

**Senate Council Meeting Minutes
(Hybrid format)
Wednesday, February 23, 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 the motion duly made and seconded the minutes from the Senate Council meeting on January 27, 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 with the reminder of upcoming Spring Break and of March 11 – the day of recess for the staff. He said that the briefing on COVID is not necessary and instead he reinforced the earlier message, that though the COVID cases are down, we need to stay vigilant. We do not want to stray from playing safe. We will strongly encourage boosters. He asked for uploading data about the boosters or scheduling the booster as soon as possible. He reminded that rules for testing around the spring break travels stay the same as for Thanksgiving, it is encouraged for unvaccinated students coming back to campus, but not needed for vaccinated students.

He mentioned the state budget. Governor released his budget proposal which formally opens the budget season. He called for state increase in investments for education. The process is long. Since state budget directly funds the tuition, it is especially important to us. We hope that students, faculty, and alumni will show their support for this appropriation. We enter advocacy season.

Chancellor shared some news:

- GSPH (Graduate School of Public Health) will be now School of Public Health, since they announced a new BS degree
- Anish Kumar joins Pitt as a new VC for Real Estate
- Anna Balazs was elected to the National Academy of Engineers, and she is the first faculty who holds both memberships NAS and NAE
- Black History Month continues with Blue, Gold Black Digital Archive unveiled this week
- Pitt launches a new discussion series “All Angles” designs to bring diverse speakers throughout the year to explore challenging and divisive topics
- Spring Safety Fair, organized Public Safety Office and SGB, takes place next Monday
- The University made the 500 list of America’s best employers
- University will be closed on June 20 (Monday) in observance of Juneteenth
- Annual Pitt Day of Giving brought more than 11,000 donors around the world and nearly 3 million dollars in gifts.

There were no more questions for Chancellor Gallagher.

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

Antisemitism is real and it hurts people. The officers and I condemn any antisemitic comments, analogies, jokes, or actions in our community. These types of comments have no place in an institution of higher education and serve to create an environment that is hostile to learning and harmful to our community. Regardless of intention, jokes cause harm. We are accountable for our words and actions.

We live in a time fraught with tension, consequence, and blame. We should take the time to understand antisemitism and reflect on our own possible biases. What is our collective responsibility? What is my responsibility? What is your responsibility? What harm does this do to our goals of an inclusive university, to an inclusive environment for learning? Do our Jewish students feel safe? How many incidents go unmentioned, do our students just absorb the trauma and move on silently, and we never know?

I acknowledge the harm incidents like these cause our Jewish students and I support the path they want to take. I stand with and support our Jewish colleagues that have been harmed by overtly antisemitic utterances. We cannot look away but must acknowledge, repair, and always strive to do better.

I have been in touch with colleagues from our Dietrich School Jewish Studies Program, who encourage all of us to take seriously our mandate to educate ourselves, and our students, about the destructive legacies of antisemitism. For those of you who may not feel you have the proper expertise in this area, the Jewish studies program has resources to help you. They can provide grants to faculty who would like to bring a scholar of Jewish studies to their classroom to discuss how your course content relates to antisemitism or Jewish studies more broadly. The program also provides larger grants of up to \$10,000 to any professor who would like to create a course with Jewish studies content or revamp a course to include more Jewish Studies content. Please reach out to Jewish studies director Rachel Kranson to develop an application, due March 18. <https://www.jewishstudies.pitt.edu/faculty/funding>

In-person Return Updates

- *Please continue to update me on any issues or concerns with the return to in person instruction.*

Policy Work

- *Vaccine Requirement Permanent Policy is meeting biweekly.*
- *There are several policies in motion, including new ones that call for faculty involvement from our Senate Committees. Thank you to those who assist with the policy work to represent the interests of faculty.*

- *The Chancellor has approved two University Policies, both in the category of Community Standards.*
 - [Policy CS 17, Protection of Children from Abuse](#)
 - [Policy CS 30, HIPAA](#)

Spring Plenary

- *Please join us on March 1st for the Senate Plenary taking place as the first portion of the Community Engaged Scholarship Forum, starting at noon. Lori will be sending out a read green.*
- *The Senate Plenary portion will be opened by the Chancellor, a keynote given by Lynette Young Overby from the University of Delaware with a talk titled: “Engaged Scholarship through the arts: A Pathway to Social and Cultural Equity.” Immediately following the keynote and Q&A led by Kris Kanthak, will be an Engaged Scholars Roundtable led by VC Lina Dostilio. Provost Cudd will wrap up the Senate Plenary portion. The Forum will continue with about 20 more programs and posters, including on Environmental Justice and Health Equity.*
- *I hope you will be able to join us, please register through the forum platform for your free ticket and access to the sessions. If you register and log in, you will have access to all the recordings of the programs.*
- *Thank you to the Jamie Ducar in the Office of Community & Governmental Relations, all of the other forum organizers, and Vice President Kanthak who worked with the Community Relations and Research Committees to assist with planning the Spring Plenary.*

No questions.

VI. Reports of Student Members of Senate Council: **A. Student Government Board (SGB), Harshitha Ramanan**

Ramanan reported on some recent events and programs:

- Advocacy Days – a virtual meeting with peers from other schools to talk about voting rights, infrastructure, increasing costs of higher education, sustainability and much more.
- National Eating Disorder Awareness Week with multiple events going on
- Spring Tenant Townhall organized with the help of the Office Engagement and Community Relations is happening today; this event is highly recommended for lower classmen
- Hosted public meetings with: Chief Loftus about Pitt police and campus safety, Dr. Williams – to get more information about COVID19, Sydney O’Hara - to talk how students can be civically involved. Students really appreciate these conversations with administration
- Election for SGB schedule for March 1

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:

● *Recruitment for next year's CGSSG:*

- *The Judicial Affairs committee is taking the lead on our recruitment strategy.*
- *Bringing back and building on the success of the tabling events we did during*

Nontraditional Students Week.

