

**Senate Council Meeting Minutes
(Hybrid format)
Thursday, April 21, 2022**

I. Call to Order

President Robin Kear called the meeting to order at 3 pm and asked those on zoom whose name does not appear on screen to use chat for the roll.

II. Approval of the Minutes of the Past Senate Council Meeting

On a motion duly made and seconded the minutes from the Senate Council meeting on March 24, 2022, were approved as written.

III. Items of New Business

No items of new business were raised.

IV. Report of the Chancellor, Patrick Gallagher

Chancellor Gallagher opened his report with wishes for a good weather for the in-person commencement ceremony next week, then he talked about his announcement to step down. The search for the chancellor is the BOT process, but he gave his thoughts on a possible timeline and outline of this process. The timing of his announcement was intentional to give the Board of Trustees ample time to deal with the nomination and election of a new chair after the untimely death of T Richards (probably in May-June) and with the selection of a new chancellor search committee (probably in early fall). After the election, they will probably discuss the committee to choose the next chancellor over summer and since this committee's membership is made up of BOT and elected faculty, it is easier to deal with it when we are in session. On a personal note, he said he did not take this decision lightly, but since the support was overwhelming, he wanted to say thank you. He is excited about a prospect of being a professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, but it is not imminent. We still have a year and a half to prepare for the transition.

The CMRO message confirms that we are in good shape, so the Chancellor decided not to talk about COVID.

There are two commencement ceremonies: one, the long overdue for the class of 2020 (Saturday, April 30) and for the class of 2022 (Sunday, May 1). He talked briefly about the commencement speakers. He thanked everyone for participating in the Pitt Day at Harrisburg. He said it would be a busy budget season. It is not too late to get involved in our advocacy efforts.

Chancellor Gallagher shared some news:

- David Brown takes over Paul Supowitz's position as Vice Chancellor for Government Relations and Advocacy,

He let Provost Cudd to talk about the announcement of a new dean of SCI.

- Bruce Childers was selected to fill this position. Provost Cudd introduced the new dean.

Then, Chancellor Gallagher continued with other announcements:

- Goldwater Scholar in STEM – Kathy Oppenheimer (junior in microbiology major)
- Erasmus Mundus Scholarship - alumnus Tate Allen Yawitz (A&S '21) is the first Pitt winner
- 2022 Guggenheim fellows – Yona Harvey (poetry), Associate Professor of English and Keisha Blain (US history), Associate Professor of History
- Tina and David Bellet Teaching Excellence Award winner – Jennifer Laaser (chemistry), Dana Och (Film and Media studies) and Ellen Smith (English)
- Katz MBA Program was ranked fifth in the nation by Forbes Magazine

- Burton Morris artwork unveiled in Hillman Library – proceeds of merchandise will go to scholarship fund
- Chancellor Awards for staff nomination are due by April 29

There were no questions for Chancellor Gallagher.

V. Report of Senate President, Robin Kear *(submitted in written)*

At Faculty Assembly last week, I gave updates on several items. I am happy to report very positive progress on one of them.

- *Regarding the travel issues, I believe that you will be pleased to know that the ‘COVID-19 Standards and Guidelines: Travel Management’ are being removed. The travel booking requirement though Anthony Travel and Concur is being removed pending the existing FN28 policy review. Faculty and staff can choose to book travel this way or they can book travel on their own and be reimbursed according to pre-COVID norms.*
 - *The travel registration requirement for faculty and staff is being removed. Faculty and staff are encouraged to enter their travel registration on a voluntary basis.*
 - *If faculty and staff do choose to use Anthony Travel or the Concur system for travel bookings, Pitt is temporarily pausing the fees associated with travel bookings.*
 - *These changes should be formally announced within the next week.*
 - *I appreciate the willingness of the Chancellor and the CFO’s office to work with us on this issue.*

Response to the Budget Policies Committee Resolution from March

- *Chris Bonneau and I met with Provost Cudd and CFO Hari Sastry to discuss the resolution point by point. The Provost and CFO will be issuing a memo to the Deans in response to the call for strengthening the unit-level Planning and Budget Committees. The goal of the memo is to strengthen the existing PBC structure and hold deans accountable for the functioning of PBCs in their units. Functioning, healthier unit level PBCs with elected and appointed membership are integral to the success of this new budget model.*
 - *PBCs should be more transparent and meet regularly in the budget cycle. They should see budgetary information, including in the form of the unit’s previous year RCRP (Responsibility Center Resource Proposal). RCRP guidance will require evidence that PBCs have been consulted.*
 - *There will be larger, informational meetings for PBC members and orientation materials. The BPC should also convene and liaise with the PBCs.*

Update on Provost’s Committee on DEI and Community Engaged Scholarship in Promotion and Tenure

