

**Faculty Assembly Meeting Minutes
Via Hybrid
2700 Posvar Hall and Zoom**

Wednesday, May 10, 2023

1. Call to Order

President Robin Kear called the meeting to order at 3:01 pm.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Past Faculty Assembly Meeting

Kear asked for a motion to approve the minutes. On a motion duly made (Parker) and seconded (Scott) the minutes of the April 12, 2023, Faculty Assembly Meeting were approved as written.

3. Items of New Business.

None

4. Report of the Senate President, Robin Kear (submitted in written form)

I hope you all are enjoying the spring weather and have wrapped up your spring term activities. Congratulations to Kris on her re-election as Vice President. Thank you for my re-election. Elections for Senate Committee spots concluded yesterday.

Safety

- Both CUPS and EIADAC committees heard updates on campus safety and held discussions over the past month. This will continue to be a priority over the summer, including for your Senate Officers.

Benefits Open Enrollment

- You may have noticed that we have not received any information yet on next year's health insurance plans. As I discussed last month, shared governance involvement is through the Medical Advisory Committee.
- In response to my inquiry with Pitt's HR, I have learned that open enrollment will begin for all employees on May 15th. Information will be mailed out by the end of the week, and it will be arriving as usual via USPS to your home.

Summer Access to Services by Part-Time Faculty

- Last summer and fall, there were several problems related to ID cards and library access/bus pass use, for adjunct faculty (those who are coded as adjunct in Pitt's systems) and who usually returned from year to year or even term to term to continue teaching. I worked with Dwight Helfrich in Pitt IT and he brought together a larger group from Panther Central and Human Resources to examine these issues for adjuncts in Pitt's systems.
 - Dwight has reported back that we are in a much better place, there is now better synchronization between the computing account and the Pitt ID card. Our questions

gave them a chance to examine processes involving IT computing account, ID center, library system, and payroll.

- I am happy to report that Pitt IT and Panther Central worked to fix the majority of the issues for adjuncts.
 - Adjunct faculty who teach in the Fall and Spring will continue to maintain computing accounts and ID Cards as long as their contract dates are updated in the Payroll system.
 - There are ~50 current adjuncts whose ID cards would have expired May 31, 2023; these ID cards are manually being extended longer, at least 1 year. Thus, the expiration date printed on the card will not limit services for this group. The plan is to eventually remove the printed date from new cards.
 - For future, new adjunct ID cards, the expiration date will be longer and automatic. Additionally, as soon as they are in the Payroll system, they can get an ID card.
- Pitt IT also fixed several flaws in coding, including related to returning faculty, and the library data feed from Panther Central
- If you have any adjuncts with issues in library/bus pass access this summer, please have them work with their department administrator to verify their payroll contract end date, and contact Dwight Helfrich in Pitt IT. It helps to have specific cases to improve the system.
- Thank you to Pitt IT, Panther Central, Human Resources and all others who worked to make these improvements.

Brief Yearly Inventory of Faculty Assembly

- Because this is our last meeting of the academic year, I will try to briefly recap our activities.
- As most pandemic issues faded almost completely to the background this year except for those who remain especially vulnerable (remember the weekly check for whether masks are required? And we only had one CMRO presentation this year), we are all working through various leadership transitions, Chancellor, Provost, some deans. We continue to work on our priorities as the administration changes.
- Late October brought a letter from the union to admin, and an intensification of the interpretation of roles for the union, administration, shared governance, and mandatory subjects of bargaining that necessarily continue to impact some of the Senate's work. Some overcorrection occurred by the administration, limiting discussions on some Senate committees. There were removals of bargaining unit members from some Policy committees related to mandatory subjects of bargaining.
 - Faculty Affairs has only met once or twice this year. Budget Policies continues to work through what they can. Benefits & Welfare Committee's working relationship with HR has changed. The discussions between myself and the vice-provost for faculty affairs have been mostly paused. I think that open discussions and advisement can still continue, what has changed is how administration can participate and implement in certain areas.
 - A Senate-Union Communication exploratory group was formed and continues to meet.

