

Call to Order 3:05pm

Attendance

Elected Members

Joanne Baird, SHRS/Occupational Therapy
Harvey Borovetz, Bioengineering;
Marylou Gramm, Dietrich, Department of English;
Julius Kitutu, School of Nursing;
Sybil Streeter, Dietrich, Psychology;
Juan Taboas, Dental Medicine;

Chancellor's Liaison

Kenyon Bonner, Vice Provost and Dean of Students
Marc Harding, Chief Enrollment Officer
Jennifer Seng, General Counsel

Pro-tem

Robin Kear, University Library System

Senate Liaison

Gosia Fort, Health Science Library System

Office of University Communications

Susan Jones, University Times

Guest Speakers

Nathan Urban, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Strategic Initiatives
Kellie Kane, Director of Admissions

Agenda

- I. Speaker: Nathan Urban, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Strategic Initiatives
Update on Graduate Student Unionization Movement

1. Nathan Urban reports the following:

The majority of graduate students voted in opposition to unionization in April 2019. [The vote was 712-675 according to the *Pitt News*.] 70% of eligible students voted.

The United Steel Workers filed an objection with the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board (PLRB) of 12 claims of unfair labor. After a hearing, the examiner ruled in favor of the university for 9 claims and in favor of the steel workers for 3 claims that the university was coercive.

The university filed an appeal as did the Steel Workers. We are now in the 20-day period in which both parties file briefs in opposition to those appeals.

The PLRB hears cases once a month; we have no time-line, nor do we know if it is an in-person hearing. There can be a second appeal to the Commonwealth Court, and after that to the PA Supreme Court.

2. Q & A

Streeter: Does the bargaining unit change?

Urban: No, the definition of the bargaining unit remains the same through these steps. Individuals in it may change if there is another election.

Borovetz: Any chance of trying to negotiate with students?

Urban: We have limited ability to negotiate during this period. A court has to make the decision first. No option for voluntary recognition of union

Taboas: How often can this process start over again?

Urban: If the election is against union, then there is a one-year period until union cards can be filed again. (Card collection can be begun immediately.)

Kitutu: Who is supporting the union financially?

Urban: I don't know any details about financing for the advertising and other efforts, but the United Steel Workers are supporting the effort in that USW attorneys are the ones at the PLRB hearings and USW staff are involved in organizing efforts.

Kear: If there is another election held eventually, would the first set of cards be valid?

Urban: If the election were to go against union, those cards would expire (1-year expiration date). They would no longer be valid in a new card collection campaign.

Kear: If the ruling is in favor of holding another election, would the first set of cards be valid?

Urban: Yes.

Taboas: What is the cost benefit of the university appealing versus letting them do a revote? We must be expending funds.

Urban: I think calculating the cost of doing a revote would be impossible. Because of the laws in PA, we can't predict what the costs would be. Cost is also not the biggest concern. It's how unionization would affect graduate education.

Taboas: What are those fears or concerns?

Urban: The ways in which a union could influence how we appoint graduate students. At Temple University, when students are under union contract, the research that they do cannot count toward their thesis. There are very few places that have unions that include GSRs, students supported off of a grant. Usually just teaching assistants.

II. Marc Harding, Chief Enrollment Officer Update on Changes in Undergraduate Financial Aid

1. At the end of February 2019, Pitt made 2 major changes to financial aid to redress Pitt's growing national reputation for inequality.

2. Two initiatives: Pell Grant Match and Success Grant for all campuses: Oakland and regional campuses. Cost is \$40 million.
 - A. Pitt Success Pell Matching Grant: if the student gets a Pell Grant (first-year or transfer student) Pitt will match the amount received in the Pell Grant. (Maximum Pell Grant is \$6,000).
 - i. 3,000 of Oakland campus' 19,000 students are Pell recipients.
 - ii. 1/3 of regional campuses are Pell recipients.
 - iii. 6,034 new Pell recipients this year.
 - iv. This will be an ongoing program.
 - B. Success Grant is just a one-year program: It ensures that no student has unmet need exceeding \$20,000 on the Oakland campus, and \$15,000 regional campuses.
 - C. Reasons for these initiatives:
 - i. Pitt's ranking for affordability had fallen in *U.S. News and World Report* from 56 in 2010 to 70.
 - ii. Our ability to recruit diverse students to campus and ensure their graduation was being limited.
 - iii. Pitt and Penn State are the most expensive state tuitions.
 - iv. Students' unmet need (after grants, scholarships, loans, family contribution, etc.) has been rising. Unmet need correlates strongly with student performance, 93% retention, 84% graduation rate (6 yr)
 - v. We are need-blind for admission to prevent discrimination based on ability to pay.
 - vi. We are losing students to other colleges that can offer better financial support. Average income of students increasing but the number of Pell grant recipients going down. Losing to schools that are investing in students.
 - vii. On all campuses, unmet need is \$187 million (across all Pitt campuses) for \$12,500 per student, with 19,000 students at Oakland and 4,400 at our satellite campuses. This is 210% of current expenditures.
 - viii. Only 11 universities meet unmet need of all students, those with big endowments.
 - ix. Based upon studies: \$15K of unmet need or more and retention and graduation rates plummet.
 - x. These initiatives are a pilot; we will test them out when we look at this year's class retention rate.
 - D. Funding: shifting some money from strictly merit based aid to need; from the endowment, etc. Merit stayed near \$6M. Cut back engineering scholarship (impacted engineering). We under enrolled by 70
 71.5% of success funding went to Pennsylvania students. 25M spent this year.
 Pitt Success Pell Match
 Equal amount of \$ to Pell, up to cost of attendance

 Pitt Success Grants
 Unmet need limited to critical performance threshold
 No student has unmet need exceeding \$20k (PGH) / 15k (Regionals)
 - E. Recruitment: These new financial aid programs help enhance student diversity.
 - i. Oakland has a growing out-of-state population; regional campuses continue to provide big opportunities to Commonwealth.
 - ii. Two biggest new recruitment populations: Asian and Latinx
 - iii. Questions:

- a. Borovetz: are we recruiting more students with need than other schools? Pell recipients is high (5,000), but enrollment was low because cannot offer support (less yield than that of average student
- F. Additional sources of financial aid include Panthers Forward, Chancellor's initiative, an evergreen fund, up to 5K grant senior year to fed loan recipients; RaiseMe; Pittsburgh Public Scholars; federally subsidized loans; federal and state grants. For more info, go to <https://www.affordability.pitt.edu>
- III. SAAA vote: unanimous support of the University's revised policy on PA residential tuition for veterans, international students, etc.
- IV. Topics for future meetings

Kitutu: What is Pitt doing about vaping and medical marijuana? We don't have a policy that we can lean on. What about students taking medical marijuana on clinical sites?

Seng: That depends upon the site's policy.

Bonner: Invite the Executive Director of the Wellness Center to learn what is happening with medical marijuana.

Seng: Disability Services could also provide information.

Baird: We should get an update about sexual assault and sexual violence.

Streeter: See the most recent Washington post article about the rate: 25% on campuses.

Taboas: Follow up on upward mobility of Pitt graduates. Kenyon will look into this.

Meeting Adjourned: 4 pm