



Summary of Meeting • April 24, 2020

Prior to this meeting, the Faculty Senate held a gathering at which a straw poll was taken with regard to a proposed amendment to the Senate's bylaws. The Executive Committee, operating under its authority to act when the Senate is unable to meet, then adopted the bylaws amendment, which provides that under extraordinary circumstances, the Senate may meet via technological means.

Remembrance of Former Senate President: Senate President Keller marked the passing of Joel Reidenberg, Stanley D. and Nikki Waxberg Chair in Law, a former president of the Senate who lost his life on April 21. She introduced Senator Colon, who remembered his long-time friend, colleague, and fellow University citizen. He will be much missed by the Senate, the Law School, and colleagues and friends throughout the world.

Presentation from the President: Joseph M. McShane, S.J., addressed the Senate. He began by thanking Senators and all faculty for their extraordinary work during the COVID-19 crisis. Fr. McShane then provided an overview of three chronological stages of Fordham's response to the pandemic:

- *First phase, from early March through March 23:* Following Fordham's move to remote learning, the University began to recall study abroad students. Faculty rapidly and generously made the adjustment. Student Affairs worked to help students depart, and at present there are only 50 students still in residence. Health Services tracked cases and traced contacts. 140 members of the faculty, staff, and administration have had some contact with the virus, and 29 students have tested positive out of 55 reported cases. No cases were reported within 14 days of the transition to remote learning.
- *Second phase, from March 22 through April 3:* Fordham offered to make facilities available to New York State and has provided "A" Lot at Rose Hill to Northwell Health. The University adjusted to regulations that the Governor issued, rapidly reducing to only a small presence of essential staff in areas such as maintenance, residence halls, and biomedical research. Refunds issued to students for room, board, and some fees, plus other expenses generated by the pandemic, opened a gap of \$38 million in the 2019–2020 budget. The University closed this gap by, among other measures, freezing discretionary spending and travel, cancelling events, and freezing hiring except for searches already well along.
- *Adjustments to the 2020–2021 budget:* Fr. McShane laid out principles that guided the University in adjusting next academic year's budget. First, Fordham will focus on strategies that enable us to retain all our employees. Second, the culture of the University must be preserved. Third, budget adjustments should not undercut our capacity to deliver on our strategic plan. Guided by these principles, the University developed a matrix with fifteen scenarios representing different levels of enrollment and on-campus operations. The scenario currently being used for budget planning is one in which Fordham realizes 88% of its projected enrollment and operates on campus for the equivalent of half the academic year. The lost revenue associated with these projections would require a number of actions, including a freeze on hiring for all but a small number of student-facing positions, a one-year freeze on all salaries, cuts to discretionary spending, and deferrals of capital projects. However, apart from the one-year salary freeze, all provisions of the memorandum of agreement negotiated with the faculty currently remain in place. Fr. McShane said that the Board of Trustees unanimously approved these adjustments yesterday. He noted that there remains financial uncertainty, including in responses from the federal and state governments.
- *Third phase, from April 3 to the present:* Fr. McShane said that the University's focus has shifted in recent days, especially as the admissions season is about to conclude. Admissions events have

been held virtually, and there is intense competition at a time when many family budgets are precarious. International students face additional hurdles in obtaining visas. Therefore, the University has decided to become “test-optional” this year and next year. Fr. McShane reported that enrollments in Summer Session are looking strong. Other areas of the University, including Mission Integration and Planning and Student Affairs, have transitioned their work online. Fr. McShane announced that Fordham’s provost, Dennis C. Jacobs, has accepted an invitation to join a New York State task force on reopening higher education.

Discussion ensued. In response to Senators’ questions, Fr. McShane and Dr. Jacobs explained that the financial scenario planning that the University has undertaken can not at this point presuppose any particular date for the resumption of on-campus operations. Fr. McShane observed that it is not the University, but the government and ultimately the virus, that will dictate when a return to campus will be possible. However, Fr. McShane added, he is praying for as speedy as possible a return to instruction and operations on campus.

Responding to other questions, Fr. McShane noted that programs such as HEOP that support underrepresented students are more important than ever in this time of pandemic. Many Senators expressed opinions about possible ways of restoring the University’s ordinary operations, and Fr. McShane noted that Dr. Jacobs has begun an effort to identify ways in which Fordham can be creative and flexible in the face of an uncertain future. Several Senators urged that a date be identified by which faculty would know the status of the fall semester.

Fr. McShane concluded his presentation with deep gratitude to the faculty for demonstrating such care for the University, Fordham’s students, and one another. He thanked Senate President Keller for her leadership.

Key Conversation: Academic Planning in the Time of COVID-19

Dennis C. Jacobs began his report by identifying three dimensions in which Fordham is currently planning:

- *Health and Safety:* The University will not create risks for members of the community and will be working with public health authorities. The task force to which Dr. Jacobs has been appointed is developing plans for reopening higher education in New York State that are in accordance with a phased approach that federal and state governments have begun to outline. He noted that even when the campus at large is prepared to return to activity, some individuals will not be able to come back immediately.
- *Academic Planning:* Dr. Jacobs observed that the future is almost certainly going to be one of unpredictable disruptions. The goal of academic planning is not to try to predict which disruptions will occur but instead to structure Fordham’s programs so that they are resilient as possible regardless of the circumstances. The University wishes to assure students that they can earn their degrees on time and receive education of the quality that they expect. Dr. Jacobs has therefore set in motion a process of discerning communally how to proceed. The first stage, which began Tuesday, is to invite ideas about approaches to achieving a certain set of desirables while operating within a certain set of constraints. There will be focus groups to hear from students. Dr. Jacobs is assembling a diverse group representing all sectors of the University to help evaluate proposals. By May 11, Dr. Jacobs hopes to announce a framework for how the University will structure the coming academic year; that framework will then be implemented in each of the schools and academic units in line with its particular needs.
- *Financial Planning:* Dr. Jacobs said that enrollment is facing a “perfect storm” of pressures, including health concerns around the risk of contracting the virus, economic precarity, barriers for international students, and questions about the value proposition of remote learning. He observed that a 10% drop in undergraduate and graduate enrollment, for example, would lower net tuition revenue by approximately \$50 million; likewise, one semester during which University housing

goes vacant would create a \$45 million revenue shortfall. The impact of these revenue losses should be understood in the context of an overall university budget of approximately \$640 million.

