

**Senate Council Meeting Minutes
Via Zoom**

Thursday, March 25, 2021

1. Call to Order

President Chris Bonneau called the meeting to order at 3 pm.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Past Senate Council Meeting

The distributed minutes from the February 17, 2021 were approved as written.

3. Items of New Business

No items of new business were raised.

4. Report of the Chancellor, Patrick Gallagher

Chancellor Gallagher said the COVID update would still be the center of his briefing, but he wanted to reflect on painful moments of the world around us, on the horrible mass shootings and racial hatred of last week. Pitt community needs to know that we all belong here and that we have the right to defend this and support each other. Acts of solidarity and kindness are important.

Dr. Williams talked about the COVID situation. Nationally things are getting better, though in the places where the restrictions were lifted cases are on the rise. Locally, new cases are on a rise, too. Positivity of testing on campus was low early in the semester, but we have seen some spike last week. We try to keep campus open, but it is not time to relax. On a positive side, though we have the base line of cases similar to the fall, we are in a different situation, because the community around us is different with almost 370K people in Allegheny County who had at least one dose of vaccine.

Dean Bonner added that the main concern was the student behavior off campus with the upcoming St. Patrick Day and nice weather. The fear materialized and large student gatherings happened. He wanted to impose on students how their behavior might have a negative impact on the safety of other students on campus or threaten the commencement ceremony. The incidents were off campus. The students living on campus behaved responsibly.

Gallagher said that while we could change the risk posture, we do not want to use it as a punitive measure. He added that virus would take advantage of lapses in behavior and he acknowledged all students who followed our rules of mitigation.

Dr. McGivney gave the update on the vaccination efforts. Pitt administered 10 000 vaccines through cooperation with ACDH. It held 13 vaccination clinics at Peterson Center with about 1000 volunteers participated. Pitt also got an extra 500 Moderna vaccines, which would be for University custodial, food services and transportation employees in 1A group. The State opened vaccinations to people in 18-64

age group with health conditions. She also added that education was important and asked everyone to help spreading the correct information in casual conversations that fevers and headaches are not side effects; they are normal responses of immune system to the vaccine.

Bonneau: At some point, as more people are vaccinated, we will be less concerned about cases but more about hospitalizations and deaths, so at what point we will stop paying attention to the number of cases and turn to those other metrics?

Williams: That is right. All kinds of respiratory viruses are around us, but we do not care unless they are putting people in hospitals. Mitigation we had for COVID helped with other viruses too. A few months? We will get to this point sometime soon.

Bonneau [from chat]: Will the incoming class be required to have a vaccine?

Gallagher: No. We will not require it. Vaccines are approved for emergency use, but we hope that with community vaccinations we will get to the point that all students are vaccinated through voluntary vaccinations.

Scott [from chat]: Are we collecting data across campus/region about so called 'long-haul' COVID?

Williams: CMRO is not, but other groups here do collect this data, as part of national effort.

Rhein: Should we be concerned seeing students walking without masks, or only when there are large gatherings?

Williams: Transient walkers outside are lower risk than any group gathering indoors or large gatherings of people.

Bonner: Actually, we want all students wear mask on campus.

Ramanan: Are we going to maintain the 6' distance or lower it to 3' for vaccinated people?

Williams: Even when vaccinated, we have to wear masks and distance, because other people around us might not be vaccinated yet. In addition, we want to treat everyone the same and not have different rules for different departments. He added that the variant B.1.1.7 had been detected on campus, but there is no convincing evidence yet that variants are more dangerous to make any changes in the rules we have in place.

Chancellor Gallagher continued with his report addressing the announcement about the fall, which upset some people. It is obvious that we are still amidst pandemic, but there is a lot of time until fall. We wanted our students, staff and faculty to have some expectations. Before pandemics, we did not use online instruction or remote working. When we go back to normal, we will not forget what we have learned, but we will use it differently. Flex@Pitt was designed to give us flexibility, when we are back to in person teaching, it will not be used on the individual level, but the school might choose to design an online course.

