

Senate Council Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
April 16, 2020

AGENDA ITEM	ACTION
<p><u>Call to Order</u> The meeting was called to order by President Chris Bonneau at 3:00 pm.</p>	<p>The meeting commenced at 3 pm.</p>
<p><u>Approval of the Minutes of the March 19, 2020 Senate Council Meeting</u> Minutes were approved as written.</p>	<p>Approved</p>
<p><u>Items of New Business</u> No items of new business were raised.</p>	<p>No items</p>
<p><u>Report of the Chancellor, Patrick D. Gallagher</u> Gallagher started with news: SGB passing of the gavel ceremony is happening today. He thanked Zechariah Brown and his cabinet for his work. Similar thanks went to GPSG whose leadership is also changing. Kathryn Fleischer, 13th Truman Scholar at Pitt receives \$30,000 for graduate study and Thyra-Lilja Altunin receives prestigious Beinecke Scholarship. Pitt faculty in the news (Atloona News headline about possible vaccine created by Pitt). Professor Yona Harvey wins fellowship for Poetry Virtual Graduation Celebration will be happening on fb and the commencement page on April 26, 2020. In person, commencement will happen in the future. Then, Chancellor proceeded to talk about where we are and where we will be going. When reviewing terminology he stated that controlling the pace of epidemics and its spread, whether it is just containment or mitigation efforts must be guided by public reaction and state imposed regulations. In our current situation, we operate the campus in a mitigation mode. Our top priority was to support our community, to move teaching, student services and events online, to allow work from home, to redefine work to include self-education and volunteering. We offered extended leave, provided technology and support for the work from home. We also increased volunteer program, introduced voluntary hourly reduction program. While our online teaching is going on, about 50% of University research is barely limping on, only 12 % researchers are working in labs. Contract activities at the University were severely impacted. Our ability to support the laid off contract workers is limited, but fortunately there are some government resources to support them. Costs are rising (\$30-40 million incurred due to the COVID-19 related costs and loss of revenue, new software needed to support students, faculty and staff). We expect \$21 million from the CARES Act in two parts, which is the money designated for the student financial aid (not to recover our loss). So what can we expect in the future? Our actions will be affected by actions of the state, but considering that there is no vaccine and wide spread immunity, it is unlikely that we will return to normal in fall. The question is to what off normal we</p>	<p>Report and Discussion</p>

<p>will return.</p> <p>We need to have several scenarios, plan for and prepare for each of them. After graduation, we will work on detailed scenarios under which we can resume the work (including mitigation mode scenario, containment scenario or flexible hybrid of the two). It is easier to shut off than to turn on (how to restart safely?) and there is a lot of financial uncertainties. Every revenue we depend on is uncertain, state is looking at shortfall and our appropriation is uncertain, and our fundraising is at risk, our endowment is down. It is the most challenging financial situation, but we have the luxury that we can underwrite some loses and defer payments for later. I do not want to mislead people to think that we are immune to the crisis, but we can make the decisions when we are in a better strategic situation than now. We will extent the strategic plan timeline.</p> <p>The crisis is exhausting; it is all around us, effecting everyone, and with no end in view. However, I take comfort in two things, which are not hindered by the turmoil we are in: our mission and its importance.</p> <p>Bonneau: Will staff and faculty in high-risk group have some options of flexibility in the plans?</p> <p>Gallagher and DeJong: We hope so. We have already reconsidered work flexibility, which now includes professional development, large project across departments, community volunteering, etc.</p> <p>Bonneau: Do we know number of COVID cases for the Pitt community?</p> <p>Gallagher: We have knowledge of the cases where we are involved in contact tracing (about 20), but we do not have the same info for students not on campus.</p> <p>Scott: Will we have a chance to get involved in the planning process? I'd be interested to get labs working safely again.</p> <p>Rutenbar: We need to be sensitive to the whole intellectual breath of University, from wet labs, through libraries and art studios; we need to make sure that planning will have a wide representation.</p> <p>Bonneau: Will the reduction in tuition be considered for the students who cannot get to campus?</p> <p>Gallagher: Tuition is tricky. We will not charge students for things they are not using; we will rather seek "reduction" through financial aid for students than through lowering tuition.</p>	
<p><u>Report of Senate President, Chris Bonneau</u></p> <p>Bonneau: We hosted Virtual Plenary Panel on mental health, organized by David Salcido and Lori Molinaro. It was a success and it was well-attended (160). The recorded plenary is available from the senate website.</p> <p>The officers are in regular contact with University Administration discussing issues of interest to faculty: tenure clock and appointment issues. We had a discussion related to contract workers, whom we hope we will be able to help somehow.</p> <p>I wish to close by wishing all graduates a happy commencement and especially I want to thank Zechariah.</p>	<p>Report and Discussion</p>

