



# FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

## Faculty Senate

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Henry Schwalbenberg

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Sarah Zimmerman

Excused: Senators Dubrovsky, Zimmerman.

Guests: Larry Alcoff, SEIU Lead Organizer;  
Diane George, Adjunct Faculty Member,  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology

### **1. Call to Order**

The special meeting was called to order by Senate President Dr. Micki McGee at 4:00 p.m. in Campbell Hall Multipurpose Room, Ground Floor, Rose Hill.

### **2. Invocation**

Senator Mozes delivered the invocation.

### **3. SEIU presentation regarding non-T+TT instructional staff contract negotiations— Larry Alcoff, SEIU Lead Organizer, and Diane George, Adjunct Faculty Member, Department of Sociology and Anthropology**

Senate President, Micki McGee introduced Larry Alcoff, lead organizer of SEIU, and Diane George, adjunct faculty member from the department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Diane George began the presentation by explaining her own position as an adjunct and by explaining the composition of Fordham Faculty United (mostly adjuncts and non-tenure-track faculty): who they are and what they are trying to achieve in the current bargaining process. Adjuncts and non-tenure-track faculty share the commonality of being contingent. Having little to no job security, they are grossly underpaid. This past semester, there were over 500

contingent faculty members teaching at Fordham. Over the past year, they taught more than 2200 classes, that's about 50,000 students. Students at Fordham certainly know adjuncts, and will likely know several during the course of their academic studies. There's a narrative that says adjuncts are just filling in; that they are failed academics; that they don't need the money; or that they could have made better choices. This is not a realistic narrative. While it's clear that the university has a need to fill in for those on sabbatical, on parental leave, etc., this does not describe the nature of contingent faculty. The sheer number of classes taught by contingent faculty tells a different story. Contingent faculty are clearly not just filling in for temporary absences. Adjuncts are hired for only one-semester contracts. Full-time Lecturers receive 1-year contracts and in some cases slightly more, with no expectation of renewal. This leads to extreme job insecurity. Adjuncts don't know if they are going to be rehired; they don't know if a course will be cancelled at the last minute. This is not only hard for adjuncts; it also affects students. The student-teacher relationship is at the heart of the Fordham student experience, but Diane George had been told that it's not an important part of the educational experience. Contingent faculty mentor students, and guide them; they come to contingent faculty for support and advice.

Diane George went on to speak of her own story, to present a personal face for contingent faculty. She stated that she had been a lawyer but changed careers to study anthropology. Things went very well, but then she was sidetracked by medical and personal issues,

which she explained. After a number of years, she was able to continue her studies but still had medical concerns. She began teaching as an adjunct at Fordham, and was thrilled to be teaching at a school committed to social justice. However, at Fordham an adjunct can only teach 2 classes per semester. That means one can receive no more than \$16,800 and with no benefits (no health benefits, no pension). This is a precarious situation. To be told that one should have chosen differently is the height of arrogance and indifference. For the vast majority of contingent faculty, this is their career. They love it, and love teaching at Fordham. They did not go to graduate school to become contingent faculty.

Diane George continued by noting that, across America, universities face critical decisions about their reliance on contingent faculty. About 70% of professors are contingent faculty. This is a huge number of people living with job insecurity. People in SEIU often have to travel between 3 and 4 different campuses to make ends meet. They face being evicted from housing because they have no guaranteed future income. Adjuncts are living at the poverty level, while Lecturers cannot afford a one-bedroom apartment in the Bronx. A lot of people need to supplement teaching with other work like bartending. Adjuncts and Lecturers are not really seen as an integral part of the community. It was heartening, though, to see the open letter of support from students, which was mentioned in an editorial in the Ram (see [here](#)). As the open letter puts it: “Our professors’ working conditions are our learning conditions.”

Fordham faces a critical choice, she argued, with regard to its treatment of contingent faculty. Fordham’s mission statement includes a commitment to social justice. Social justice in the Jesuit tradition includes respecting labor rights and alleviating poverty. A document precirculated amongst senators shows that faculty salaries have not increased commensurate with tuition increases. This draws attention to the choice Fordham needs to make. Fordham needs people to teach its classes. Fordham does not need just a few temporary

workers. The choice is whether to allow contingent faculty to continue to be paid at a level that doesn’t even reach above the poverty level. The choice is whether to set back and remain silent as Fordham does this in your name. Being silent is acquiescing. The other choice is to speak out and say that this is not acceptable.

