



FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Faculty Senate

Joseph M. McShane, S.J., Hon. President

John Drummond, President

Dana Alonzo, Vice President

Francesca Parmeggiani, Secretary

Gregory Acevedo

Andrew Albin

Ida Bastiaens

Thomas Beaudoin

Jeffrey Colon

Stephen Grimm

Ralf Hepp

Amir Idris

Margo Jackson

Judith Jones

Mark Mattson

Matthew McGowan

Alesia Moldavan

Haim Mozes

Giorgio Pini

Berish Rubin

Aditya Saharia

Falguni Sen

Henry Schwalbenberg

Grace Shen

Grace M. Vernon

Ian Weinstein

Present: Senate President Drummond; Senators Albin, Alonzo, Bastiaens, Beaudoin, Colon, Grimm, Hepp, Idris, Jackson, Jones, Mattson, McGowan, Moldavan, Mozes, Parmeggiani, Pini, Rubin, Saharia, Schwalbenberg, Sen, Shen, Vernon, Weinstein

Excused: Senator Acevedo

Guests: Dr. Dennis Jacobs, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Jonathan Crystal, Vice Provost; Mr. John Buckley, Vice President for Admission and Student Financial Services; Mr. Brian Ghanoo, Assistant Vice President for Student Financial Services; Mr. Michael Tavas, Enrollment Research; Dr. Yi Ding, University Research Council Chair and GSE/Psychological and Educational Service; Dr. Silvia Finemann, University Research Council and A&S/Biology; Ms. Carolyn Cargile, A&S/English

Call to Order

At 11:30 a.m. Senate President Drummond called the meeting to order.

Invocation

Senator Schwalbenberg delivered the invocation.

President's Report and Q&A

Fr. McShane began his remarks by wishing peace in Ukraine and noting Fordham alumni's fundraising for Ukraine and Fordham's support for faculty and students from Russia and Ukraine, particularly from Ukraine.

Development and recruitment efforts continue with trips planned to California and Chicago. Mayor Adams will visit soon and Fr. McShane will be in contact with New York State officials on Governor Hochul's higher education advisory committee. Fr. McShane reported the excellent status of the Cura Personalis Campaign, which has now reached \$180 million cumulatively. This year's Giving Day has been extremely successful in terms of gifts (\$1.54 million) and number of donors (2,878).

Fr. McShane reported that screening for Covid-19 continues. To return to campus after Spring break, students are required to get tested by March 30. A modest number of cases have been reported so far with about 800 students getting tested each day. The President noted that the University will continue its relationship with the Broad Institute and Vital Check into next year. Vaccines remain available to the Fordham community.

With regard to admissions, the University received more than 46,000 undergraduate applications but it is too early to ascertain whether the 2400 admission target – the highest goal ever set with the exception of last year – will be met or not. May 1 is the date when we will find out. Fr. McShane mentioned a substantial waitlist, ongoing intense

campus tour activities for accepted students and the upcoming open houses at Lincoln Center and Rose Hill, with repeated morning and afternoon sessions in order to accommodate the many requests. Admissions activities to foster the University's interaction with prospective students and their families also continue in other forms.

Lastly, Fr. McShane informed the Senate that as of July 1, Mr. John Buckley, who currently serves as Vice President for Admission and Student Financial Services, will become Vice President for Enrollment Services.

In the ensuing Q&A, one Senator asked about the University's preparation to accommodate and support the next incoming class. Fr. McShane commented that they have focused on various areas to ensure proper accommodation and strengthen the support for students – housing, counseling and healthcare services, and academic advising among them. He underlined that the undergraduate population stands at about 9,000 individuals at present and the University does not want to expand beyond this number because it would incur a number of financial and logistical problems to adequately support students and ensure their education. Prompted by the President, the Provost further observed that in addition to a smaller incoming class compared to last year, the University expects about 240 fewer students due to some attrition in the enrollment and students' larger participation in study abroad programs. One Senator inquired about retention affecting specific demographics. Fr. McShane responded that the University does not have the full picture yet. Some data is available only with respect to residential capacity. However, he emphasized that diversity and inclusion remain a top priority for the University in responding to students' needs. Another Senator asked about tuition increase and financial aid. Fr. McShane responded that tuition increase should be 4% and that financial aid is being awarded case by case. The discount rate this year is down by nearly 5% with the early numbers of the pool. It was 43.2% last year at this time. However, there is no final word on these matters from the Board yet.