Next, he talked about the COVID relief money – which is the largest amount so far. It has similar conditions as the previous infusion of funds to higher education had, that half of it should go directly to support students.

Gallagher and Humphry talked about the planned hybrid Commencement. We will celebrate the graduates during in-person ceremonies with two guests allowed, if it is safe to happen this way. The plan is to celebrate graduates all month with special programs, workshops, seminars and social events. We will also honor three individuals with honorary doctorates.

The final Chancellor's announcements included:

Homecoming next year – in person event for 2020 class

Pitt Day in Harrisburg (virtual) had a good impact, so please continue to go the website to engage at the state level.

Gallagher closed his report by talking about Kathy Humphrey's career, thanked her for her contributions to Pitt and wished Kathy all the best in her new life as the next President of the Carlow College. He also welcomed all newly elected student board members.

5. Report of Senate President, Chris Bonneau

President *Bonneau* gave update from the last Faculty Assembly, which voted and approved a proposal to change the length of term for the Senate Officers in the Senate Bylaws. He briefly explained the changes. The Senate election starts on April 1, so next time we meet we will know the new President elect. The other issue we voted on was a new Gift and Naming Policy, both of which are on the agenda for today's meeting. Then, he allowed Vice President Salcido talk about the upcoming Senate Plenary.

Salcido updated the Council on program for the Senate Plenary "**Anti-Racism and Equity**," scheduled for April 7, 2021 at noon to 2:30 pm, which includes 3 panel discussions on building an equitable institution, development of Pitt's anti-racism course, and Senate Committees findings on racism, equity and justice at Pitt. Senate Plenary will be accompanied by an additional event organized by the Senate Research Committee on April 8, 2021 at 2 pm - a panel discussion on the documentary "Picture a Scientist."

6. Reports of Student Members of Senate Council:

a. Student Government Board (SGB), Eric Macadangdang

Macadangdang's report was short. His updates included SGB Statement on Increasing Anti-Asian Violence and Solidarity with the AAPI Community released last week, results of the recent SGB elections, and information about Student Public Art Competition on campus, organized with the Provost's Office, for which they are seeking submissions. He introduced the newly elected president Harshitha Ramanan. He concluded his report with some reflections and lessons from the past year.

b. College of General Studies Student Government (CGSSG), Daemon Rhein (submitted in written)

It is my pleasure to provide an update on the state of affairs of the University of Pittsburgh's College of

General Studies Student Government, the governing body that represents and advocates for CGS undergraduate students whether online or on campus. The following report will highlight the updates on events, projects, and other activities of the College of General Studies Student Government.

1. March Self-Care Packages On March 22nd and 23rd, members of the College of General Studies Student Government handed out packages of snacks, candy, and self-care products to students from our temporary office within the William Pitt Union to promote the self-care of students for the March 24th Self-Care Day. CGSSG members and the attending students performed the necessary safety measures, such as social distancing, wearing masks, and sanitizing hands. The event was significantly more successful than our members expected; we have seen more students interested in their self-care, into the processes of their local student governments, and into becoming a representative in CGSSG's election.

2. CGSSG 2021-2022 Election The College of General Studies Student Government's election for the Fall Term of 2021-2022 is underway. Applications for executive and general positions have opened on March 1st and interviews for positions have begun on March 22nd. The members of CGSSG have decided that our current election will continue using the method of appointment rather than popular vote to ensure the quality and skill of student representation.

3. Incorporation of Student Wellness and First Year Relations The College of General Studies Student Government's First Relations Chair, Madison Mascari, is in the process of incorporating a focus on Student Health & Wellness to her current position. Due to the unfortunate circumstances that the students of the University of Pittsburgh have been dealt, CGSSG believes that this is necessary to meet the physical, mental, and emotional needs of our students, especially for the Fall 2021 Semester when virtual-only students will be returning to in-class lectures without any previous college experience.