- There really is no blueprint to follow here. I appreciate all suggestions, including at our informal forum in March, for how to improve this situation in the interim period before a contract is finalized.
- Stalled issues for various reasons: dependent care ad hoc progress, ombuds office, permanent vaccination and immunization requirements policy, DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) and Community Engaged Scholarship guidelines in Promotion and Tenure have not been implemented
- Changed Processes, these are unresolved or evolving:
 - Senate appointments to Policy Committees - if the policy is related to mandatory bargaining -bargaining unit members cannot be appointed;
 - yearly Medical Advisory Committee Senate appointment;
 - University Planning and Budget Committee, can discuss raise pool as a whole number for management purposes, cannot differentiate specifics on merit, market, equity or differences in application from low to high salaries;
 - Bargaining unit members participation in planning and budgeting: unit-level Planning and Budget Committees; strategic budgeting that involves vice chairs who are bargaining unit members
- Seven Policies passed this year:
 - AC 69 Tuition Exchange Scholarship Program (September 2022), SAAA
 - Does not cover bargaining unit members
 - ER 21 Intergovernmental Personnel Act Assignments (October 2022), Research
 - Does not cover bargaining unit members
 - AO 47 Management of University Facilities and Grounds Policy (December 2022), CUPS
 - FN 15 Relocation Policy (December 2022), Benefits & Welfare, Faculty Affairs
 - Does not cover bargaining unit members
 - RI 13 Drones (February 2023), Research
 - AO 38 University Network (April 2023), SCITC
 - FN 27 Travel Advance (April 2023), Budget Policies
 - Does not cover bargaining unit members
- Three Resolutions passed this year:
 - Resolution on the Defense of Academic Freedom put forward by TAFC (October 2022)
 - Affirmation of the Principles of Shared Governance (December 2022)
 - Statement of Support for the English Language Institute related to imminent closure (January 2023)
- Other issues where progress was made:
 - Decommissioning of University Policy now has a process, including a 28-day comment period. 14 policies were decommissioned this year.
 - Interim Policy on Research and Clinical Training Using Cadavers, reviewed by Research Committee leadership; 5 other Policies received minor interim updates.
 - English Language Institute received a one-year reprieve
 - Worked with staff council on the Employee Emergency Fund for staff and faculty outside the bargaining unit
 - Maintenance of free exercise facilities for all employees
- Future:

- We had open and frank discussions related to the responsibilities of free speech and the impact of hate speech. Our work will continue in this area in the next academic year.

Provost

- I have not received any information on the search process or any possible interim steps for the Provost position.

University Policy Open for Comment

- There are currently no policies open for public comment.

Interim Policy Edits

- [RI 07 Research Integrity \(formerly 11-01-01\)](#) The edits remove references to employees and clarify postdoctoral appointments.
- [CS 02 \(formerly 07-14-01\) on Consensual Relationships](#) The edits remove references to employees and clarify postdoctoral appointments.
- [AC 09 Certification of English Language Fluency Policy \(formerly 02-02-16\)](#); The edits remove references to graduate students as employees
- I collected feedback on these interim policy changes from three Senate Committees chairs that relate to these policies and from the Senate Officers.

Union Relations

- We met on Monday May 8th. We discussed the three official agreements that the union has reached with administration. We also discussed benefits and the impact on the delay in agreement on benefits on staff and medical school faculty.
- We do have a shared mission statement for the work so far:
 - The Senate-Union Communication exploratory group establishes a regular channel of communication between the University Senate and the UPF-USW Council of Representatives. The group provides an opportunity to keep communication open and share pertinent information. When appropriate, the group will coordinate on issues of mutual concern.

Recognition

- I want to express condolences on behalf of the Senate for the late March passing of Tica Hall and the early April passing of Dave Bartholomae. Tica was currently serving on both the Faculty Assembly since 2019 and Senate Research Committee since 2021. Dave served as a faculty assembly member for three years, 2010-2013.
- Former Research Committee co-chair Shilpa Sant will move on soon from Pitt to an appointment at the University of Illinois, Chicago.

Thank you for your service and dedication to shared governance.