<u>Reports of Student Members of Senate Council:</u>	
<p><u>Student Government Board (SGB)</u> <i>Zechariah Brown, President</i> Last public SGB meeting was held on April 14. The transition is complete. We have new president and executive presidents. All the committee chairs were elected. We are still working on choosing committee members, but those interviews will be finished by Saturday. He then invited the incoming SGB President <i>Eric Macadangdang</i> to speak. <i>Eric</i> introduced himself and said that his cabinet would have many new challenges, but advocating for the students and their needs would be always the first priority.</p>	Report and no discussion
<p><u>College of General Studies Student Government (CG SSG)</u> <i>Selena Eisenberg, President</i> Absent, so no report.</p>	Report and no discussion
<p><u>Graduate and Professional Schools Student Government (GPSG)</u> <i>Rachel Coombs, President</i> <i>Amanda Leifson</i> said that GPSG was also going through the transition of the leadership. We participated in virtual SAGE conference. The new Board is interested in discussions how to provide the graduate perspective, how to make them heard. <i>Malena Hirsch</i> introduced herself and said that they would be pursuing sexual harassment prevention issues and student mental health and wellness.</p>	Report and no discussion
<p><u>School of the Arts and Sciences Graduate Students</u> <i>Anthony Verardi, President</i> I hope this message finds you all in a safe and stable place today. I'm not gonna' sugarcoat things, these have been the most difficult weeks of my academic career as both a master's candidate and a graduate student government official. I cannot begin to describe the depth of anxiety that permeates the graduate student community in this moment in time, whether as a result of concerns over what will happen to our funding windows or out of worry about whether international students are able to safely leave the country and return in the Fall. Right now, graduate students in A&S are suffering from not only financial insecurity but also unprecedented levels of isolation, stress, and hopelessness, and although I am so fortunate to be surrounded by a loving, irreplaceable community of peers and colleagues, I know this is not the case for everyone. Particularly indelible to my conscience in the last week are comments from students in the Department of Anthropology who are unable to perform fieldwork and uncertain when they will have the opportunity to do so, which poses a serious threat to their studies and their timelines. I want to give a shout-out to Zechariah and SGB and everyone else who worked to establish the student emergency fund and to GPSG for their contribution, and Zechariah, if you have some time to talk after this meeting</p>	Report and no discussion

<p>concludes, I'd love to chat about how A&S GSO can contribute our leftover funds to bolster the availability of resources.</p> <p>To those of you in the room who mentor graduate students: now is the time to reach out to them and let them know that if their productivity suffers under these circumstances, it is okay. It is valid, it is right, it is a sane reaction to an insane situation for which there is no precedent in living memory. This will be my last semester as a representative of the A&S Graduate Student Organization and although I am thrilled to be graduating and moving on to new adventures, I am also heartbroken that I won't be able to work with the members of this group and the A&S administration next year to address what I'm sure will be reverberating, compounding repercussions of this pandemic. I don't have anything specific to ask for in this moment because I know that right now the main concern for a lot of folks, self-inclusive, is to get through the next week, but I just wanted to say that when the time comes to support graduate students with additional funding, time to completion, or whatever accommodation their situation necessitates, Pitt will rise to the occasion.</p> <p>I want to end these remarks by saying this: I do dearly appreciate the spirit of Pitt's response to this crisis in prioritizing the health and safety of our society and our community. In a time when government officials across the state and at the federal level as well are tripping over their own feet to reopen businesses despite guidance from the medical community that urges otherwise, it's a source of comfort to see a response that prioritizes what is right over what is a futile attempt at a return to normality. Thank you.</p>	
<p><u>Schools of the Health Sciences</u> <i>Jacob Khan</i></p>	<p>No Report</p>
<p><u>UPPDA</u> <i>David Gau, President</i></p> <p>Good afternoon, Senate members and I hope that everyone is doing well. A few updates from UPPDA this time around – in this time where most postdocs are working from home and spending a lot of time with reading and writing, UPPDA has expanded ways to keep postdocs connected, with an emphasis on postdocs that are brand new to Pittsburgh and Pitt. To address this, we ramped up our newsletter to postdocs to weekly messages advertising relevant postdoc programming occurring on campus and resources available to them. We have also turned our coffee hours to virtual events happening weekly and inviting various hosts to these meetings with this week's host being Dr. Tullia Bruno, Department of Immunology, to discuss women in postdoc. All of these coffee hours are open to</p>	<p>Report and no discussion</p>