Dr. Jacobs concluded by observing that the best way for Fordham to respond to the crisis is to commit to provide high-quality academic programs that serve our students well, regardless of the factors in the environment that the University cannot control.

In the discussion that followed, Senators thanked Dr. Jacobs for his collaborative and inclusive approach. Senators commented that some faculty have expressed concern about the additional, uncompensated work that adjustments to the usual academic calendar will require. One Senator asked how the salary freeze will affect merit and promotion increments that faculty had earned, and Dr. Jacobs responded that this year's promotion and merit increases will need to be deferred. Another Senator asked if there could be flexibility with regard to how teaching load is calculated, and Dr. Jacobs said that he is open to receiving as many proposals as colleagues are prepared to submit. Each proposal will be evaluated in relation to the desirables and constraints set forth in the call for proposals. A Senator observed that the steering committee for the academic continuity process is not as diverse as it could be, and Dr. Jacobs responded that the group of faculty and administrators he will soon be convening to evaluate proposals will be much more extensive, diverse, and representative of the community at large. The steering committee is a group to guide and monitor the progress of the process. A Senator asked how the University is planning to help faculty prepare for the possibility of continuing to teach in an online environment. Dr. Jacobs praised the work of colleagues including Anne Fernald, Special Faculty Advisor to the Provost for Faculty Development, and Steve D'Agustino, Director of Online Learning, as well as the team in Instructional Technology/Academic Computing. He said that he will be prioritizing the need to invest in faculty members' development for teaching online. He also observed that many but not all accreditors have been fairly flexible with their regulations during the pandemic. Several Senators asked how the various proposals under consideration would affect the calculation of faculty workload, and Dr. Jacobs indicated that this will be an element of the evaluation process.

Responding to another Senator's question, Dr. Jacobs confirmed that the search for the dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences is proceeding. Jonathan M. Crystal, Vice Provost, who is chairing the search, said that finalists would be making virtual visits to campus starting next week and would participate in forums with faculty.

Library Task Force Report

Senate President Keller introduced Ellen Fahey-Smith, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Maryanne Kowaleski, Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, S.J., Distinguished Professor of History and Medieval Studies, the co-chairs of a joint Provost–Senate task force on Fordham's non-law library resources. Dr. Kowaleski presented an overview of the task force's report, which included comparisons between Fordham and other Catholic, Jesuit, and New York City institutions. Fordham ranks unfavorably in library expenditures in comparison to peer and aspirant institutions; the University also employs significantly fewer professional librarians than our counterparts. Dr. Kowaleski highlighted a number of the task force's recommendations that will cost little or nothing: including the library in academic planning processes, creating a unified online library presence, joining external partnerships such as HathiTrust, restructuring and redefining librarian positions, and developing a promotion and salary plan for librarians. The Senate thanked Dr. Kowaleski and the task force for this work.

Salary and Benefits Update

Senate President Keller confirmed what Fr. McShane had previously announced: the terms of the memorandum of agreement negotiated between the faculty and administration this year remain intact, with the exception of a university-wide salary freeze, in which faculty are included, for 2020–2021. She noted that the projections for next year's budget may yet change, and she has been advocating that faculty be included in conversations about the impact of any changes, whether positive or negative. On

behalf of the Executive Committee, she presented a resolution. An amendment was offered and accepted, and the amended resolution carried, 22–0–0:

Effective immediately and until the date of the Faculty Senate’s first meeting in the 2020–2021 academic year, the Senate delegates to the group of faculty members who comprised the Faculty’s team for negotiating the Memorandum of Agreement, namely Eve Keller, Haim Mozes, Ida Bastiaens, John Drummond, Ralf Hepp, and Berish Rubin, the authority and responsibility for conducting such further conversations and negotiations with the Administration as the changing circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic may make necessary, as well as for reporting to the Executive Committee, which would report to the Senate, the substance of any such conversations and negotiations.

N.B. Article IV, Section 5, of the Senate's bylaws grant the Executive Committee authority to “act on behalf of the Senate on matters requiring immediate action when it is not possible to call a special meeting of the Senate, such action to be reported to the Senate for confirmation at its next regular meeting”.

Approval of Minutes

Senators approved the draft summary of the discussion held at the gathering of March 27, 2020, 22–0–0.

Announcements and New Business

Senate President Keller announced the names of those newly elected to the Faculty Senate: John Drummond, Stephen Grimm, Patrick Hornbeck, Eve Keller, Matthew McGowan, Francesca Parmeggiani, and Henry Schwalbenberg (Arts and Sciences–Rose Hill); Mark Mattson and Grace Vernon (Arts and Sciences–Lincoln Center); James Cohen (Law); Falguni Sen (Business); Margo Jackson (Education); and Dana Alonzo (Social Service). The incoming Senate will hold its first meeting at 4:45 p.m. on May 5, which will be preceded by the final meeting of the current Senate. Senate President Keller also announced that the Board of Trustees had approved the Senate’s proposal for a statutory change concerning the Student Experience Committee.