Provost's Report and Q&A

Dr. Jacobs began his remarks by confirming that about 800 students per day have been tested for Covid-19 since classes resumed after break with a positivity rate around 2%. While the University has relaxed the mask mandate, many have elected to continue wearing them. At the London campus, which currently hosts 340 students, weekly testing continues. Unfortunately, some Gabelli graduate classes had to pivot to online after a group of MBA students contracted Covid while studying in London during the Spring recess.

Dr. Jacobs returned to the University's preparation for the incoming undergraduate class by focusing on academic advising and support for faculty teaching. His office should soon receive recommendations regarding student advisement as part of a concerted effort by deans, faculty and administrators to review and improve on the current advising model in FCRH and FCLC. Some decisions will hopefully be implemented this fall at least for first-year students. He also reported that the Working Group on the creation of a new Teaching and Learning Center has drafted a vision statement, gathered community feedback via a virtual meeting (the recording is available), and seeks further feedback through an anonymous Google form by April 8 (see Provost's email of March 24: "Anonymous Feedback Channel (via Google Forms): Fordham's New Teaching & Learning Center").

Dr. Jacobs also announced three staffing changes in the Provost's Office:

- Dr. Ben Crooker, Associate Vice President for Faculty Personnel, has announced his retirement. Effective July 1, 2022, Dr. Ji Seon Lee (Graduate School of Social Service) will assume the role of Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs.
- Dr. Jeannine Pinto will serve as the inaugural Director of the newly renamed Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.
- Dr. Dawn Lerman (Gabelli School of Business) has been appointed as Special Advisor to the Provost on Strategy.

Finally, Dr. Jacobs noted GSAS students' upcoming vote on unionization on April 5 and 7 at Lincoln Center and Rose Hill, respectively.

In the following Q&A session, Dr. Jacobs indicated that the Provost's Office will hire another research analyst to support the work of Jeannine Pinto's office. In response to a Senator's concerns regarding the impact of GSAS graduate students' unionization on students who have different types of scholarships, managerial roles and professional commitments outside the university, Dr. Jacobs pointed out that Fordham and the Union are defining clear criteria for inclusion or exclusion from representation. The discussion then turned again to preparation for next academic year. Senators commented on faculty exhaustion and continued labor demands, and raised great concern about the higher than usual mental health issues reported among students, which severely affects instructors. Graduate students in particular find themselves in an untenable position, with long-term consequences, having to complete their degrees while teaching has become a full-time undertaking rather than one component in their training and education. Dr. Jacobs acknowledged and empathized with these concerns. He reiterated the commitment of his office to early staffing and advance planning to avoid the challenges of last year. In response to a Senator's alarm about undergraduate attrition, Dr. Jacobs and Dr. Crystal responded that further efforts are needed to understand the reasons for student attrition during this academic year. In recent years, attrition rates have been consistently higher for commuter students in comparison to residential students, and surveys administered to students withdrawing from Fordham mention financial concerns as a primary reason for leaving the school. More information is needed on the relationship between student retention and student demographics. Another Senator observed the different performance of students this year, and warned that data on learning, retention, and so on regarding this class may be different from the past and may raise the question of whether the University has adequately provided students with the needed support. Dr. Jacobs acknowledged how the pandemic has affected education not only at Fordham but nationally.

The "Laudato Si'" Initiative

As a member of the "Laudato Si'" Committee, which Julie Gafney (CCEL Executive Director) chairs, Senator Jones overviewed the scope and timeline of the project. Inspired by and in response to Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si'", this project aims at developing curricular and other initiatives to address, in a sustainable and lasting manner, socio-economic and environmental challenges of our times.

Senator Jones covered each of the seven areas of interventions originally identified by the Laudato Si' Action Platform – response to the cry of the Earth; response to the cry of the poor; adoption of sustainable lifestyles; ecological education; ecological spirituality; and community resilience and empowerment – and clarified that the depth and breadth of the initiative necessarily warrants a developmental approach that will unfold over a 7-year process and in partnership with other institutions.