<p>the community and posted on the Pitt Event Calendar if anyone is interested!</p> <p>I also want to highlight the “Creating Community” project which Sara Baumann, postdoctoral associate and Dr. Jessie Burke, professor and associate dean for education both at the Graduate School of Public Health. In the spirit of the Year of Creativity, this project seeks creative submissions from the Pitt community on how they have stayed connected and maintained connections during the pandemic. Submissions are due on April 20th - https://www.provost.pitt.edu/creating-community.</p> <p>We are in the middle of elections for next year’s board. I will be happy to introduce the new board at our next meeting. That concludes my report.</p>	
<p>Report of the President of the Staff Council (SC) <i>Andy Stephany, President</i> President Bonneau, Chancellor Gallagher, members of Senate Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff Council held a general meeting yesterday via Zoom. We did not have our March meeting and it was refreshing to see everyone. I want to give kudos to all of the staff at Pitt who have been so adaptive and flexible. People seem to be taking this adjustment in stride - a testament to our staff's dedication to serving the University's mission through these extremely difficult times. 2. I am so proud hearing reports from Staff Council members Pete Adams in Critical Care Medicine being part of a clinical trial with COVID patients, Peter Chambers from Dietrich School for making hand sanitizer to donate to those in the community, and Alex Toner from Community and Governmental Relations for coordinating countless volunteer opportunities for Pitt to give back. Thank you to everyone serving on the front lines, particularly research staff working in clinics, technicians working on essential research leading the way to find a vaccine; our nurses and physicians on the front line in the hospitals. 3. I want to give a huge thank you in particular to staff who worked to make this semester happen - IT team members, academic administrators, everyone who has enabled the University to continue to operate 4. I want to acknowledge our faculty colleagues for adapting their teaching and research methodologies to serve mission critical functions. I know calls for COVID related research are overwhelmed by our research community's response 5. Special shout out to all the students. This meeting is usually bittersweet because we say goodbye to students, Zechariah in particular, attending their last Senate Council meeting. But this one is particularly difficult. My heart aches for our graduating seniors and grad students. I am excited to participate in the virtual sendoff next weekend. 	<p>Report and no discussion</p>

<p>6. I want to thank Dave DeJong and the HR staff for all of their work, particularly over the last 6 weeks. Along with Pitt's senior leaders, you've acted deftly and quickly in staff's best interest. Staff can rest assured that everything is being done to support us in these uncertain times. I am particularly appreciative of the initiatives to augment and protect staff's accrued time off, embraced community service as part of our overall work, among other items.</p> <p>7. We finally got broad acceptance of remote work - not the way we wanted it - but hopefully this opens some eyes to its potential moving forward. I know I'm excited to get back to the office and never ever leave. I'm sure my home office mates feel the same way.</p> <p>8. I want to encourage everyone to remain engaged. I want to give Dr. Humphrey credit for pushing us to keep Panther Nation together. As part of this, Staff Council is co-hosting virtual lunch gatherings with Faculty Assembly with the next date to TBD. We hope you join us for a chat. I want to thank Frits Pil and Lori Molinaro for making this happen. Please check out Pitt Wire Live and calendar.pitt.edu for all of the opportunities to tune into Panther National virtually.</p> <p>9. Staff Council is hosting a virtual seminar with Sherdina Harper on Friday at noon, rescheduled from last month. The talk is titled "Won't you be my neighbor: Diversity in the workplace" - details are at calendar.pitt.edu and we hope you'll join us.</p>	
<p><u>Reports by and Announcements of Standing and Special Committees of the Senate</u></p>	
<p><u>Unfinished Business or New Business</u></p>	No Business
<p><u>Announcements</u></p> <p>1. Alex Labrinidis shared a link to the app helping to locate the most desirable products in grocery stores: https://got-toilet-paper.org</p> <p>2. Bonneau reminded everyone that the election for Senate officers and FA representatives is still going until midnight.</p> <p>3. Bonneau announced that the election for senate committees would begin on April 23 and run until May 5.</p>	Announcements
<p><u>Adjournment</u></p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 4:18 pm</p>	Adjournment at 4:18 pm

University Senate website: <http://www.univsenate.pitt.edu/senate-council>

Respectfully Submitted,
Małgorzata (Gosia) Fort

Members attending:

Aziz, Becker, Bonneau, Bonner, Bratman, Brown, Buchanich, Conley, Coombs, Cousins, Cudd, Dahm, Denman, Doty, Fort, Gallagher, Gau, Goundappa, Gregerson, Guterman, Humphrey, Infanti, Kanthak, Kaynar, Kleebank, Kovacs, Kucan, Labrinidis, Landsittel, Levine, Loughlin, Molinaro, Mostern, Peterson, Poljak, Rutenbar, Salcido, Sant, Sastry, Stephany, Stoner, Unger, Verardi, Washington, Wilson, Wood, Yates

Members not attending:

Agarwal, Bachman, Eisenberg, Kaufman, Khan, Kohanbash, Kory, Long, Martin, McGreevy, Mulcahy, Mulvaney, Munro, Nelson, Sukits, Swigonova, Weinberg

*Excused attendance:

Others attending:

DeJong, Dostilio, Frieze, Harding, Harrell, Hirsch, Jeffrey, Jones, Kirsch, Lalo, Leifson, Macadangdang, McGlaughlin, Moran, Moss, Pelt, Ringler, Scott, Staresinic, Supowitz, Turner, Walker, Washo, Zwick

*Notified Senate Office