asked to send their committee chairperson choice to Christine Kenny before the next meeting
- Christine Kenny was re-elected as University Senate Secretary by a unanimous vote

Committee Reports

By-Laws Committee: No Report.

Budget Committee: No Report

Educational Programs and Development Committee: No Report

Faculty Affairs Committee: No Report

Student Affairs Committee: No Report

Updates

- **Enrollment-** Provost Møller advised the group that undergraduate enrollment challenges continue. This year we experienced unprecedented melt in August and September. The budget was set at 2,850 new first year students at a discount rate of 60% however, projections indicate that the class will come in at 2,350 new undergraduate students at a discount rate of 60%. Students will be dropped for non-payment today and in the next few days the financial aid team will work with these students to find solutions for payment. Graduate enrollment remains consistent with last year, with a slight increase in online programs, particularly MS in Cyber-Security, MBA, and MS in Homeland Security. He stressed that Faculty/Student interaction has been invaluable and should continue, particularly during the summer months when it is crucial that we increase our engagement with deposited students.
- Father Shanley spoke about his announcement to faculty and administration on the same topic. Because of the lower student number, there will be less tuition and housing revenue. Because of this, St. John's will institute a hiring pause, new and replacement positions will only be approved by Father Shanley. The enrollment challenges are due to several factors: The FAFSA delay, a notion that a college education is not valuable, significant discounting by many schools, and some Ivy League institutions going deep into their waitlists. Most colleges are struggling, we are not alone in this. We may need to ask for an endowment draw for the first time. To help with this situation, we will be working with consultants. This topic will be on the agenda for the board retreat in November of 2024. It may take a 2-3 year plan to strengthen our enrollment.
- **Academic Year Priorities** should have been received by Faculty from their respective deans.

New Business

- **Reducing Textbook and Learning Resource Costs for Students**

Jackie Lochrie, Heather Robertson, and Joseph Trainor presented this PowerPoint, the most updated version of this will accompany these minutes when sent out October 7, 2024. Discussion followed with key points emerging:

- Many are already onboard with helping to reduce these costs for our students
- 93% of faculty survey respondents agreed this is a problem for some of their students
- 70% of faculty survey respondents determine which textbook to use so we do have some say
- By law, costs for courses, such as books and courseware, must be disclosed to students before time of registration
- Faculty must be aware of costs of Courseware and access codes before using

The recommended chain for faculty to follow to assist students would be:

- Use open-source materials
- Put books on Library reserve
- Work with publisher and textbook companies to negotiate prices for our students
- Lastly, send student to Jackie Lochrie, she may be able to assist with gift cards, access codes, etc.
- Faculty can also refer students to the Basic Needs website (www.stjohns.edu/BasicNeeds) and Office of the Dean of Students for additional support

A discussion ensued particularly as it relates to course packs offered by publishers at the added expense to students. There was a consensus that this topic needs to be explored further as we need to reduce the cost for students when it comes to textbooks and related material.

For more information, or if you have ideas to share, please contact:

Jackie Lochrie, lochriej@stjohns.edu

Lucy Pesce, pescel@stjohns.edu

Heather Robertson, robertsh@stjohns.edu

Joseph Trainor, trainorj@stjohns.edu

The agenda having been completed, the meeting was adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Kenny