The Committee has been collecting data about existing resources and ongoing initiatives at Fordham connected with the above areas of intervention. The Committee now seeks greater faculty input and involvement to continue identifying existing resources and initiatives while determining additional needs and required institutional resources, but also to begin formulating shared values and a shared vision. By the summer, the Committee will articulate short-, medium- and long-term objectives, and an action plan, which would also comprise strategies for constant reflection and evaluation. Senator Jones hopes that the Faculty Senate will discuss the "Laudato Si'" encyclical and action plan in September.

Senators applauded this initiative and expressed enthusiastic support. One Senator cautioned against certain Catholic positions that have de facto erased other concerns (e.g., gender and racial justice), or tend to dismiss diverse forms of spirituality. Senator Jones made clear that the Committee, cognizant of these limitations, has adopted a broad-minded and intersectional approach to justice and spirituality. In response to another Senator, Senator Jones underscored the importance of effective information sharing and communication, and the need for adequate support for all those laboring on this project.

Senator Jones concluded her presentation by encouraging faculty to send her and Julie Gafney any relevant information, ideas or feedback to help advance the initiative.

Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid

Mr. Buckley, Mr. Ghanoo and Mr. Tavas reviewed data on undergraduate admission and financial aid in the last 20 years while providing information about the decision-making process and units involved. The application pool has grown significantly larger in the past years and the University has undertaken more aggressive enrollment campaigns. Planning for recruitment and admission is a collaborative process involving two committees, the Council of Undergraduate Enrollment and the President's Advisory Council. These committees normally evaluate historical data to define strategic priorities in the areas of student diversity, student academic profile and revenues, and to plan accordingly. A "scientific approach" is used by which different detailed scenarios are created to achieve the University's goals and priorities. Planning is a comprehensive endeavor requiring a holistic review process of each student file. It is a balancing act to maintain a discount rate while continuing to be attractive to students and their families. Cultivation of the applicants' pool is a lengthy process that occurs over multiple years. Mr. Buckley, Mr. Ghanoo and Mr. Tavas then reviewed the trends in first-year admission activities, emphasizing the volatility of such trends in the past couple of years on account of the Covid-19 pandemic. It has become increasingly difficult to predict families' behaviors toward college education. Other factors impacting these trends include: the role of online learning in high school; students' social and academic preparation for college; changed competitiveness among schools; the decline of international enrollment; a test-optional environment. The economic impact of the pandemic has greatly contributed to this volatility: while families appear to be recovering, recouping the material loss will take years. The University has adopted different strategies with regard to financial aid: 80% of students run through the financial aid model; 20%, instead, require a different approach. The students in the latter group are, for example, HEOP students, student athletes, students in the performing arts, international students, students with major scholarships, students who benefit from tuition remissions. These students normally benefit from higher discount rates. Lastly, Mr. Buckley, Mr. Ghanoo and Mr. Tavas commented on the trends in first-year discount and yield rates, at 50.7% and 10.6% respectively in 2021 (at 40.1% and 14.5% respectively in 2011 for comparison). While, in the current circumstances, it is difficult to project the incoming class based on past behaviors, there is hope that it will be possible to return to greater consistency in the future.

In the ensuing Q&A, Senators noted that the University has grown and what the University is currently netting for each student is not sustainable over time; that academic concerns should be addressed more carefully, through better and more significant consultation with the faculty; and that the faculty has not been adequately included in the decision making process on budgetary matters. Mr. Buckley responded that Fordham is facing issues similar to those addressed by other institutions and that the Provost, the Deans and the Senate President are involved in the process. Senate President Drummond interjected that the Senate President is brought into the discussions and that earlier and greater faculty involvement is needed. Another Senator asked how close the University is to achieving the desired characteristics of the incoming class. Mr. Buckley responded that hopefully, we are close to coming out of this volatile period. One Senator added that the new Teaching and Learning Center and the revision of the advising program, both of which are initiatives fostering larger faculty participation, may help Admission and Enrollment in achieving these goals.

Policy on Intellectual Property

Dr. Finnemann, a member of the University Research Council, presented the revised policy. She premised that revisions were included upon consideration of Senators' concerns and faculty feedback. They were aimed at improving the overall document by making it more precise and specific, and at strengthening inventors' and faculty rights and input in matters concerning intellectual property/patenting. Changes from the original document rejected by the Senate in October 2021 include: clarification of what shall be understood by "supported inventions"; clarification of the processes regulating intellectual property at Fordham and the agreement between the inventor and the University (e.g., disclosure form, composition and role of the University Intellectual Property Committee,

grievance procedures); clarification of inventor's rights to ownership (e.g., should an inventor decide not to pursue commercialization of their invention, the inventor will be able to stipulate an agreement with the University for the release of ownership to them only).