- *Reaching out to professors about talking about recruitment in classes.*
- *Ensuring that CGS minors and certificates can apply.*
- *Emailing CGS students list.*

○ *Currently compiling previous materials and putting together informative resources.*

● *Student Safety Initiative:*

○ *In tandem with our recruitment efforts, we will be introducing our initiative in the opportunities we get to speak with CGS classes.*

● *New Advisor Search*

○ *Thank you, Pat McGrane! As we reach the midpoint in the Spring semester, CGSSG is looking to ensure that future boards are well prepared to build off the progress we have made this year. Therefore, our primary focus this semester will be making sure we are recruiting the best CGS students at Pitt and providing them with the tools they need to succeed.*

No questions.

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

Pierce reported that GPSSG (Graduate and Professional Schools Student Government) is also approaching elections and is soliciting applications for 5 executive positions. The campaign will begin on February 28 and elections are scheduled for mid-March. New president will be introduced in April. Other events:

Grad Student Coffee Hour – a great success

Spring Formal and the Graduate Student Appreciation Week are coming up.

No questions.

VII. Report of the President of the Postdoctoral Association, Dave Gau

Dave Gau is teaching currently, so there is no report today.

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

Pitt Day of Giving (February 22, 2022) update. All monies raised for Staff Council will go to our Frisch Staff Professional Development Award and the Staff Council Endowed Book Fund. The numbers are not official yet, but we believe we had 117

donors and received a \$1,000 bonus for placing at a particular level during the Power Hour. Some of you may know that last year, there was an incentive for SC members that if we met our goal, Andy Stephany, former president, took a pie to the face. Well, this year's incentive is to soak the president. Yes, there will be a time this summer where I will be the target of multiple super-soakers.

The **2022 Staff Council Spring Assembly** is set for March 9, 2022, from 9 a.m. to Noon. The keynote speaker will be Felicia Savage Friedman, founder, and CEO of Yoga Roots on Location ([YROL](#)). Felicia's approach is embodied, joy-centered, and takes audience members on a journey into their hearts and minds to explore what actions they can take to create a more just and loving society. Her talks explore what collective liberation could look like and are rooted in unconditional love for humanity. The workshops unpack how we may dismantle racism, patriarchy, and capitalism in a way that centers our histories, our present, and unconditional love. These engagements build capacity for professionals to examine systems of oppression, their roles in them, and how to create change in the systems they interact with. An OEDI Mini Grant was awarded for this event. I asked Lori to put a link to the registration in the chat.

Staff Council will host a table at the Spring Safety Assembly, Monday, February 28, 2022, at WPU Assembly Room.

Our next (open) general meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 16, 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. The next time we meet, spring will be in the air.

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

None

X. Unfinished Business and/or New Business:

A. PUP name change proposal – David Salcido, Co-Chair of PUP

Salcido said that safety was and always had been in PUP's mission, but within Senate there is no direct interface with the public safety apparatus at Pitt, therefore, to remedy this, we are reorienting a little bit to emphasize safety. Ted Fritz, the VC for Public Safety and Emergency Management will join the committee as the liaison. We will have carved out time on our agenda to talk about safety and we proposing the name change of our committee from Plant Utilization and Planning (PUP) to **Campus Utilization, Planning and Safety (CUPS)**. This proposal was accepted by our committee, by Faculty Assembly last week, and now we are presenting it for Senate Council vote.

The vote was via poll (for those on zoom) and by raising hand (for those in the room). Results: YES – 36, NO - 0, ABSTAIN – 3

Proposal passed.

B. Draft Policy on Gifts That Support Projects – Carey Balaban

Balaban introduced the background of the proposed policy and gave a short PPT presentation to explain the new policy, which would give us guidelines for efficient management of gift sponsored projects. This draft policy brought to the Senate Council today, has been already approved by TAFT and Research Committees, as well as Faculty Assembly.

Kear asked if the comment received at the Faculty Assembly has been incorporated into the policy.

Balaban: Yes, as a friendly amendment.

The vote was via poll (for those on zoom) and by raising hand (for those in the room). Results: YES – 39, NO - 0, ABSTAIN – 4

Policy passed.

XI. Announcements

None.

XII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 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, Fort, Gallagher, Gregerson, Henker, Judd, Kanthak, Kear, Kieselyov, Kiesling, Kleebank, Klem, McCormick, Molinaro, Murphy, Murtazashvili, Pacella-LaBarbara, Paljug, Paterson, Pierce, Ramanan, Rautkis, Roberts, Rutenbar, Sant, Sastry, Scott, Shekhar, Tashbook, Washington, Yeager, Zack

Members not attending:

Bench, Cilli, DeVallejo, Floyd, Hall, Jeong, A. Jones, Kesbhat, Khan, Kovacs, Maier, Mulcahy, Newman, Oylar, Potoski, Schuster, Taboas, Vento, Wood, Yearwood

*Excused attendance:

Gau, Labrinidis

Others attending:

Ayars, Chou, Cooper, Crawford, Davitt, Dostilio, Fike, Harding, Harrell, Hitter, Houser, Jones, Lancaster, McGrane, Moran, Panzella, Pelt, Pickett, Pope, Roadman, Salcido, SantaCasa, Seldin, Sidorovskaia, Staresinic, Supowitz, Tenney, Washo

*Notified Senate Office