Larry Alcott, SEIU lead organizer, spoke about the negotiation process currently ongoing with the Fordham administration. The bargaining process breaks down into four parts:

- 1) on matters of institutional organization and management;
- 2) on not being treated as a marginal and divisible faculty
- 3) on the question of whether the university needs to function with the current level of precarious employment for contingent faculty
- 4) on the question of whether Fordham has an obligation to support benefits for part-time faculty

Focusing on the last two issues, he stressed that the aim was to move past the notion that contingent faculty are just doing gigs. He recognized two points. First, it’s absolutely understandable that the university may need temporary replacements. And second, not every adjunct wants a full-time job. Nonetheless, he emphasized that the vast majority of people who teach as adjuncts want a regularized form of employment, whether part-time or full-time. There’s no eleventh commandment that says thou shalt have to reapply every eleven months. The fact that there are adjuncts who have been teaching Fordham for 10 or 15 years suggests that Fordham needs to align its employment practice with reality. What SEIU is proposing is a regularized, part-time arrangement, with renewable 3-year appointments and with presumption of renewal. SEIU thinks departments will be better served with adjuncts who teach all of their courses at Fordham. How does it benefit a department to have 50% of full time Lecturers on one-year appointments? What is the pedagogical rationalization for having one-year Lecturer appointments? SEIU would

also argue that people should be reviewed. A review process should ensure people are doing quality work. It should ensure, also, that the work is not invisible, and that good teaching is recognized. There should be equal pay for equal courses. Adjunct faculty should not be cheap labor. Fordham should take responsibility, too, for providing benefits to adjunct faculty.

In the brief remaining time allotted, there was some discussion. Larry Alcock noted that, although initially the negotiating team had consisted entirely of lawyers, now there are two members from the Provost's Office (Ben Crooker and Jonathan Crystal).

Another senator asked about the potentially conflicting community interests of Lecturers versus adjuncts; and about the flexibility of hiring a one-time distinguished adjunct (such as a Diplomat). On the second point, it was noted that yes, in every contract where there are combined groups of people being hired, there is always a recognition that there are exceptions in contracts for operational reasons (although this is a small percentage). As to the second point, it's important to operate with a consensus approach, so no group is abused or used by the other group. If you're hiring a full-time lecturer and a qualified adjunct applies for that position, who has been teaching already, in that case the adjunct should be given preference.

Larry Alcock concluded by saying he didn't believe that the model of hiring adjunct faculty was consciously thought out by faculty. It's likely that all of us would think it would be a better model for departments and for students to create more tenure lines for teaching instead of relying on part-time adjunct labor. The adjunct model is driven not by pedagogy, but by money and economics.

Following the presentation, the Senate gave a round of applause for the guests.

#### **4. Discussion of the Online/Hybrid Learning Task Force Recommendations**

Senate President Micki McGee called attention to a revised version of the recommendations from the Task Force on Online/Hybrid Learning. The recommendations were initially presented along with the report from Task Force chair Mary Ann Forgey at the last Senate meeting. The Senate President turned things over to Task Force member and chair of the subcommittee of Salary & Benefits on Online/Hybrid Learning contract matters, Senator Mozes.

Senator Mozes outlined the overall recommendations (which fall into two parts: shorter-term and longer-term) and explained the rationale for changes that had been made to the recommendations. Overall, the recommendations were presented as a necessary adjustment to the new environment of online/hybrid learning. Just as new traffic rules were needed to adjust for the shift from horse-drawn carriages to cars around 1900, so too we need new guidelines now for online learning. The key question was how to figure out a process whereby faculty were involved and informed, but could also work effectively and efficiently in a decision-making process that was more productively engaged with administrators (e.g. 2U representatives). In the longer term, what is recommended is the formation of a standing committee at the university level to come up with guidelines. At the School level, the recommendation is to develop an advisory body with statutory authority but also with the ability to respond quickly to the needs of a commercial partner; hence the recommendation for a body of 2 or 3 people accountable to curriculum committees, but with decision-making authority.

There was some discussion about the language in the recommendations concerning the size and the authority of the designated faculty group at the College and School Level of governance (number 2 under Longer-Term Recommendations). The wording was changed to read "no less than 3 faculty members" and "be given considerable decision-making authority"; wording that was accepted as a friendly amendment. (For revised recommendations, see Appendix I.)

There was considerable discussion about whether this smaller faculty body would undercut the authority of the curriculum committee that designated it. Comparisons and contrasts were made to the model of the negotiating committee of Salary & Benefits. It was also noted that these are only recommendations from the Task Force.

Facing the possibility of deferring until a future Senate meeting, the question was called by Senator Kung, seconded by Senator Jones. The Senate voted in favor of calling the question by a vote of 15 – 2 – 4.