Any questions or comments on my report?

Tashbook: Is there any way to get any information from the MAC committee concerning changes in benefits? I know that bargaining unit members could not be present but others were. Can we hear what

happened?

Kear: I think we can discuss this next week at Senate Council after everyone has received their information.

Tashbook: It was not just about the current meeting but also how can this be organized going forward.

Kear: Staff Council was still represented by their president Lindsay; Penny represented the Senate Council Officers as she is in the medical school. There were other people from the related health areas also participated. It is formed each year by the administration. Were you concerned about the composition of the committee.

Tashbook: No, I was wondering if we could hear what was discussed but maybe that is not allowed.

Morel: We were told at the meeting that the discussions were confidential. I can tell you that there are plans to have more frequent meetings of the MAC committee throughout the year, rather than just at the time of benefits enrolment. I can also say that there will be changes and that we had quite active discussions about those changes, and it has been complicated by the union bargaining issue.

Kear: We are a self-funded health care plan so we cover all of the costs. Those costs are covered by three things; the University pays a portion, the employee pays a portion and tweaking the budget plan. As far as I know the health care costs are rising.

Tashbook: Thanks, I get it.

5. Reports by and Announcements of the Special and Standing Committees of the Senate

University Marks Policy

Professor Kristin Kanthak, Senate Vice President

The chair of the library committee could not be here today to present this so Kris Kanthak, our Senate Liaison to the committee, will present.

Kanthak: This is an update of existing University Marks policy. It was last reviewed in 2008. It covers logos, the Pitt name and where they can be placed. It is updating and simplifying the use of the policy and specifying who is in charge of it. One thing is that it makes it easier to see where the brand standards are and makes it easier to adhere to them. It is easier to get print and design suppliers who already know how to use the marks that are approved. It was passed unanimously by the library committee with little discussion.

Salcido: It seems quite broad and general. What is the policy on artistic interpretation of artistic of university marks? For example, if someone produces a work of art that includes the seal, but has artistic angle to the piece.

Tenney: I don't think that this would fall under this policy as this would be art rather than use to promote something. Maybe Jen Chaparro can comment.

Chaparro: We don't recommend using the seal in artistic works, as it is not our main mark anymore. We now use shield and signature across the board. It would fall in our area, as well as the licensing office and university counsel; these are the three offices that are concerned with this policy. We are trying to create consistency in how brands are used so that all that use them use the same brands.

Salcido: My question is should a student be concerned if they create a work of art/satire that uses Pitt

mark?

Kanthak: This policy really addresses the use of the correct mark and how to find out where to find them. It does not change the use of these marks.

Reed: As a research faculty who gives talks in other institutions how do we know if we are using the right mark on slides when giving a talk? It is not clear from the website or policy.

Kear: There is a link at the bottom of the policy to the brand guide and marks.

<https://www.brand.pitt.edu/visual-identity>

Chaparro: We have been trying to make all information is available to faculty to sue. I review a lot of questions from folks concerning the use. We have a lot of these on our site, including if there is a need for co-branding with UPMC for example.

Reed: I am not sure that people have access to this information. There is a real need for outreach to inform faculty as I was not aware of any of this. There has been zero communication to faculty on this, and if I were not on FA I would not know anything about this.

Kear: Can you take these suggestions back to the office?

Chaparro: Our office offers trainings on the use of brands, and we are making efforts to disseminate this across campus.

Tyler: We can work with UCM to communicate this once the policy is in place.

Vote: Yes: 32; No: 0; Abstain: 3

The policy is approved.

Bylaws and Procedures Committee

Dr. Nick Bircher, Bylaws Co-Chair

You have been provided with the materials. The Bylaws committee believes that we should increase the voice of part time faculty in shared governance, and that all part time faculty should be considered full members of the University Senate. Part time faculty consist of approx. 30% of the total faculty, consisting of a sizable number of faculty. Since it can be difficult for part-time faculty to find out about the Senate and how to join we are trying to remove the opt in option for part-time faculty. We also seek to correct the fact that part-time faculty do not have voting rights. It was also pointed out that part-time faculty have a higher proportion of persons of color. He then presented the proposed changes to the Bylaws to make these changes, which were sent to all Faculty Assembly prior to the meeting. The Bylaws committee discussed the definition of part-time and voting rights, and it was concluded that the faculty member needs to be employed by the University during the term that a vote is being carried out.