- *Under the leadership of Vice Provost John Wallace, this provost’s committee has been hard at work developing recommendations and guidance surrounding these two areas.*
- *The deadline for the groups to have their document was April 11. Senate Committees are reviewing the recommendations and the recommendations will come to Faculty Assembly in May.*

Senate Elections

- *Thanks to chair Chris Bonneau and the Committee for Elections.*
- *Thanks to Lori Molinaro and Linda SantaCasa for running the Senate elections.*
- *Congratulations to Penny Morel, our next Senate Secretary.*
- *Congratulations to all those faculty elected from their units. I look forward to working with all of you. The list is on the Senate website and will be linked in the chat.*
- *Senate Committee elections are going to be held April 27-May 9th. There are three openings on each of the fifteen committees.*

Diversity Forum Submissions

- *The 2022 Diversity Forum, Rewiring Our Systems: Transforming the Intersections of Inequity, will take place July 25-28 and focus on engaging the intersections of social identities impacted by systemic oppression. If you'd like to participate, the Office for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion invites you to submit your proposal by April 22. Our Vice President Kris Kanthak has been part of the planning.*

Pitt Advocates

- *It is state budget season, and we need to communicate the value of Pitt to our state government representatives. As the Chancellor indicated in a campus-wide email, consider joining the Pitt Advocates network from the Office of Government Relations.*

No questions.

VI. Reports of Student Members of Senate Council:

A. Student Government Board (SGB), Danielle Floyd

Danielle Floyd, the new SGB President, introduced herself and the new Board. She let Derek Dressler, SGB Vice President of Governance, who accompanied her, to introduce himself. Then she gave a brief update:

- *Last public meeting of the 2021-2022 SGB*
- *First official meeting of the 2022-2023 SGB to appoint 7 chairs and 25 members of the Allocation, Election and Judicial Committees.*
- *Tonight, during inauguration the new Board will be sworn into office*
- *Allocation Update: Over the past year the Allocation Committee reviewed 21 requests in spring 2021, 7 – in fall, and 237 supplemental requests for financial support and allocated \$706,333.87 in total.*

She said, she would go over SGB's strategic plan for the next year during the May Senate Council meeting. Floyd closed her report with information that they passed the first resolution of 2022-2023 in support of Pitt's state appropriation sponsored jointly by the incoming and outgoing boards.

No questions.

B. College of General Studies Student Government (CGSSG), Ryan Yeager

The College of General Studies Student Government (CGSSG) is pleased to update you on some of the progress we are making this semester.

I. Updates:

- *Interviews in progress, new board will be announced early next week*
- *Increased number of nontraditional student applicants*
- *New Advisor Search*

Will work with the incoming board to help plan for this.

As I reach the end of my term, I am really thankful to have been a part of this organization and this school at Pitt. The College of General Studies and this student government are really important in making higher education more accessible to students in all different situations and I am happy to have been a part of CGSSG and to be a CGS student.

No questions.

C. Graduate and Professional Schools Student Government (GPSSG), Morgan Pierce

Pierce reported that GPSSG (Graduate and Professional Schools Student Government) had a very successful graduate Appreciation Week with a turnover of 90% of those registered for the events. They were happy to provide social and relaxation time for their student population after these two long years. After the final Assembly Board meeting, they were able to celebrate graduate students further with a ceremony and reception for the Leadership and Service Awards members. They met and had been transitioning to the new Executive Board. Members:

Sendi Estrada, President

Jordyn Kamasa, VP of Committees

Varbi Midhra, VP for Finance

Evelyn Zamora Vargas, VP of Communications

Marlon Brown, VP of Programing

Pierce expressed her gratitude for the chance to be an advocate for graduate and professional students and let Sendi Estrada to introduce herself.

Estrada joined us from Colorado. She introduced herself and said that she would support single mothers and first generation graduate student during her presidency.

No questions.

VII. Report of the President of the Postdoctoral Association, Dave Gau (submitted in writing)

Good afternoon Senate Council members, hope everyone is well. Short report today. We will be starting our election for board members in the next few weeks and am excited to report that we are co-hosting our Annual Data and Dine symposium on May 25 with the Office of Academic Career Development in the School of Medicine and the Office of the Provost. Data and Dine is one of UPPDA's largest programs which brings together postdocs and faculty on campus for a research symposium.

That concludes my report.

VIII. Report of the President of the Staff Council, Angela Coldren (submitted in written)

I attended my first Pitt Day in Harrisburg. A special thank you to the Student Government officers who allowed me to tag along with them for the day, especially Harshitha. She took me under her wing. Reality check...when I told Governor Wolf's Chief of Staff that I've worked at Pitt nearly 26 years, that was a few years before the students were even born. It's hard when you work in academia, you continue to get older, but most students are always 18 – 22 years old. They just don't age! The Pitt students at the Capitol were well-prepared and their passion and pride for Pitt really came through.

