

Office of the Dean of Faculty

2018-19 Annual Report

Submitted by Charles Van Loan, Dean of Faculty

Major Highlights

Enhanced Representation for Non-tenure Track Faculty

At Cornell there are approximately 1600 tenured/tenure track (TT) faculty, 460 research faculty, 380 teaching faculty, and 230 extension faculty. The pool of academic titleholders also includes the emeriti (600+), visitors and adjuncts (900+), and postdocs (500+). The University Faculty (= TT + emeriti) currently have representation through the Faculty Senate; everyone else is aligned with the Employee Assembly, a body that rarely considers academic matters.

The University Faculty approved a plan whereby all academic titleholders are brought under the umbrella of the Faculty Senate with a group of about 500 “RTE” Faculty being given University Voting Rights, e.g., Senior Lecturers, Senior Research Associates, Senior Extension Associates, Professors-of-the-Practice, Clinical Professors, Research Professors, etc. “RTE” stands for research-teaching-extension. Having “university voting rights” means that you can serve in the Faculty Senate and participate in university-level elections.

Shared governance is essential to the design of effective promotion ladders. The long-term health of the tenure system and the surrounding academic tracks are related. Oversight is the responsibility of the Faculty Senate which now has a more flexible set of membership rules:

1. An RTE Faculty member with university voting rights could serve as a department or at-large senator.
2. There would be approximately fifteen RTE-only seats apportioned among the colleges.
3. There would be an RTE senate seat for the library and a nonvoting ex officio senate seat for postdocs.
4. All RTE faculty would be invited to senate meetings but only RTE senators could propose legislation.

A broader range of academics can participate in elections. In particular, RTE Faculty with University Voting Rights are now be able to vote in elections that determine the Faculty Trustees, the Dean of Faculty, and the Associate Dean of Faculty. Candidates for these positions would still have to be members of the University Faculty.

Meeting-Time Patterns

Classes can only be taught at certain times, e.g., MWF 10:10-11:00 or TR1:25-2:40. These are called “meeting-time patterns” and we have had the same line-up of meeting-time patterns for

forty years. The way we teach is rapidly evolving requiring more allowable 75-minute meeting-time patterns and greater flexibility in terms of how we use the two-hour meeting time patterns.

Working with the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and the University Registrar we addressed these concerns.

Three new MW 75-minute patterns are now allowed. However, it is necessary to proceed with a measure of caution to guard against unintended side effects. We can only guess at the number of MWF courses that will migrate to the new MW patterns. Course conflicts that complicate the fulfillment of requirements and classroom availability are serious concerns. Therefore, only courses numbered 3000 or higher are allowed to use the new MW 75-minute patterns until further notice. The reasoning is that freshman and sophomore level courses tend to be larger and more of the “need-to-take-now” variety.

The stipulation that the longer class periods must be used for “laboratories and similar exercises” is dropped. The responsibility for using the longer class periods in a way that makes pedagogical sense is an academic decision to be made by the instructor and the offering department. Consultation with a neighboring academic program is expected whenever a scheduling change has ramifications for students in that program.

The use of a nonstandard meeting time requires approval. We expect to streamline the exception-approval process thereby making it easier for departments to be more creative with their teaching.

Improvement of Policy 6.4 procedures

Policy 6.4 deals with harassment, bias, and sexual misconduct. When the revised Policy 6.4 Guidelines applicable to faculty and staff were presented to the Senate last fall, a number of objections were raised, including the lack of a hearing and other due process protections for faculty accused of offenses. We formed a subcommittee chaired by Professor Cynthia Bowman to re-examine these and other questions. It included representatives of all the major constituencies affected by the policy –Human Resources, the University Counsel, the Provost Office, the University Faculty Committee, graduate students, and the Academic Freedom and Professional Status of the Faculty Committee. They met many times and came up with a new version of the policy, which has been approved and is now ready for implementation.

Student Accommodation Guidelines

Currently the Faculty Handbook has a section on religious observance accommodations and a section that discusses accommodations associated with varsity athletics, job interviews, family emergencies, medical emergencies, and extracurricular activities. The prose is vague and confusing—a situation that wastes time and creates angst. We have proposed modifications that

will address these issues. More vetting and editing is required and we aim to complete this project in the fall.

