



# FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Faculty Senate

## Summary of Meeting • November 8, 2019

**Presentation from the President:** Joseph M. McShane, S.J., addressed the Senate, discussing these topics:

- *Congratulations:* Fr. McShane congratulated the African and African-American Studies Department on the recent celebration of its fiftieth anniversary.
- *Admissions and Enrollment:* Fordham continues to host the only annual college access fair in New York State that is targeted at African-American and Latinx students and families. Fr. McShane reviewed data on early action and early decision applications for undergraduate admission. Overall, the pool is slightly larger than last year, but with substantial increases in applications to colleges at Rose Hill and declines in applications to colleges at Lincoln Center. Fr. McShane noted that the recruitment of diverse students, especially Black students, remains challenging despite strong efforts. A potential cause for worry is that attendance at open houses is down 16% this year, though the overall number of visitors is up.

**Presentation from the Provost:** Dennis C. Jacobs addressed the Senate, commenting on the following subjects:

- *Faculty Personnel Committees:* Given the importance of the work of the University Tenure Review Committee, Tenure and Reappointment Appeals Committee, and Faculty Hearing Committee, Dr. Jacobs offered to meet with each committee at the end of its annual cycle of work to review its recommendations.
- *CUSP:* Colleagues across the University did a great amount of work in fleshing out 43 initiatives, which following an initial round of review are now being grouped and prioritized into a strategic plan.
- *London Centre:* Dr. Jacobs reported on a recent visit to London and on programs at the London Centre.
- *Congratulations:* Dr. Jacobs echoed Fr. McShane's congratulations to the African and African-American Studies Department and recognized Prof. Christina Greer, recently named by *City and State* as one of the 100 most powerful members of New York's Black community.
- *GSAS Dean Search:* There will be a town hall meeting November 19 for faculty to provide input.

### **Key Conversation: Mission and Diversity at Fordham**

Senate President Keller introduced Michael C. McCarthy, S.J., Vice President for Mission Integration and Planning and Associate Professor of Theology, and Rafael A. Zapata, Chief Diversity Officer. Fr. McCarthy described his role at the University, noting his two basic assumptions: that everyone shares in the ownership of Fordham's mission, and that advancing mission looks different in 2019 than it did in the past. He summarized the process and results of Fordham's 2017 Mission Priority Examen self-study. Fr. McCarthy noted that Fordham was founded for the express purpose of serving an immigrant population that had felt exclusion and, for that reason, must be committed to diversity. He stressed that Fordham's mission calls the University to value diversity *because* of its Jesuit and Catholic identity. Mr. Zapata concurred, noting that it is necessary to tie together conversations about diversity and mission. In discussion, Senators noted that Fordham's culture remains insufficiently nimble to address tensions in these areas. Suggestions were made about better accommodating the needs of specific groups. There is also often insufficient conversation about what is already being done. Faculty are not always incentivized, in, e.g., the tenure and promotion process, to pursue mission-related activities.

### **Discussion: Videoconferencing for Senate Committees**

Senate President Keller indicated that the Senate Executive Committee has received requests concerning the use of videoconferencing from the chairs of the Tenure and Reappointment Appeals Committee, the University Tenure Review Committee, and the Faculty Hearing Committee. The Senate discussed the following motion:

- *For a pilot period running through the conclusion of academic year 2019-2020, TRAC, UTRC, and the Faculty Hearing Committee may conduct their business (including discussions of cases, interviews, and final deliberations) by means of videoconferencing, provided that they give the appellant the opportunity to be interviewed in person and adopt measures to ensure the confidentiality of their proceedings (e.g., referring to candidates by pseudonyms or numbers, using online platforms to ensure secret ballots, etc.).*

The motion carried (20-1-0).

**Procedural Matters and Announcements:** The Senate approved the minutes of the meeting held on November 4, 2019. Senators and faculty at large were encouraged to complete the online Kognito training on supporting students' mental health, especially in light of the increasing prevalence of mental health diagnoses. Mental health will be a key conversation at a future meeting of the Senate.