

Minutes

October 24, 2019; 1:00-2:30 pm
CL 826

Attendees: Ellen Ansell, Kenyon Bonner, Ally Bove, Brenda Cassidy, Pam Connelly, Cindy Danford, Goeran Fiedler, Kate Gardner, Elizabeth Hernandez, Christine Jackson, Camille Jacqueline, Claude Mauk, Meg Mayer-Costa, Helenmary Sheridan, Zuzana Swigonova, Natasha Tokowicz

Regrets: Gosia Fort

Presiding: Cindy Danford

Recorder: Ally Bove

1. Call to Order 1:01pm
2. Approval of prior minutes – May 2019 meeting. Motion: Christie Jackson; second: Pam Connelly; all in favor. Minutes from May 2019 unanimously approved.
3. Chairs for 2019-2020 – Cindy Danford expressed that she has been serving as chair for a few years and is open to stepping down. Ally Bove is willing to remain as co-chair or become chair. Cindy asked all members to consider serving as chair, perhaps beginning in winter term (January 2020) and to contact Cindy or Ally with questions or to express interest.
4. Faculty Assembly Update
 - a. September 2019 (update provided by Cindy Danford – see Faculty Assembly minutes for details)
 - b. October 2019 (update provided by Ally Bove – see Faculty Assembly minutes for details)
5. Ongoing Business
 - a. Non-discrimination policy update
 - i. Policy is coming up to Faculty Assembly on November 5th, 3:00pm in Posvar 2700. Ally and Cindy will be present to answer any questions regarding EIADAC's perspective on the policy, but it would be helpful to have other members there. There is likely to be substantial resistance from some members of the Assembly.
 - ii. Major changes from prior policy:
 1. Centralized investigations (in Office of Diversity and Inclusion)
 2. All faculty and staff are mandatory reporters (consistent with the sexual misconduct policy)
 - b. Digital accessibility policy update
 - i. Policy is coming up to Faculty Assembly on November 5th, 3:00pm in Posvar 2700. Ally and Cindy will be present to answer any questions regarding EIADAC's perspective on the policy, but it would be helpful to have other members there.

- ii. This is a brand-new policy, not a revision of a prior policy
- c. GRE update and discussion – where to go from here?
 - i. Changes have been occurring! The Dietrich School has had approximately 90% of departments drop the GRE as a requirement for application/admission. In SHRS, each department now has the option to decide whether to continue using the GRE, and 2 programs have already discontinued it.
 - ii. We would like to allow departments wanting more education re: GRE and its alternatives to be able to reach out to EIADAC for resources.
 - iii. We would like to get outcomes from departments that dropped the GRE, and also to understand what they are using instead of the GRE (if anything)
 - iv. Concerns re: certain graduate fellowships that require GRE scores to apply/qualify
 - v. Concerns re: the five-year requirement that many departments have (GRE scores must be within the past 5 years)
 - vi. Some international students find the GRE helpful to prepare them for what to expect
 - vii. Plan moving forward: send e-mail to all EIADAC members to identify who would like to serve on the committee moving forward.
- d. OMET – do we want to contact Faculty Affairs or other committees to see who is working on issues of bias in OMETs?
 - i. General consensus was yes. We will contact Faculty Affairs and Educational Policies.
 - ii. Camille from UPPDA mentioned that the educational policies committee is looking into alternatives to OMETs, for both faculty and for teaching assistants/teaching fellows.
- e. LGBTQIA issues on campus
 - i. A few issues were discussed:
 1. The Transgender Working Group, which runs out of the Chancellor's office, is meeting regularly and working to ensure that university systems get regularly updated to reflect individuals' preferred names
 2. Generally, administration is working to coordinate various LGBTQIA advocacy and affinity groups across campus a little better, to more fully understand what various groups are working on
 3. The Chick-fil-A in the Cathedral Café is closed, and a new one will be opening in a few months in the Peterson Events Center. It's owned by Sodexo, not the university. There is concern amongst the LGBTQIA community and allies because of corporate donations to certain organizations. A recent survey showed it's quite popular among students, and attempts to petition for its removal have been thus far unsuccessful.
- f. Tenure status / non-tenure status faculty – gender gap in tenure status and academic rank
 - i. It was mentioned that the faculty unionization organizers are very interested in this.
 - ii. There was general interest in bringing in speakers to discuss this with EIADAC to help determine what we may be interested in doing moving forward.
- g. Lactation rooms
 - i. No significant updates here.

6. New Business

- a. University policy on student organization names

- i. This was mentioned because of recent news reports that the university will not allow independent student group to have the word “Pitt” or “Panther” in their names, and there was concern regarding whether students would have a difficult time finding out about groups that may interest them. Kenyon Bonner clarified a few things regarding the policy: First, it is an existing policy that hadn’t been consistently enforced but not a new policy. Second, groups can still use “at Pitt” at the end of their group name – for example “Club Hockey At Pitt” rather than “Pitt Hockey”. There were no further concerns stated and the meeting attendees appeared generally satisfied that this is not a significant issue.
 - b. Starship food delivery robots – safety concerns for wheelchair users
 - i. A student who uses a wheelchair reported being stuck in a busy roadway by a food delivery robot that was blocking the entry to the sidewalk at a very busy intersection. Within a day, it was reported that Starship halted testing of the robots until they could ensure enhanced safety for wheelchair users. The robots have been tested at other universities, but apparently with less urban campuses that perhaps have wider sidewalk cutouts for wheeled devices.
 - ii. No action necessary at the moment, but EIADAC will continue to monitor issues pertaining to technology and accessibility issues on campus
 - c. How to increase diversity of EIADAC (in all forms)?
 - i. Discussed that EIADAC’s membership lacks gender diversity and also has overrepresentation from the Schools of the Health Sciences.
 - ii. It was pointed out that a committee can have as many pro tempore members as it wants, so current members will consider potential future members to suggest joining on a pro tem basis.
 - iii. Will also look into election rules re: whether there are any guidelines for trying to ensure broad representation on each Senate committee.
 - d. Year of Creativity – any action from EIADAC?
 - i. Out of time to discuss this – members were asked to consider whether the committee should consider any programming or activities related to the Pitt Year of Creativity

7. Announcements/Events

- a. “The Social Empowerment of Difference” – P. David Howe, Ph.D. October 30, 4:30-6:00pm, University Club Ballroom A
 - i. Dr. Howe is a world-renowned expert on the culture of disability and how people with disabilities are portrayed in the media. He is a Paralympic athlete and has studied changes in how athletes with disabilities are represented in the media. He will share his research findings and personal experiences to help enlighten the audience about biases that exist within society.

8. Determine best dates/times for remaining 2019 meetings.

- a. November 21 at 1:00 in CL 826
- b. December 19 at 1:00 in CL 817