

**UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**  
**Senate Educational Policies Committee**  
**April 20, 2015**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Amy E. Aggelou, Bonnie Falcione, Zsuzsa Horvath, A. Murat Kaynar, Juan Manfredi, Alberta Sbragia, Cynthia Tananis, and Aliyah Weinstein.

**Excused:** David Beck, M. Kathleen Kelly, Mary Lou Leibold, Helen Petracchi, and Laurel Bridges Roberts.

**Not Present:** Shelly Renee Brown, Lori A. Molinaro, Robert Sica, Susan Skledar, and Michael Spring.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Zsuzsa Horvath (Chair) at 3:03 pm.

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the March 16th meeting were approved as written.

**Special Topic:** PeopleSoft

- **Guests:**
  - Dwight Helfrich, Director System Engineering
  - Patti Mathay, University Registrar
  - Bob Treloar, Manager Systems Upgrades & Enhancements
- **Topic:**
  - No.1 Overview of PeopleSoft.
    - Patti Mathay provided a presentation for the committee that included a demonstration of the program from the student's perspective for selecting courses, using the planner, the course description that is viewable, and how students indicate if they will be taking the course as pass/fail or for a letter grade. Future anticipated functionality will include the ability to automatically check pre-requisites and time conflicts. She also reviewed the functionality from the standpoint of a faculty advisor and the available reports (for example, academic advising reports) that can be generated including the mechanism for generating one report to capture all of a faculty member's advisees. The committee members' questions pertaining to "milestones" showing up on the academic record were also addressed. Other questions pertained to the ability to merge CourseWeb grades with PeopleSoft; this functionality is not available but is something that is being looked into, along with improving how quickly students who drop a course are removed from Blackboard and these will require a business plan to accomplish. Other possible future features include validation appointments and post enrollment requirement checking.
    - Dwight Helfrich and Bob Treloar reviewed the focus groups that have recently been held with the purpose of gaining faculty feedback. They are interested in finding ways to increase faculty participation. The focus group sessions have been

advertised in the “Read Green” emails with 1-2 month advance notice. The call for focus group attendees has also been posted on the my.pitt portal as an announcement. The committee suggested providing the information pertaining to the focus group sessions to the Associate Deans as a mechanism for reaching more faculty. Based on feedback via previous focus groups, upcoming changes to PeopleSoft this summer are anticipated to include more self-service functions that are mobile-device friendly. For example students will be able to download their schedule to a mobile platform calendar.

- The need for PeopleSoft training for advisors (via online video modules or face-to-face workshops) was discussed and Patty Mathay agreed to bring the issue to Vice-Provost Lauri Kirsch’s and CIDDE Director Cynthia Golden’s attention.
- No. 2 Availability for “walk-in” requests to the Registrar for transcripts.
  - Patti Mathay confirmed that students can still request transcripts on a “walk-in” basis at no charge and clarified that these are only available for on-site pickup (will not be mailed out to universities and employers) and are provided in a sealed envelope as it is still accepted; requests for same day pick-up must be made by 2pm. Requests for transcripts to be mailed must be made on-line and must be requested by 2pm in order to be sent out the same day (by 3pm). She noted that requests for older transcripts may require a longer turnaround time.

#### **New Business**

- None at this time

#### **Old Business**

- Non Tenure Stream (NTS) Adhoc Committee recommendations for EPC:
  - Recommendation 1: Review the process for teaching evaluation of full time non-tenure stream (NTS) faculty to ensure they are treated fairly.
    - Cynthia Tananis serving also on the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on NTS Faculty Issues (NTS Committee) confirmed that a formal review of policies and procedures at different units is not needed. A draft affirmation statement was distributed and reviewed. The committee discussed the feasibility of proposing such an affirmation statement. It was recognized that units may set up their own rules for accomplishing teaching evaluations and such an affirmation as was proposed would recommend that those rules be applied fairly. The fair application would require oversight from the Provost’s Office. It was explained by Chair Horvath that if the EPC approved such a statement then the next step would be to bring it to the Faculty Assembly.
    - It was decided that opinions from the EPC committee members not in attendance, along with sufficient time for further review of the statement by those in attendance would be sought. In addition, members agreed to consult with Irene Frieze, NTS Committee Chair.

- Recommendation 2: Assurance that full-time non-tenure stream (NTS) faculty with teaching duties have input into decisions about curriculum content and curriculum changes in the unit.
  - Chair Horvath reviewed the distributed draft proposal statement affirming this recommendation. Discussion included recognition that graduate students sometimes fall into the category of part-time faculty. Chair Horvath confirmed that at this time the recommendations from the NTS Committee pertain to full-time faculty. Other discussion included recognition that NTS represent a majority of faculty in many units.
  - It was decided that opinions from the EPC members not in attendance, along with sufficient time for further review of the statement by those in attendance, and additional insight from the NTS Committee Chair for assurance of appropriate timing of the EPC proposal (possible synchrony with other standing committees), would be sought in the interim before the next EPC meeting.
- Working Group Updates
  - Working Group on Issues Related to Student Opinions of Teaching Online Surveys
    - Working Group Chair Horvath reported that the second meeting took place on Friday, April 17. The working group discussed students' rationale for their request to make OMET results public with student representatives, Graeme Thomas Meyer, President, Student Government Board; and Naomi, SGB Academic Affairs Committee Chair. The working group will meet again and invite Laurie Kirsch and Cynthia Golden to future meetings. The working group plans to make a recommendation to the SEPC on issues related to making OMET results public in the next few months and then move on to the next topics.
  - Digital Ethics
    - Working Group Chair Falcione reported on a productive first meeting at the end of February that identified key stakeholders to involve, and an action plan for working group members to review the modules produced at the University of Georgia, with the goal create modules personalized for PITT. Next meeting will be scheduled for April.

