

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
Senate Educational Policies Committee
May 16, 2016
Meeting Minutes

Present: Amy E. Aggelou, Michael Beach, Boryana Dobрева-Schalk, Leslie Eibl, Bonnie Falcione, Zsuzsa Horvath, A. Murat Kaynar, Douglas Landsittel, Juan Manfredi, Frank Wilson

Excused: David C. Beck Jr., Mario C. Browne, Micah Gross, M. Kathleen Kelly, Helen Petracchi, Alberta Sbragia, John Stoner, Aliyah Weinstein

Not Present: Lori A. Molinaro, Naomi Stoll, Susan Skledar

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Zsuzsa Horvath (Chair) at ~3pm.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the April 2016 meeting were approved as written.

New Business

- **Student opinions of teaching surveys** Chair Horvath introduced Alex K. Jones from Electrical and Computer Engineering and Frank Wilson, Senate President who requested to revisit the topic of student interest in publicizing results of the student opinion of teaching surveys. President Wilson indicated that he has been contacted by students from the branch campuses pertaining to addressing this. Dr. Jones requested that this committee could look more broadly at the use and impact of the surveys on students and faculty, particularly in light of recent literature indicating lack of correlation between student evaluations and teaching effectiveness. Chair Horvath indicated that this request aligns with the cross committee senate working group which has recently received requests to address gender bias in evaluations and concerns with logistics involved with the strategy of assigning extra credit for completed evaluations that are anonymous. President Wilson expressed interest in expanding the working group's scope to include all aspects of the surveys, and to include additional participants. Chair Horvath explained that a new lead for the working group was planned due to her transitioning role. The committee discussed these requests and agreed to move forward by expanding the working group scope and leadership, with the working group tasked with examining the related literature, and current practices and needs across university units, and making any necessary recommendations back to the committee. Michael Beach, Alex Jones, and Doug Landsittel offered to serve on the working group. Drs. Beach and Jones agreed to share the leadership role as Co-Chairs.

Vice-Provost updates

Undergraduate

- Vice Provost Juan Manfredi provided his report:
 - The Periodic Review Report (PRR) for the Middle States Accreditation process is due on June 1, 2017. Two committees have been formed, the Compliance Committee which will function to demonstrate the University's compliance with various applicable federal regulations, a new aspect of the Middle States Accreditation requirements, and also the PRR Committee itself which will draft the PRR and which has been charged by the Provost and includes members from this committee. The Compliance Committee verifies that we are compliant with federal regulation. An example is the requirement for a credit-hour policy, discussed at this committee previously. From this two masters degree programs are being addressed to meet the new interpretation of the regulation.
 - The PittPASS program is being conducted once again this summer for freshman students for seven credits during the second summer session. Last year 27 students participated and

this year 73 students are enrolled. The Pitt Summer Edge program is also being conducted for sophomores and juniors in the School of Public Health.

- The results from the second iteration of the Gallup poll, the survey sent to all alumni graduating between 2005 and 2015, have been received and look very good, further details will be provided at a future meeting.

Faculty Assembly update

- Co-Chair Falcione provided an update from Faculty Assembly held on May 10th:
 - President Wilson summarized the work completed over the year including the Senate Plenary on academic freedom (<http://www.univsenate.pitt.edu/plenary-session-ay-2015-2016>), the work to come including addressing student opinions of teaching surveys, graduate student engagement, the research committee, and an adhoc committee forming related to the topic of diversity and inclusion to address the larger framework of an institutional values statement which aligns with the upcoming year of diversity of inclusion. He also offered special thanks and acknowledgement to Irene Frieze for her remarkable commitment and service.
 - Faculty Assembly endorsed a recommendation that full-time non-tenure-stream faculty retain year-round access to library resources, computing accounts, CourseWeb and other University resources they need in order to do their jobs.
 - Irene Frieze, Chair of the adhoc committee on non-tenure stream (NTS) faculty reported various ways that part-time NTS faculty contribute to the university. Her committee is trying to define different categories of part-time faculty (provisional as recently placed on the payroll, or recurring as on the payroll for at least two semesters within a two-year span). Plans include proposing recurring part-time faculty be treated as continuing employees and be granted additional rights. The committee will be inviting feedback on how best to categorize part-time faculty members.
 - The Computer usage committee Co-Chair Alex Jones reminded faculty that email should not be considered a secure means of communication and that Pitt email accounts are to be used for conducting University business. Also, Pitt email soon will be moving to the cloud and no longer will be housed on University servers.
 - Senate community relations committee (CRC) Co-Chairs Linda Hartman and Pam Toto reviewed CRC's constituents, its mission and issues that have been on its recent agenda.
 - Vice Provost Laurie Kirsch provided an overview of the revisions to the sexual harassment policy, renamed sexual misconduct policy, and a new accompanying procedure that were developed in light of changing federal requirements. The Faculty Assembly approved the revised sexual misconduct policy and the new procedure on sexual misconduct which will next go to the Senate Council for review.
 - Committee members were referred to the University Times (<https://www.utimes.pitt.edu/?cat=527>) for additional details from the assembly.

New Committee Members and Leadership Elections

- Chair Horvath reported that Helen Petracchi and Bonnie Falcione were reelected and John Stoner from the Department of History in the School of Arts and Sciences was elected. The committee elected Doug Landsittel as committee Chair and Bonnie Falcione as Co-chair.

Next meeting is June 23, 2016 and will be a committee social at the University Club.

Adjournment: at ~4:30pm.