Frieze: Does this mean that a part-time faculty member who is a member of FA would not be able to vote on issues when not employed by the University?

Bircher: They would be allowed to vote if they are members of FA even if not employed

Frieze: this seems to be a problem

Scott: Can they can be on committees and can they be elected as chairs?

Bircher: Yes , and they can be removed from the committee if they are not doing their jobs

Salcido: How does this amendment help people know that the senate exists?

Bircher: At present part-time faculty get no information about elections and under this they would now be getting info.

Salcido: What about clinical faculty? Are they eligible?

Bircher: It would apply to them as long they were employed but this does not apply to volunteer faculty.

Bratman: This proposal out of an effort for inclusion and from an anti-racism perspective. Thus, we want to include faculty in underrepresented groups. We drew the line at being able to serve as an officer.

Toboas: What discussion did your committee concerning the inclusion of international faculty to the bullet of your proposal? International faculty are also over-represented among part-time faculty.

Bratman: I consider this a friendly amendment.

Bircher: We can add this to the proposal.

Frieze: While part-time faculty could be members of FA, I feel there is a problem to have them chair committees. It is very difficult to remove chairs.

Bircher: how would you do this?

Kear: That is in a different section of the bylaws that is not covered in these amendments.

A discussion followed concerning who qualifies a part-time faculty and Bircher clarified that it will depend on employment status. These changes would not affect contractors, who may be adjunct faculty who receive 1099 forms. This is for faculty who are employed by the University.

Balaban: Do you need active faculty status to be a voting member of the Senate?

Bircher: You would be eligible to vote for whole 3-year term even if you are not employed for the whole time. It seems very unlikely that someone would run for FA if they are only teaching for one session.

Balaban: I suggest we send it back to the committee to consider these important questions.

Kear: I agree, we also have Irene's outstanding question about committee chairs, which is a different Bylaws sections. We also have a question about active faculty status, and the question of what area they are representing.

Balaban: These are Senate governance issues, not University employment issues and should be addressed by Bylaws.

Balaban: I make a motion to table.

Scott: second

Vote: Yes: 28; No 8; Abstain: 1.

The motion passed

Bircher: Please forward comments and questions to me so that we can properly address them.

Scott: This is a good idea – but the implementation should be improved.

Kear: I would agree with that as well.

Unfinished Business and /or New Business

None

6. Announcements

None

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:16 pm.

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

<http://www.univsenate.pitt.edu/faculty-assembly>

Respectfully submitted,

Penelope (Penny) Morel

Secretary, University Senate

Members attending:

Almarza, Balaban, Bell, Bircher, Bonneau, Bratman, Buchanich, Burton, Conley, Cousins, Cutsumbis, Damiani, Falcione, Fort, Jacobs, Kanthak, Kear, Keown, Kohanbash, Mauk, Melnick, Molinaro, Morel, Morris, Nguyen, Parker, Pitetti, Potoski, Reed, Salcido, Schuster, Scott, Songer, Streeter, Swigonova, Taboas, Tashbook, Wert, G. Wood, K. Wood, Zack

Members not attending:

Archibald, Bench, Denman, Giandomenico-Meaner, Jones, Lemery, Lewin, Mahboobin, Maier, McCormick, I. Murtazashvili, J. Murtazashvili, Newman, Oyler, Pacella-LaBarbara, Paljug, Sant, Schmidt, Shafiq, Tokowicz, Triplette, Tudorascu, Yates, Yearwood

*Excused attendance:

Epitropoulos, Glynn, Guterman, Kovacs, Labrinidis, Massanelli, Paterson, Shephard, Stoner

Others attending:

Chaparro, De Vallejo, Frieze, Harding, Hauck, Jones, Keating, SantaCasa, Tenney, Wells

*Notified Senate Office