Dr. Ding, chair of the University Research Council, reviewed the actions taken by URC since September 2021, to prepare the first draft of the policy, which was, however, rejected by the Senate in October for three main reasons: the policy was established without proper consultation with the faculty; the policy was a radical departure from established practices until then; the policy presented severe limitations of faculty rights to not commercialize their inventions. URC then initiated a process to revise the policy by seeking greater faculty input and meeting with members of the Senate and the faculty. The Council also prepared a Frequently Asked Questions sheet to explain the revised policy. UCR extensively discussed the revised policy and added language to address the question of inventions for the public good. The Council unanimously approved the revised policy on March 11.

In the ensuing discussion, in response to one Senator, it was pointed out that the policy provides information about shared revenues from commercialization, and that the Copyright policy is different from the Intellectual Property policy. Another Senator observed that while the policy as currently drafted represents an improvement from the previous version, it still leaves some matters unclear or unresolved, and still limits faculty rights. For example, the lack of an arbitration process places the ultimate decision on the Provost, "whose final decision shall not be *unreasonable*" (the vague language was also noted); the lack of clarity on ownership by graduate students who do work in the labs at other institutions: does the University have any claim on their inventions? According to this Senator, rather than enforcing this Intellectual Property policy across the board, faculty should be given the possibility to opt into it, thus preventing conflicts in the future. A Senator, who is also a URC member, reiterated that the University needs an Intellectual Property policy, and added that compared to the IP policy in other institutions, Fordham's proposed policy is faculty-friendly and recognizes a greater presence of the faculty in its processes. Another Senator agreed that an IP policy is needed and also noted that from a legal standpoint, it will not be possible to draft a perfect policy.

At 2:30, the Senate unanimously passed a motion to extend the meeting by 15 minutes, and moved to approve the Intellectual Property policy as drafted. Upon discussion, this motion passed (18-2-3).

FGSW Campaign and GSAS Students' Vote to Unionize

Representing Fordham Graduate Student Workers (FGSW), Ms. Cargile overviewed the objectives of this group, namely to ensure better working and living conditions for graduate employees, including: legal recognition and a say in working conditions; wage increases; comprehensive health care coverage, including dental and vision insurance; reasonable accommodations for working parents; enhanced protections and support for international student employees; formal grievance structures that ensure effective protection and recourse against harassment, overwork, and other workplace issues; extended funding due to COVID-19; student fee cuts.

Ms. Cargile noted that on April 5 and 7 GSAS students are called to vote at Lincoln Center and Rose Hill respectively, to decide whether to unionize. Ms. Cargile reviewed evidence that despite claims of neutrality in the FGSW campaign and in the absence of "loud" commentaries on the election, the Administration has nevertheless proceeded with "soft anti-union messaging". Moreover, the University's decision to hire one of the strongest anti-union law firms in the country casts a doubtful light on such claims while setting a particular tone for the entire election and negotiation process.

In concluding her presentation, Ms. Cargile asked for the Senate's support of the FGSW campaign and for the Administration's neutrality in the campaign and upcoming vote.

In the following Q&A, one Senator expressed concerns for the potential long-term impact of graduate students' unionization on GSAS. Another Senator pointed out that the landscape of graduate students' labor at Fordham is rather complicated, and expressed concern about the different categories of graduate students and the support for them moving forward should unionization occur. Ms. Cargile underlined that the University needs to be clear about its priorities, and allocate resources accordingly. Considering graduate students' key contributions through their teaching, the University needs to adequately recognize their labor. She also clarified that unionization concerns only the students in the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences.

At 2:45pm, the Senate unanimously passed a motion to extend the meeting by another 15 minutes and allow for further discussion. The Senate passed the following motion (16-2-1):

The Faculty Senate encourages the Administration to remain neutral with regard to the Fordham Graduate Student Workers campaign to unionize GSAS students.

Approval of Minutes

The Senate approved two sets of minutes: the minutes of the meeting of January 21, 2022 (18-0-0) and the minutes of February 25, 2022 (17-0-1).

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Francesca Parmeggiani, Secretary