Selected Faculty Achievements

Professor [Stephen Ceci](#), Developmental Psychology, and Professor [Kelly Zamudio](#), Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, were elected to the [American Academic of Arts and Sciences](#).

The Joseph C. Ford Professor of Engineering, [Joseph Halpern](#), has been [elected a member of the National Academy of Engineering](#) (NAE).

Associate Dean and Robert V. Tishman '37 Professor [Deborah Estrin](#) (Cornell Tech) was recognized with the [2018 MacArthur Foundation](#) fellowship award for her innovative work using mobile devices and data to address social challenges.

Dr. [Bethany Cummings](#), Biomedical Sciences, and Dr. [Lisa Roth](#), Pediatrics (Weill Cornell Medicine), each received a [Hartwell Individual Biomedical Research Award](#) and designation as a Hartwell Investigator for three years.

Six assistant professors have been recognized with National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development Program awards, given annually to support junior faculty members' research projects and outreach efforts. The six assistant professors are: [Jayadev Acharya](#), electrical and computer engineering; [Siddhartha Banerjee](#), operations research and information engineering; [Christina Delimitrou](#), electrical and computer engineering; [Nathan Kallus](#), operations research and information engineering at Cornell Tech; [Karola Mészáros](#), mathematics in the College of Arts and Sciences; and [Inna Zakharevich](#), mathematics in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Assistant professors [Brett Fors](#), Chemistry and Chemical Biology; [Karthik Sridharan](#), Computer Science; and [Jin Suntivich](#), Materials Science and Engineering, have been awarded [Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Fellowships](#), which support early career original research and broad-based education related to science, technology and economic performance.

Nine faculty members have been elected fellows of [the American Association for the Advancement of Science](#) (AAAS). The award honors their efforts to advance research and its applications in scientifically or socially distinguished ways. The nine faculty are: [Ronald J. Brachman](#), professor of computer science and director of the Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute at Cornell Tech, [Peng Chen](#), the Peter J.W. Debye Professor of Chemistry, [Corrie Moreau](#), visiting professor of entomology, and ecology and evolutionary biology, [Karl Joseph Niklas](#), professor of plant biology, [Holger Sondermann](#), professor of molecular medicine, [Charles Walcott](#), Ph.D. '59, professor emeritus of neurobiology and behavior, [Elaine Wethington](#), professor of human development, [Martin Wiedmann](#), the Gellert Family Professor in Food Safety, [Joseph B. Yavitt](#), professor of natural resources.

Associate Professor [A. Kevin Tang](#), Electrical and Computer Engineering, was the recipient of the 2018 IBM Faculty Award.

[Professor and Harold Tanner Dean of Arts and Sciences Ray Jayawardhana](#), Astronomy, was awarded the [2018 Dwight Nicholson Medal for Outreach by the American Physical Society](#) (APS). This award recognizes the humanitarian aspect of physics and physicists created through public lectures and public media, teaching, research or science related activities.

[The American Psychological Association](#) awarded Professor [Charles Brainerd](#), Human Development, for his distinguished contributions to development science.

[Lawrence Kidder](#), Senior Research Associate, Center for Astrophysics and Planetary Science, Department of Astronomy, was elected [fellow of the American Physical Society](#) (APS).

The Joseph Silbert Dean of Engineering, [Lance Collins](#), was presented [with the Edward Bouchet Legacy award](#) that recognizes esteemed educators and advocates committed to cultivating a new generation of scholars, particularly those who promote diversity and inclusion.

Associate Professor [Ariana Kim](#), Music, as awarded the grand prize at the [M-Prize Chamber Music Competition](#).

Awarded for pioneering research in life sciences, [Adrieene Roeder](#), Plant Biology, and [Bethany Cummings](#), Biomedical Sciences, both received the 2019 Schwartz Research Fund for Women in the Life Sciences award.

Seven faculty receive [Stephen H. Weiss awards](#). Professors [George Boyer](#), Economics and International and Comparative Labor, [Dexter Kozen](#), Computer Science, and [Poppy McLeod](#), Communication, were recipients of Stephen H. Weiss Presidential Fellowships. Associate Professors [Kati Griffith](#), Labor and Employment Law, and [David Smith](#), Psychology, were named Weiss Junior Fellows. Senior Lecturers [Rhonda Gilmore](#), Design and Environmental Analysis and [Bruce Land](#), Electrical & Computer Engineering, were named Weiss Provost's Teaching Fellow winners.

