



# FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Faculty Senate

## President's Report and Q&A

Fr. Joseph McShane's remarks addressed the following topics:

- *Admissions* – Data on current application numbers is overall good. Fr. McShane has just returned from California and he is preparing to go to Texas, Florida, Arizona and back to California for fundraising, alumni networking and student recruitment.
- *Covid-19* – To ensure a safe return to campus life, the University has adopted a booster mandate for all students, faculty and staff, and re-entry testing. Testing will continue throughout the semester. Comprehensive vaccination and booster data from Health Services, broken down by campuses and schools, is not available yet.
- *Support for the people affected by the January 9 fire in the Bronx and communication on the aid protocols of the University* – Fr. McShane noted that while the University has not communicated effectively with the Fordham community, it has nevertheless maintained communication with City and Borough officials and partnered with local charities to provide help.

## Provost's Report and Q&A

Dr. Dennis Jacobs' remarks addressed the following topics:

- *GSAS* – The University is planning a memorial service for Dr. Tyler Stovall, Dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences since 2020, who died unexpectedly on December 10, 2021. Dr. Patrick Hornbeck has been appointed Interim Dean of GSAS, and an expedited national search has been authorized to fill the position by reconvening the members of the last search committee.
- *Covid-19* – Based on available data, we seem to be coming down from the peak of the Omicron surge. Students who tested positive prior to returning to Fordham have been asked to recover at home rather than return to campus. Three hundred and thirty students began their semester in London last week; 14 students are currently in isolation. The University continues to follow CDC and NYS and NYC Departments of Health guidance and recently revised recommendations. Fordham is also requiring a negative antigen test from those individuals who are recovering from Covid in isolation prior to their return to campus. Vaccinated individuals who have been exposed to Covid but have not received a booster shot despite being eligible will have to quarantine. It is conceivable that some protocols might be loosened should circumstances change and the situation improve in the future. The University has adopted a multi-layered mitigation system, which permits lifting some measures should conditions continue to improve. However, mask wearing, which is one of the strongest protection and mitigation measures against Covid, will continue to be required for the foreseeable future.
- *Graduate and Professional School Admissions* – Based on current information on Spring 2022 retention and attrition, credit hours across all schools and programs (graduate and professional; in-person, online and hybrid) are currently forecasted to be 1.7% behind target (~\$2.5 million less than the anticipated net revenue of \$183 million for FY 2022).

## Contact Tracing

Mr. John Carroll, Interim Associate Vice President for Administration, overviewed the 18 points of the tracing procedures, from information collection and sharing to individual case logging and notification to the health authorities. In response to Senators' questions, Mr. Carroll clarified the following: best practices from last semester (e.g., the use of seating charts) continue to be very helpful for contact tracing; individuals who test positive notify Vital Check, which communicates directly with the University; students are notified by Vital Check and Health Services on their status and conditions. Mr. Carroll agreed with the need for clear and streamlined information. To this end, his office is currently working with the different schools to identify one person in each school who will serve as that school's sole liaison.

Continued Discussion of the Report of the Budget Planning Committee

Addressing grave concerns about infringements on the statutory responsibilities of the Budget Planning Committee and their implication for shared governance, the Senate passed the following resolution (24-0-0):

*Whereas, the duties and responsibilities of The Budget Planning Committee are detailed in Article Three, Chapter 9 of the University Statutes and Section 9.01 §3-09.01 of the University Statutes, The Responsibility of the Budget Planning Committee, requires, inter alia, that the Budget Planning Committee assist “the President of the University in the formulation of the University’s annual budget” and “suggest expenditure, objectives, revenue measures, fiscal parameters and guidelines for the preparation of the annual budget” and requires that these suggestions inform the development of “the planning budget for presentation to the President of the University” [emphasis added]; and*

- 1) The Senate finds that faculty representatives to the Budget Planning Committee have not been included in the process of formulation and development, as required by §3-09.01a, or the process of review and confirmation for the final University budget, as required by §3-09.01c; and,*
- 2) The Senate finds that the faculty representatives of the Budget Planning Committee have not been “apprised of any significant changes in the current budget and fiscal outlook” after submission of the final budget to the Board of Trustees, as required by §3-09.01c; and,*
- 3) The Senate finds that the faculty representatives to the Budget Planning Committee have not been allowed to “meet periodically” with other members of the Committee; and,*
- 4) The Senate finds that the faculty representatives of the Budget Planning Committee have made timely and specific requests for the information necessary to meet their obligations under the statute, but they have not received timely or complete information.*

*Therefore, after deliberation and due consideration, The Senate concludes that these violations of the University Statutes have prevented the faculty representatives of the Budget Planning Committee from fulfilling their statutory duties to the University and urges the University Administration to comply with these requirements of University Statutes; and,*

*After further deliberation and due consideration, The Senate concludes that these violations of the University Statutes also significantly compromise the Faculty’s ability to meet its “primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and method of instruction, research, faculty status and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process,” as is required by University Statute §4-01.02. By not involving faculty representatives to the Budget Planning Committee in decisions involving capital expenditures, financial aid, etc., the University has stymied the Faculty’s ability to act within its sphere and violated the norms of shared governance which are at the heart of our University.*

*Therefore, The Faculty Senate calls upon the President of the University to direct the Vice President for Finance to comply with both the letter and spirit of University Statute §3-09.01, as well as other relevant University Statutes and participate in the collaborative process the Statutes require and which best expresses and fulfills our shared mission.*

Other Matters

- *Report of the Committee on Student Experience* – The Committee is finalizing a document with practical advice on what to do or not do in the classroom to help prevent recurrence of racially-biased behaviors and students’ distress. Aiming at promoting a cultural change, this document should serve as a foundation for further discussion and implementation at the program and department levels.
- *“Laudato si” Action Plan* – Fordham is part of an international collaboration between the Vatican and various institutions for the establishment of a shared platform for community action on several issues, from sustainability and the environment to economic and ecological justice to education. Faculty are encouraged to send Senator Jones, who serves on the Fordham committee, information on current initiatives, existing course syllabi, existing resources and the like, that would help the committee map out what Fordham is already doing and shape a vision for the University on these issues.
- *Approval of Minutes* – The Senate approved the minutes of the meeting of December 3, 2021 (21-0-3) and the minutes of the special meeting of January 14, 2022 (23-0-1).

The Senate entered executive session at 2:11 p.m. and discussed health benefits.

The Senate exited executive session and adjourned by unanimous consent at 2:30 p.m.