I. Adria began the meeting and asked for approval of the minutes. There was a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and approved. Adria reported that Sven Travis would join the meeting at 9am to give an update on the Budget Committee and the University Finance Town Hall.

II. Adria asked the senators if they would be attending the breakfasts at the president’s house this week. She said that one issue that would come up is the vandalism that took place in the dorm over the weekend. Charles felt like the UFS needed to draft a statement. Charles thought a joint statement with staff senate and student senate might be good. Might be a good idea to draft a statement and share with other co-chairs. Adria said she would like some clarity about how the president put together his statement about the incident in the dorms. Adria wondered if it would be better to consult the administration about drafting a statement.

Discussion:
Erin wondered if anyone had been identified in the action. Frank wondered if we had a mechanism to send out an email to the entire TNS population. It was believed that all communications needed to go through Marketing and Communications. Candy said it might not even be a TNS student and that people shouldn’t jump to conclusions. One senator pointed out that we are in a new political climate that
emboldens already existing racism. Margarita felt that it didn’t matter if it was just one student. She also felt that the UFS should craft its own statement and send it out to the university. Josh felt the statement is useless if it goes out too late. Christian felt a more inclusive statement that isn’t simply reactive might be a better idea. Mark thought maybe it would be a good idea to draft a statement about the election even before the incidents in the dorms. Adria thought it would be better to focus the statement on responding to the incident in the dorm. Josh said a statement about the election might take more time to craft. Adria read the second email that the president sent about the incident out loud. Ron felt the president should have pointed to discriminatory harassment policy at TNS in his statement. Charles felt like the UFS shouldn’t be censored and should be able to send out an email to the entire university. Christian thought it was a good idea to focus on Ron’s point. Ron thought it might save time to release the statement just the UFS. Frank thought the statement should be short. Mark thought it would be good to make a commitment to safe spaces.

The senators’ workshopped a draft statement:

The University Faculty Senate denounces in the strongest possible terms the hateful and discriminatory actions which occurred on our campus last Friday. Such actions are not acceptable and will never be tolerated. We support our entire community, in alignment with the history and mission of The New School. As representatives of the faculty we affirm our continuing commitment to actively promote free spaces of discussion in our classrooms and studios. Respectful discussion of issues is distinct from actions to intimidate and create fear.

A motion was made to pass the statement. The motion was seconded and approved

Subject: Statement from the UFS
Signature: University Faculty Senate

III. Sven reported on the Budget Committee. He said that the committee looks at any overages and makes recommendations of what to do with them. He said that last year the university chose to go into the red to give faculty and staff raises. This year he said there might be some more overage available. There has been discussion to increase the percent of increase for faculty and staff. Last year there were a lot of requests for funding but there hasn’t been enough money to give. When there is money, most of it goes to the PO for academic programs. This committee doesn’t have anything to do with the way the university makes its budget. He said that the university can’t continue to raise tuition and TNS is no longer growing at a rapid rate. The PO asks for money to keep new programs going since they weren’t planned for well in the first place.

Discussion:
Adria referenced a presentation from the CoPA piano technician at the Finance Town Hall who reported that the pianos are wildly out of shape and not of good quality for students. One senator made a point about how our budgeting model is dependent on foreign students. Sven hoped that the take away from the town hall is the way that decisions are made to support the strategic plan, which had to be put aside to continue to sustain ourselves. Adria left the town hall feeling like everything had been done responsibly but had concerns about TNS’s dependency on tuition. Frank pointed out that when they accept students who are less prepared it hurts TNS in the long run. Christian wondered how the business model is evolving and how is it transparent to faculty. Erin asked if the budget committee was only dealing with overage then where were the actual budget decisions being made. Charles said the BoT. Sven wondered about the future of TNS, not sure if it will be here in 20 years. Sven said that it wasn’t the BoT that made budget decisions, that it was the executive leadership. Parsons was sold to TNS in the 70s for parts.
Sven wondered what TNS’s assets might look like to a college like NYU. Erin said she was sitting on committee to oversee new programs and that the ones that were wildly unbudgeted were the programs that came down from the PO. Christian said that the question becomes how can TNS evolve. Charles asked for the numbers that were given to the BoT to be shared with the UFS. The UFS could review and come up with recommendations and have a meeting with chief financial officers. Sven recommended creating a committee in the UFS that dealt with the future of the university. Adria proposed to invite Tokumbo and Steve to the December meeting. Charles felt like maybe it would be too soon, especially if they were going to share materials with UFS. Ron encouraged the idea of getting a faculty member on an executive leadership committee and that the UFS should start its own committee about the well-being of the university.

IV. Sven gave an update about the Faculty Lounge. He reported that new furniture has been ordered and that he thought the new stuff would be in place by the beginning of the spring semester. He encouraged the UFS to take ownership of the space and to try to find ways to use it. He said he would try to get more exact information before the next meeting.

Discussion:
Jennifer suggested having January meeting in the faculty lounge. Adria said that it wasn’t a private space. One senator clarified that the UFS did not want the school to do the work on the lounge except if they were going to address the structural flaws. The UFS encouraged the administration not to spend money so it shouldn’t be blamed for its failure if the space doesn’t end up getting used.

Charles asked for people who have interest in talking about finances and ideas for the UFS please come talk to him.

Adria recapped on topics to bring up at the president breakfasts this week.
- create a committee on the future on the university
- incident in the dorms
- UFS member of executive leadership

Retroactive remuneration for half of last academic year for PTF.

Adria said the suggested that the UFS might need to be a bigger commitment than it currently was.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and approved.