Four faculty awarded the Kendall S. Carpenter Advising Award: [Abigail Cohn](#), Linguistics, [Jamila Michener](#), Government, [Linda Nicholson](#), Molecular Biology and Genetics and [Christopher Umbach](#), Materials Science and Engineering.

Faculty Senate Highlights

September

Issues surrounding the process by which students obtain class-related accommodations was discussed. Focus was on four areas: Disabilities, Religious Observance, Athletics, and Title IX.

October

Policy 6.4 deals with bias, harassment, sexual misconduct. A new set of Policy 6.4 faculty-related were presented. Reception was generally positive but concern was voiced about the faculty panels that will help adjudicate cases. The language in the procedures will be strengthened to ensure the selection of unbiased panelists.

November

Work on Policy 6.4 Procedures will move ahead with faculty involvement. A University Faculty Committee-sponsored resolution was presented that would align the research, teaching, and extension faculties with the Senate and give 1000+ from that group voting rights. President Pollack attended and gave an update of various initiatives. Concerns were raised about Cornell's involvement with Saudi Arabia.

December

The discussion of the Research, Teaching and Extension faculty (RTE) representation issue covered four concerns: (1) On the possibility of creating an "RTE Senate", practically no interest. (2) On the terminology "RTE Faculty", there is some concern that there should be a "C" in the acronym to represent "clinical". (3) Mixed feelings on "splitting tracks", i.e., giving voting rights to Senior Lecturers but not Lecturers. and (4) On controlling the University Faculty(UF)-to-RTE ratio in the Senate, there are two concerns with the proposed resolution's laissez-faire approach. One argument says that there would be a drift towards an RTE-majority senate simply because the UF are overloaded with responsibilities and are more likely to shun senate service. The second argument is that while balance might play out nicely today because of "natural forces", those natural forces might not exist in the future. Thus, the need right from the start to include some kind of mathematical constraint on the ratio.

February

The Biological Statistics and Computational Biology Department has been reorganized and renamed as the Department of Computational Biology. The Department of Statistical and Data Science changed the name of the department to the Department of Statistical and Data Science.

Aspects of the Research, Teaching and Extension (RTE) Faculty Senate representation was discussed and included Sense-of-the-Senate voting regarding use of the RTE acronym, use of the word "faculty" as in "RTE Faculty," RTE representation through the Faculty Senate, University voting rights by title (3 options) and department/college Faculty Senate membership options with general and mixed support. Results of these votes and the Faculty senate discussion will produce the final proposal. If the Senate approves the final proposal it goes to the entire University Faculty for a vote. The final determination will be reviewed after three years.

March

Mary Opperman is obtaining input from various groups across the University toward Core Values that will be consistent and constant through change and explain how we work and interact with each other as well as strategies to fill our mission. There was an explanation of what core values are and are not and examples of other organizations' core values. And next steps in the process with a target completion date of May 2019.

President Pollack attended and provided a number of updates on key initiatives.

A call to have a vote on the UFC Revised Proposal on RTE Faculty Representation was approved. The vote was 82-to-12. The University approved the changes by a vote of 408-to-89.

April

The next steps associated with the RTE representation initiative were spelled out.

Through Sense-of-the-Senate voting, the Faculty Senate endorsed (a) the planned review of eCornell assuming that it will have a suitable level of faculty input from start to finish, (b) the core-clue initiative with concerns that certain key values be covered in some form, and (c) the use of the staff-appreciation portal.

The revision of the Policy 6.4 procedures doc was presented and generally well received.

A resolution was passed that enables Arts and Sciences to use the Research Professor title. Another resolution that passed clarified when non-academic staff are allowed to teach courses for credit.

During Good and Welfare, concerns were voiced about the process that was used to establish the Institute for Politics and Global Affairs.

May

Resolutions on grade changes, meeting times, the free-time zone, and student accommodations were presented. Representatives from Cornell Admissions came for extended Q&A. The annual report of the Financial Policy Committee was given.