*Our first **Staff Council Spotlight** was held on March 30th. CFO Hari Sastry presented the **Budget ReSTART Model**. What a kick-off! At one point, there were 204 participants. The session went a little longer than 1 hour due to all of the great and relevant questions. Even after 1 p.m., we still had over 100 participants. What I should start to do is place a bet because it never fails that my landline rings when a session starts and all eyes are on me (yes, I still have a landline). Three seconds...that's all I needed to be muted...at least only 1 ring was heard.*

*We held our second **Staff Council Spotlight** on Tuesday, April 19th. Dr. Kenyon Bonner and his team presented on the new **Campus Recreation and Wellness Center**. We had nearly 90 participants. The architect's renderings are exciting. Staff are looking forward to seeing the completed building. I told Kenyon I wanted a personal tour!*

*Our third Spotlight session has been scheduled for May 10th from 2-3 p.m. The topic is the **Walk to Work Initiative** for Staff and Faculty being presented by Paul Supowitz, Lina Distilio and James Gallaher.*

(The Spotlights will be open to staff and we will have variety of monthly topics allowing each speaker to highlight a new initiative or a topic that staff want to understand better. Each Spotlight (presentation) will be 45 minutes to 1 hour in length. These sessions were developed from the desire of Staff Council members wanting more information than just a brief 10-minute overview by guest speakers during our monthly general meetings. Therefore, the officers felt that offering Spotlights would give members an opportunity to gather a more in-depth understanding of initiatives or topics. We hope that Staff Council members will share their new knowledge with their coworkers and departments. Attendance is optional, not mandatory, for Staff Council members.)

*Our Officers are attending the **Parameters Subcommittee** and **UPBC** meetings.*

*We have a **Staff Council Summer Social** planned (in-person) on June 15th. There, we will be thanking those who donated on Pitt Day of Giving to the Staff Council Endowed Book Fund and Frisch Professional Development Award Fund. We will recognize the winners of our Frisch Professional Development Award and Staff Council Mentor Award.*

Our next (open) general meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 18, 2022, at Noon. This meeting, and future meetings for at least 6-12 months, will be held virtually. If you would like to attend, feel free to reach out to Lola at sc@pitt.edu for a virtual invitation. This concludes my report. Happy Spring!

IX. Reports by and Announcements of Standing and Special Committees of the Senate
A. Provost's Academic Freedom Re-Affirmation Statement
Kris Kanthak, Senate Vice President

Kanthak introduced the document (distributed to the SC members ahead of this meeting) and gave some background. She stressed that the Provost's re-affirmation was approved by TAFC. It was also discussed and approved by Faculty Assembly, therefore today it comes before this body for endorsement. Provost Cudd had a few words on her own on the importance of academic freedom and this document which complemented Kanthak's introduction.

De Vallejo shared the screen with the statement, in which he highlighted the principles of academic freedom by AAUP which this statement reaffirmed.

Chancellor Gallagher corrected Kovacs's comment that academic freedom as a core principle is not acknowledged in writing at Pitt. He pointed out that Pitt Board of Trustees not only has this in writing, but it is also in the University Bylaws, which are the article of BOT itself. And it was recently reviewed with BOT. He said that the body of policies on academic freedom would be shared. Kear added that we would work so they are more visible and easier to find, then she called for the vote.

The vote was via poll (for those on zoom) and by raising hand (for those in the room).

Results: YES – 35, NO - 0, ABSTAIN – 2

The Provost's statement was endorsed.

X. Unfinished Business and/or New Business:

None

XI. Announcements

None.

XII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52 pm.

Documents from the meeting are available at the University Senate website:

<https://www.univsenate.pitt.edu/senate-council>

Respectfully submitted,
Małgorzata (Gosia) Fort
Secretary, University Senate

Members attending: Almarza, Bonneau, Bonner, Brodt, Buchanich, Bunger, Coldren, Conley, Cudd, Denman, DeJong, Doty, Floyd, Fort, Gallagher, Gau, Gregerson, Henker, Kanthak, Kear, Kleebank, Kovacs, McCormick, Molinaro, Oyler, Pacella-LaBarbara, Pierce, Rauktis, Rutenbar, Sant, Sastry, Schuster, Taboas, Tashbook, Washington, Yeager, Zack

Members not attending: Bench, Cilli, Hall, Jeong, A. Jones, Judd, Kieselyov, Kiesling, Klem, Kory, Labrinidis, Maier, Mulcahy, Murtazashvili, Newman, Paljug, Paterson, Popovich, Potoski, Roberts, Scott, Vento, Wood, Yearwood

*Excused attendance: Shekhar

Others attending: Anderson, Ayars, Congleton, Dostilio, Dressler, Estrada, Frieze, Harding, Hitter, Jackson, Jones, LaBar, Lancaster, Moran, Panzella, Pickett, Roadman, Salcido, Salz, SantaCasa, Seldin, Staresinic, Washo, Wells

*Notified Senate Office