The Senate then voted on adopting the verbal report from the Task Force (delivered at the last Senate meeting) along with the recommendations as just amended. The Senate adopted the report and the recommendations by a vote of 18 – 1 – 4.

**5. Report from the Salary and Benefits Committee—Senator Andrew Clark, Chair**

Senator Clark gave a truncated report from the Salary and Benefits Committee. On the hardship fund, he reported that this was supposed to have been resolved by May 1, but they are still waiting on revisions and critiques. We are told it will be ready in the next couple of weeks. Expect closure on this before the end of June.

On the opt-out inquiry, it appears there was miscommunication from HR. They told faculty with spouses that if they were on a separate plan then the person who opted out would get money. This was false. All those individuals who acted on the false information have been given their money back.

UHC is still doing outreach, and will have a designated person for a couple more months. This is the last chance to use Senator Clark as an advocate. He believes Kay Turner will do her best to have an individual take on the task of monitoring concerns. There have been a couple of complaints with respect to mental health –

cases in which UHC has forced a therapist to resign documents every 6 months to enable them to get treatment.

A merit exploration committee has been set up and there is a consensus that this committee should go forward. At present there’s no sign of what the future leadership of Salary and Benefits will be.

Senator Mozes reported in his capacity as chair of the subcommittee on online/hybrid learning. There has been a positive outcome to discussions with the Provost, and an agreement is forthcoming. People who have already signed agreements will have those agreements updated to reflect the new agreement. The new agreement will not involve faculty giving up IP; faculty will retain the right to use what they develop for 2U. The only thing faculty cannot do, if they leave Fordham, is access the materials using the 2U platform. There has also been discussion about proper supervision of a course after it has been developed. Discussion has begun about compensation and course load. The expectation is that by Fall there will be a fully executable IP agreement.

The Senate President asked if there was a motion from the subcommittee on this. Senator Mozes proposed drafting a motion, while Senator Clark brought a motion from Salary and Benefits for the Senate to vote on the salary breakdown for the coming year.

**Approval of the Salary and Benefits Committee’s recommendations on salary and merit**

The Senate approved the recommendations from Salary and Benefits on across-the-board salary increases and merit increments, and on allocations according to rank, including newly calculated promotion increments. (See Appendix II.) The recommendations were approved by a vote of 21 – 0 – 2.

**Motion on Online/Hybrid Learning**

The Senate approved the following motion (Mozes/Jones) by a vote of 23 – 0 – 0:  
*“Faculty who wish to develop online courses*

*need only be bound by the revised IP agreement that the faculty and administration hope to finalize by the end of the summer. Faculty who already signed the existing agreement will be bound by the new agreement when it is finalized.”*

**6. Matter of Senate representation for the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education**

The matter of Senate representation for the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education was tabled for a future meeting, following further discussions. The Senate President asked for volunteers to form a small group to look into various issues relating to the matter.

**7. Vote on Committee Members and Nominees**

a. Approval of nominees for the University

Research Council

On a motion from Senator Jones, seconded by Senator Keller, the Senate approved the slate of candidates for University Research Council by a vote of 23 – 0 – 0.

b. The following faculty were voted members of the Salary and Benefits Committee: Berish Rubin, Ralph Hepp (A&S); Lori Wolff, Elizabeth Stosich (GSE); Haim Mozes, Genevieve O’Connor (Gabelli).

c. The following faculty were voted members of the Tenure, Reappointment and Appeals Committee (TRAC): Jacqueline Reich (A&S); Merle Keitel (GSE); Yuliya Komarova (Gabelli); Bruce Green (Law).

On a motion from Senator Saharia, seconded by Senator GoGwilt, the Senate voted by acclamation to adjourn at 5:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Chris GoGwilt,  
Secretary.

## Appendix I

### Senate Multidisciplinary Task Force on Online and Hybrid Learning Recommendations

In light of the university-wide lack of a systematic and workable governance structure for online learning, the task force presents two sets of recommendations.

One set of recommendations is short-term in nature and relates to the need for 2U and *existing* statutorily recognized academic governance bodies to quickly establish a working relationship, and one is longer-term in nature, and relates to new suggested governance structures at the University and School/College level for online and hybrid learning.

#### **Shorter-term Recommendations**

2U representatives and curriculum committees (or designated curriculum committee representatives), program chairs, and program directors of both GSS and GSE should immediately meet and establish a working relationship geared towards the successful implementation of online learning programs.

