

**YU Faculty Council Meeting  
December 18, 2015  
Minutes**

Present: Charles Swencionis (Ferkauf), Nora Nachumi (SCW), Will Lee (YC), Jeffrey Freedman (Stern); Gary Stein (Wurzweiler), James Kahn (YC); Gabriel Cwilich (YC); Abraham Ravid (Syms); Netanel Wiederblank (RIETS), Leslie Salzman (Cardozo); Neer Asherie (YC), Lauren Fitzgerald (YC), Joseph Kerstein (Syms), Abraham Givner (Ferkauf).

Charles reported on the Executive Committee's earlier meeting with the President and Provost and briefly, on its meeting last week with Board Chair Straus:

At last week's meeting, Board Chair Straus agreed that the Board will add faculty members to its academic affairs committee.

At the earlier meeting with the President and Provost, the President agreed to the following:

1. The President and Provost will have monthly meetings with the FC Chair, and each meeting will have a specific agenda.
2. The first monthly meeting will focus on the University finances. Josh Joseph and Jake Harmon will attend that meeting as will members of the FC Finance Committee.
3. The President agreed to share financial information with the FC, but did not make a commitment about how the Administration will weigh FC input on financial matters.
4. The President expressed his hope that the FC could serve as a helpful liaison between the Administration and our respective faculties.

A discussion followed the Report on the meeting with the President about how the FC could proceed most effectively in its relationship with the Administration and in reaching its goal of true shared governance. There was general agreement with Avri Ravid's observation that the FC would likely have more productive discussions with the Administration if we presented specific and concrete requests or proposals.

Some FC members offered ideas about topics to be addressed at future monthly meetings with the President and Provost. Gabe Cwilich recommended having a future meeting devoted to development and recommended that the Council identify additional topics for discussion. Will Lee recommended that a future meeting be devoted to the University's increased hiring of adjunct faculty and the impact on educational quality.

Various FC members expressed concerns that there still did not seem to be a clear understanding with the Administration about what shared governance of YU really means. Joe Kerstein noted that the notion of shared governance should include, at a minimum, FC involvement in tenure policy, salaries, and investment strategy.

Members were cautiously optimistic that the proposed monthly meetings with the President and Provost and the President's expressed willingness to share information would bring us closer to our goal of a significant, meaningful and substantive role in University governance.

The FC also had a preliminary discussion about the Council's options for increasing its role in university governance if the President's proposal and FC membership on the Board's Academic Affairs Committee proved inadequate. There was a brief discussion about potential assistance from the State Education Department/Board of Regents, Middle States Commission, or the AAUP in ensuring that the FC has a meaningful role in governance.

Jeff Freedman informed the FC that Yeshiva College was currently amending its governance document to make it more consistent with practice.

With regard to access to financial information, a member reported that all units were currently getting monthly budgets from the University. Some members suggested that we might ask our Deans to share their budgets with Department chairs and members of the FC. Avri Ravid recommended that FC members read the Yeshiva University 990 Form available on line as it provides useful information about the University's finances.

There was a discussion about the importance of having faculty members on the search committee for the new president, especially at this challenging time in Yeshiva's history. Gabe Cwilich reported that the Provost supported faculty participation in the search and she has spoken publicly about the importance of having faculty members on the search committee so that the new president begins his/her term with some level of faculty support.

There was a lengthy discussion about how to proceed in future discussions with the Board and Administration. The group discussed ways in which we could be helpful to the University and our students, and that these activities might encourage the Administration to give the FC a meaningful role in governance. There was general agreement that the FC should give the new Board Chair an opportunity to work with the Council on issues of concern.

All agreed that the ultimate goal was to strengthen the university by maintaining an excellent and satisfied faculty and student body. There was then a wide-ranging discussion of how best to achieve this goal. The discussion covered various topics including: goals for increases in faculty salaries and benefits; faculty participation in YU's continuing education and summer school programs, (including potential financial participation in those programs); faculty participation in university assessment obligations; and faculty participation in all aspects of student recruitment and service to our students.

Ultimately the FC approved the following resolution:

The Executive Committee will invite members of the FC to submit to the FC Chair short lists of the following:

1. Proposals/suggestions for University action;
2. Ways in which the FC can be helpful and cooperative in meeting the University's objectives;
3. Actions the FC would be willing to consider in the absence of a reasonable response to our proposals and suggestions; and
4. The elements of our concept of shared governance.

The Executive Committee will consider the submissions and distribute a document containing the EC's selected priority items for a discussion and vote by the FC.