

Minutes - Senate Budget Policies Committee
Wednesday, June 24, 2020
3:00-5:00 pm via Zoom meeting

Members in attendance:

Tyler Bickford (Chair), Panos Chrysanthis, Yolanda Covington-Ward, Mackey Friedman, Immaculada Hernandez, Gary Hollibaugh Jr., John Mendeloff, Elia Beniash, Juan Taboas, Jennifer Elizabeth Jones (UPPDA) Adriana Maguiña-Ugarte (SC), Brian Smith (McGowan), Jennifer Lee (Secretary), Emily Murphy, Melanie Scott, Frank Wilson, Amanda Brodish, Richard Henderson, Thurman Wingrove, Stephen Wisniewski, Chris Bonneau, John Moss (Pitt News), Deborah Todd (University Communications), Donovan Harrell (University Times)

Absent: Wesley Rohrer, Dave DeJong, John Baker, Beverly Gaddy, Phil Wion Ben King (SGB), Yashar Aucie (GPSG)

Call to Order at:

1. Approve May minutes: Approved

2. Matters Arising: None

3. Discussion of Chancellor's ["Statement on Racial Injustice and the Death of George Floyd"](#):

Tyler Bickford (Opening Remarks): From the Chancellor's statement: "But this is also a time to turn the lens inward and consider our institution's own role in perpetuating unfair structures and systems." Highlighting the realignment of resources, the statement is an invitation to proactively consider how the BPC might contribute.

From the statement: "African Americans living within in the shadow of the Cathedral of learning are still confronting an alarming opportunity gap." Contract and dining hall workers have been laid off in pandemic; we know that many of these workers are African American—a "race neutral" policy that effectively targeted the very people the Chancellor's statement vows to protect.

Looking at the racial composition of faculty and staff: according to the 2020 Fact Book, just 3% of faculty at Pitt are black. In a [Letter to the Editor](#) in the *University Times*, Yolanda Covington Ward pointed out that this percentage represents a decline in the percentage of black faculty at Pitt over time. In Pittsburgh, African Americans make up 25% of the total population. When comparing salaries of underrepresented faculty, there is no disparity according to the Fact Book, and yet the proportion of underrepresented faculty is higher at lower ranks. This broadly holds true across campuses and is in line with national data that shows a pattern of underrepresented faculty primarily in contingent positions. If these patterns hold true at Pitt, then looking at our salary benchmarking reports, which show contingent faculty earning significantly less than their peers at similar institutions, we can conclude that underrepresented faculty are being underpaid because they hold jobs in lower, un-tenurable ranks. A nominally "race neutral" failure to meet our salary targets that has outcomes that are not race neutral.

Increasing the “pipeline” to the professoriat is a common strategy, yet is there evidence this actually works? Or are such pipelines in fact “leaky”: increasing the numbers of Black post-docs and Assistant Professors, or increasing the number of black people ending up in contingent positions? Is this in fact an inequality of race by way of rank? “I would raise concern about pipeline approaches.”

No decisions or actions today, but a conversation.

Yolanda Covington Ward: Thanked Tyler Bickford for his opening remarks and noted that for her *University Times* letter she used Pitt’s 1985 & 2020 Fact Books. Comparing the data from 1984 and 2019 in these two books, she found that Pitt added 30 times the number of white faculty as black faculty in those 35 intervening years. This is an “open secret”—everybody knows about the disparity. It’s question not just of hiring black faculty but of retaining them.

This illustrates the need for Pitt to be more transparent. The numbers are not broken down by rank in the Fact Book. By comparison, at the University of Virginia you can actually see the numbers and so see how bad it is—it’s public accountability. The rhetoric around diversity and inclusion here needs to be held accountable publicly. We were able to see the data in the Dietrich School and it was mind-boggling: four black full professors in the Dietrich School. Pitt is way behind.

Adriana Maguiña-Ugarte: The effort is to recruit internationally; so, how do we compare internationally? In terms of staff we recruit regionally; yet we need numbers about this. Arts and Sciences is using the city of Pittsburgh to see how we compare to the composition of the city, but she’s curious if there is information about recruiting faculty who then choose to go elsewhere. And if so, are there reasons for this Pitt can work on? Just as we find out why students choose other institutions and use this to better our recruiting. Staff often come for benefits. Further, how do particular disciplines’ biases affect this. For example, “I know a supervisor who tries to recruit African American staff but has difficulty because the pay is better elsewhere.”

Immaculada Hernandez: Of the School of Pharmacy’s 100 faculty, 2 are Hispanic; there are no African American faculty. For two years, I have been the only non-white faculty member—this year, two Asian faculty were hired. We need to check recruitment and retention. An African American faculty member left after only three years; faculty leave because they don’t like being the only non-white faculty member. The University of Texas and other schools are doing cluster hires, and as these universities increase diversity, Pitt is going to become less so. The checklist for diversity in hiring disappeared after a few months. We are able to say a candidate is “qualified” and so what is the point of the “diversity checklist”?

Elia Beniash: Just walking around campus you see it. We, by publishing the numbers, won’t solve it. Referring to Ima’s point, it makes sense that being the only non-white person in a department is a problem, though I’m not sure what to do with that.

Juan Taboas: We can recommend the administration support the organizations within the university that support underrepresented faculty. Affinity Groups like [Equipoise](#) for black faculty and staff.

Yolanda Covington Ward: Unpaid diversity work is expected of underrepresented faculty: there needs to be time and pay for such work.

Mackey Friedman: Last year the BPC requested a report that broke down faculty salary by race. This is a good time to ask for more granularity in that data to see if things are getting better or worse so that we can see disparities in appointment, promotion, etc., To make those data public, as Yolanda said. The administration has said it doesn't want to make individuals' salaries public, yet how then can we make the data public? Just released, the [COACHE Survey](#) data: we can request greater granularity there.

Stephen Wisniewski: Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs Laurie Kirsch is stepping down and the position will be split in two: one the Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity & Development.

Jennifer Jones: Echoes things said on the Post Doc level: 3% of Post Docs are black (same as the faculty numbers); PDAs who recruit Post Docs do so individually: How could you get individual faculty to think more deeply about diversity?

Elia Beniash: I want to return to how long it takes; we are just achieving gender parity; it takes time, focus, and money. Perhaps we should focus on the specifics of what this committee can accomplish.

Jennifer Lee: We need data for part time faculty; currently, we don't have information about salary by race or gender in the part time ranks.

Tyler Bickford: It's likely that there are people teaching here who are not counted in our data, who are contributing to the university, but at its margins. Things this committee can do are to work with Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity and Development; to reach out to the Faculty Senate. Let's keep having conversations about what this committee can do; what we can do with data that shows we aren't meeting our goals.

Immaculada Hernandez: Because of NIH incentives for diversity, we need to separate data from Health Sciences & non Health Sciences.

Tyler Bickford: Encourages committee members to reach out with further ideas and asks when the budget will be made public.

Steve Wisniewski: The budget will be officially announced on July 17; published on Pittwire.

4. Closed Session: UPBC budget recommendations (Steve Wisniewski, Office of the Provost) DO NOT INCLUDE IN MINUTES

5. July & August Meetings? Tyler Bickford will reach out about this.