The purpose of these meetings would be to

- i) Determine the range of decision-making requiring approval from relevant academic bodies,
- ii) Establish a regular mechanism for 2U to obtain the necessary approvals from relevant academic bodies, and
- iii) Establish a communication channel for 2U to share with faculty leaders aspects of its program management, such as enrollment targets, new program implementations, key policy changes, etc., and for faculty to discuss with 2U their questions and concerns about online program policies and procedures.

#### **Longer-term Recommendations**

Formal guidelines and structures need to be developed for the faculty role in online learning. The recommendations below deal with both the University-level faculty role and with the School and College level faculty role.

#### **1. University Level Governance Structure Recommendations**

*Formation of a Standing Committee of the Faculty Senate on Online and Hybrid Learning.*

This committee will be tasked with working with the University administration to establish i) procedures for vetting and selecting on-line program managers, ii) standards for fully online and hybrid courses and programs (of which none exist today), and iii) a formalization of the respective roles of faculty and deans in managing the online educational process. The committee also will be tasked with monitoring the procedures' and standards' effectiveness, and monitoring whether faculty are fulfilling their designated roles.

The membership is to be comprised of faculty members appointed by the Faculty Senate from each of the schools and colleges (similar to the University Research Council structure). Key members of the Administration involved in the management aspects of online learning will serve as non-voting members. The Chair will be a faculty member elected from within the committee and will receive administrative support.

#### **2. College and School Level Governance Structure Recommendations**

We recognize that decision-making in an on-line world, especially with commercially focused partners, needs to be quicker and more responsive than typical broad-based faculty committees. We note that college and school-wide committees tend to meet on fixed schedules and are too large to convene easily on an at-needs basis.

Thus, we recommend *at the college and school level that the most relevant statutory body (typically, a curriculum committee) designate no less than 3 of their faculty members who are knowledgeable and experienced in online learning to focus on on-line matters.* These designated faculty representatives will be selected by and accountable to the relevant academic body but will be given considerable decision-making authority and will be guided in their decision making by the norms to be established by the Senate Committee on Online Learning. Their responsibilities will include, but not be limited to:

- Working with Deans to vet OPMs,
- Working with Deans and OPMs to identify programs and courses that are suitable for online or hybrid learning,
- Reviewing and recommending online program policies that support the creation and delivery of quality online learning within the college or school,
- Working with OPMs directly and making specific implementation recommendations in relation to course design, development, delivery, evaluation, revision,
- Bringing faculty implementation questions and concerns directly to OPM representatives,
- Oversee the evaluation of:
  - o online course effectiveness and the appropriateness of the delivery mode, including measures of student engagement
  - o whether the hybrid or online course complies with accreditation standards
  - o whether the online and hybrid programs are faithful to principles of Jesuit pedagogy.

Appendix II

Salary and Benefits Committee recommendations on salary and merit

Here are the numbers based on Dr. Crooker’s understanding that the Faculty Senate voted to divide the 2.7% increase this year for the non-Law Tenure/Tenure-Track Faculty into an across-the-board component of 2.3% and a merit component of 0.4%.

As we have done in the past, Dr. Crooker used the non-Law T/TT AAUP data to determine the merit increment and the across-the-board increments by rank.

Rank	Non-Law Count	Av. Salary	Total
Assistant Professor	121	\$100,310	\$12,137,510
Associate Professor	206	\$113,790	\$23,440,740
Professor	177	\$146,455	\$25,922,535

The total salary for this group is: \$61,500,785. The 2.7% increase gives a pool of \$1,660,521.

The Senate allocated 0.4% to merit. This gives 252 merit awards of \$976 each.

The Senate allocated 2.3% to the across-the-board increase. This gives increases by rank of:

Assistant Professor: \$2,307

Associate Professor: \$2,617

Professor: \$3,369

As a check on these calculations, the total award for this group will be:

$$252 * \$976 + 121 * \$2,307 + 206 * \$2,617 + 177 * \$3,369 = \$1,660,514$$

In addition, new promotion increments and minimum salaries are determined by applying the across the board 2.3% increase to the numbers from last year:

Promotion to Full: \$7,291

Promotion to Associate: \$4,786

Minimum Professor Salary: \$109,359

Minimum Associate Professor Salary: \$88,854

Minimum Assistant Professor Salary: \$79,741

We will also use these increases by rank for faculty currently serving as administrators, faculty excluded from the AAUP numbers because they were on unpaid leaves last fall, T/TT Instructors (treated as Assistant Professors), to calculate base salary for faculty on phased retirement (actual increases will be determined by the details of the specific phased retirement agreement), and to calculate stipends increases as agreed upon in 2015.