### **Vice-Provost updates**

- **Undergraduate**

Vice Provost Manfredi presented the report:

- Next steps for accreditation of the University includes preparation of the Periodic Review Report (PRR) which is due in June 2017. Recent work included Stephanie Hoogendoorn and Juan Manfredi of the Provost's Office attending a preparatory workshop in Philadelphia where 2 notable new items were raised: the PRR (done every 5 years in between accreditations) will still include the regular self-study document and a new compliance document whereby the process in which we verify compliance with federal regulations is described. The handbook explaining how to prepare this document has not yet been released but is due out by the end of April 2015 [confirmed]. Faculty will be asked by the Provost's Office to help with preparing this document. Some

current practices may need to be adopted as policy to move forward with this. Work on this will begin in fall 2016.

- Student Experience at the Research University (SERU) survey update was provided. As of the Friday prior to the meeting our response rate for this voluntary survey was 25% with a goal of 35%; reminders are planned to be sent out after final exams. This survey provides useful benchmarking information to the Provost's Office about student satisfaction at a research university. The SERU organization is considering adding a graduate student survey instrument that may come in the future but is still in development.
- The university consumer information webpage recently went live.

- **Graduate**

Vice-Provost Sbragia presented the report:

- New Director for the Office of International Services is Genevieve Cook, BA, MPM. She was the previous Associate Director and may be a good guest at a future SEPC meeting to speak about international scholars who come to the university to conduct research. Charles Nieman the past Director recently retired.
- Commencement will differ from past years, for example there will be an undergraduate student speaker and a graduate student speaker. Yang Song, receiving her PhD from economics and who is originally from China, will address the attendants at the commencement ceremony on behalf of the graduate students.
- Vice Provost Sbragia has newly been meeting with the Associate Deans from all of the schools with graduate programs and these have been going extremely well, including serving to improve communication of ideas. For example, the Masters Degree programs have expressed tremendous interest in exploring on-line programs.
- The Chancellor recently held the annual dinner meeting with student leaders, including for example, the President of the Graduate Student Government. This served as an opportunity for the student leaders to meet the new Chancellor.
- A task force was recently created that is chaired by Larry Feick, the past Director of the University Center for International who is now working on Special Projects for the Provost; Vice Provost Sbragia is the Provost's Office representative on the task force. They have made progress with the business units in facilitating faculty research overseas; four meetings have been held to date bringing various business units together to iron out associated barriers and develop relevant procedures for faculty to conduct research internationally. Work will continue into next year.
- Graduate and Professional Student Government will give out leadership and service awards this week. New President elected, Joseph Kozak.
- An update on the course description resolution will be provided at an upcoming meeting.

### **Faculty Assembly update**

- President Spring confirmed the request to the EPC to review again how the shift to online Office of Measurement and Evaluation of Teaching student evaluations is affecting response rates.

Chair Horvath confirmed that it is on the agenda for the Working Group on Issues Related to Student Evaluation.

- University Senate voted on the creation of a standing committee on research. This will need to be voted on by the Senate Council. Candidates were recruited to run at the next election.
- The Assembly also voted unanimously to refer to the research committee an open letter to the chancellor on the commercialization of research, signed by 76 members of the University community. The letter speaks to the idea that many of us do research that is not appropriately commercializable. The letter not to say that we are opposed to the commercialization of research, but states that there are some bigger issues at stake.
- Realignment of the Senate standing committee structure: Faculty Assembly approved the merger of the Senate committee on admissions and student aid with the Senate student affairs committee, and the dissolution of the University Press committee, which would be reconstituted as a Provost-office advisory committee.
- Faculty Assembly approved the University Senate computer usage committee's motion to send back to the Senate benefits and welfare committee for discussion the issue of single-sign-on access to TIAA-CREF/ Vanguard retirement information and UPMC health information via the Pitt portal.
- The Assembly tabled until its May meeting a vote on proposed changes to the University's international travel policy, in order to allow faculty time for a more thorough review.
- Online voting for Senate officers and Faculty Assembly representatives ends April 22.

#### **Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence (ACIE) update**

Liaison Falcione reported that the council met on March 16<sup>th</sup> from 4pm until approximately 8pm to review Innovations in Education Award proposals. The request for proposals was made on Nov 4, 2014 and the submission deadline was January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Each proposal was assigned to 5 council members and one CIDDE technology expert for review prior to the meeting; one of the council reviewers was pre-assigned to lead the discussion at the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting; all reviewers and council members were given opportunity to comment. Eleven proposals were reviewed, 6 were submitted to the Provost by Council Chair, Vice Provost for Faculty Development Laurie Kirsch for funding and all 6 were approved by the Provost. All who submitted proposals were notified of the results the week of March 30<sup>th</sup> and recipients were to receive letter notification of their awards the week of April 6<sup>th</sup>. A summary of the proposals being funded was provided by the liaison. It was suggested that details pertaining to the proposals may be of interest to this committee (for example topic and technology). A request to share this level of detail will be made by the SEPC liaison at the next council meeting. The council next meets on May 6<sup>th</sup>.

#### **SEPC future planning**

The last meeting of the year will be held May 18, 2015 at the University Club, details will be emailed to committee members.

**Adjournment @ 4:54pm**