

SAAA meeting
4/23/2019
Hillman 272

Call to Order 3:05pm

Attendance

On Site

Nathan Urban
David Gao
Juan Taboas
Harvey Borovetz
Karen Sheffey
Marylou Gramm
Sybil Streeter
Robin Kear
Julius Kitutu

Remote

Joanne Baird
Penny Semaia
Kenyon Bonner
Jennifer Seng

Agenda

1. Dr. Nathan Urban (Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Strategic Initiatives): Graduate Student Affairs – Including Unionization Update
 - a. Close to 60% vote (above 50%)
 - b. University was encouraging students to be against unionization but stronger message was please go vote.
 - c. Some students ineligible (e.g. training grant recipients). Approximately 100 challenge votes filed.
 - d. Votes to be counted this Friday (April 26)
 - i. Vote in favor: union elects representatives and bargaining committee, which eventually negotiates with representatives of Pitt
 - ii. Vote against: many things that the University has not been allowed to change, if it were a topic of bargaining, since the Cards were filed December.
 - iii. Expectations that humanities voted more in favor than sciences due to lower stipends and more teaching duties.
 - e. Negotiation topics: Mandatory negotiation topics are clear: wages, benefits, and working conditions. Other topics would be negotiated.
 - i. Working conditions to date are undefined.
 - ii. Potentially PIs will be restricted from hiring students unless can demonstrate 2-years secured funding.
 - f. Potential issues for graduate students
 - i. How to negotiate problems of unhealthy working environments / toxic mentors?
 - ii. What if PI loses funding?

- iii. Sense of isolation. Dr. Urban has placed Ombudsman in all schools who can help with this issue;
- iv. Female harassment: awareness of duty and places to report is happening. Related to Title IX
- v. Graduate student mental health. Dr. Urban said 2 panels this year (internal and external) have reviewed issue, and workshops have been held on mental health training.
- vi. Vulnerability of graduate students
 - 1. Will they be afraid to bargain, potential university retaliation? Dr. Urban believes this is unlikely.
- g. Other issues relating to students including participating in interviewing faculty, etc.

BOTTOM LINE: Dr. Urban will proceed accordingly based on the tally from this upcoming Friday vote count.

2. Follow Up to Our January 22 SAAA Committee Meeting Topic: Personalized Education Initiative

Dietrich School A&S discussion regarding predictive student analytics (Steve Wisniewski and Amanda Brodich answered questions in a 4/23 meeting called by the Humanities Council; Senate Officer Liaison to SAAA -- Robin Kear -- attended)

- a. Meeting with A&S faculty to discuss implementing new advising products
- b. Questions/discussions at that meeting
 - i. Does not replace in person meeting with advisors
 - ii. Accuracy with small departments/limited data
 - iii. Can students opt their data out
 - iv. Implicit biasing in the modeling
 - 1. Main problem is missing data, run validation assays
 - v. Is predictive analytics aligned with department's mission of individual mentoring
 - vi. 250 : 1 (student : faculty) advisor in the first two years for undeclared students
 - 1. Note these are professional advisors
 - 2. Borovetz and Marylou Gramm: best is having advisor/mentors, like in engineering, to address professional goals of students. Kitutu noted that in his school, students already selected career path so do not have as many issues as undecided majors in Dietrich School
 - 3. Sybil Streeter: Undeclared ≠ undecided student (undeclared have mostly decided on their major). This analytic platform can really help with the undecided (over-persistence: repeating a class too many times)
 - a. Discuss other things you can do within the medical profession, and training for which involve classes beyond the traditional medical school preparatory classes
 - vii. Students use Navigate package, while only advisors have access to the predictive model

- viii. Benefits
 - 1. System can help students filter out options/programs from the many available at Pitt
 - 2. Can help with dual and joint degrees, detailing requirements
 - 3. May allow more breadth in courses that can be selected to satisfy major
- c. Note on current student predictive analytics at Pitt
 - i. Navigate (EAB platform) and Othot (predictive analytics)
 - ii. Predictive data is currently used for OCC (outside the classroom curriculum) and study abroad data. Only used in nursing and engineering.
 - iii. These products will be rolling out to other schools.

OUR NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING IS TUESDAY, MAY 28, AT 3 PM IN 272 HILLMAN. WE WILL SEND AN AGENDA SHORTLY. THE MAY 28 MEETING IS THE FINAL MEETING OF THE CURRENT ACADEMIC TERM.

WE HAVE BEEN REMINDED BY LORI MOLINARO THAT AN ELECTION NEEDS TO BE HELD TO ELECT THE CHAIR OR CHAIRS FOR SAAA FOR THE COMING YEAR. ACCORDING TO LORI AND PER THE BYLAWS, THE CHAIR NEEDS TO BE AN ELECTED FACULTY MEMBER AND THE ELECTION SHOULD BE HELD BY JULY 1. ROBIN KEAR SUGGESTED THAT AN E-MAIL BE SENT TO ALL SAAA COMMITTEE MEMBERS INQUIRING OF INTEREST TO SERVE AS CHAIR/CO-CHAIR. WE WILL SEND THIS E-MAIL SHORTLY.

Respectfully Submitted,
Juan Taboas and Harvey Borovetz