4. Student Misconduct with Oakland Businesses After several discussions with the local small businesses within Oakland, members of CGSSG have been informed of multiple occurrences of student misconduct regarding Pennsylvania's COVID-19 Restrictions on Operating Businesses. University of Pittsburgh students are not following social distancing and mask wearing policies, and when these small local businesses enforce Pennsylvania's protocols, these students are acting vindictive and hostile. These local Oakland businesses have also told CGSSG that they have contacted the University of Pittsburgh, but their attempts to express their problems have either been ignored or disregarded because "they should just do their job". CGSSG understands the mutual symbiotic relationship between the University of Pittsburgh Oakland Campus and the local Oakland businesses, which is a relationship that CGSSG will strive to promote because it is one of the greatest strengths of this University and is one of the most beneficial perks to the students of this campus. CGSSG's first task to correct this student misconduct problem is to inform this Senate Council of these issues, because the first part of solving any problem is knowing there is one.

The College of General Studies Student Government's goal is to serve the needs of CGS undergraduate students and to promote the best interests of the student body. As the needs of our students change during this pandemic, CGSSG will continue to change in order to fulfill the needs of our students. Whether online or on campus, CGSSG is here to serve!

Thank you and Hail to Pitt!

Bonneau encouraged CGSSG to work with Students Affairs and Dean Bonner on the last issue.

Gallagher commented that we worked closely with the Oakland Business Improvement District leadership. We want to be good neighbors. Paul Supowitz's team and Dean Bonner would be interested in these complaints.

c. Graduate and Professional Schools Student Government (GPSSG), Malena Hirsch

Hirsch provided GPSSG updates, which includes:

- Statement in relation to Atlanta shooting;
- \$100k donated to Student Emergency Assistance Fund;
- Applications for Leadership & Service Award open & due April 5;
- Spring town hall for graduate students on April 1, 2021
- Co-host of a three week fitness challenge;
- Co-host of guided meditation;
- Virtual Andy Warhol Museum tour on April 1;
- Graduate appreciation week is April 5-9 with many events happening that week;
- Last week a new Executive Board was elected, participation was greater than last year, and the incoming president is Morgan Pierce

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

Good afternoon Senate Council members, hope everyone is doing well.

UPPDA joined our colleagues and peers in denouncing and expressing our outrage by the recent murders of those in the Asian community. UPPDA supports and stands with the Asian community and will be hosting a coffee hour this Friday, hosted by Dr. Danny Lopez, our chair of diversity and inclusion who is also a trained anti-bias facilitator and licensed social worker.

*Since the last time we met, UPPDA hosted a successful viewing and discussion of the film *Picture a Scientist*. We also kicked off our American Friendship Program and paired up 34 international postdocs with domestic postdocs to learn from each other and, hopefully, build a lasting friendship. As part of our efforts for Women's History Month, we are hosting a book club featuring the book "*Inferior: How Science got Women Wrong*", by Angela Saini.*

Moving forward, we are planning for our board elections this next month and also in the process of developing a postdoc climate survey which we hope to share with the Senate the results of sometime in the fall.

Thanks everyone. That concludes my report for the month!

7. Report of the President of the Staff Council, Andy Stephany

Stephany said we stood with Asian communities against xenophobia. He congratulated Kathy Humphrey

on her new role. He expressed his hopes that everyone took advantage of the staff self-care day since we all struggle with hardships of last year and work-life balance issues. All look forward to resuming some normalcy in the fall with understanding that the campus culture needs to shift in supporting and encouraging remote and flexible work arrangements. At the last Staff Council meeting, SC approved new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion standing committee, selected candidates for the Book Fund Award and for the Professional Development Award. Staff Council elections are coming up.

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

a. Gift Acceptance and Naming Policy - Professor Carey Balaban, TAFC

Balaban briefly introduced the new policy as the product of shared governance with many people involved. The policy establishes standards and requirements for the acceptance of gifts, which reflect University values, mission and priorities. The Office of P&AE will ensure adherence to standards.

Since this policy has been already approved by FA, it did not need a motion and voting poll was launched immediately.

YES – 24, NO – 0, ABSTAIN - 2

Passed.

b. Bylaws and Procedures Committee - Dr. Nicholas Bircher, Chair

While the text of resolution was being displayed on screen, *Bircher* summarized the reasoning behind it. The proposed edits to Senate Bylaws will change the one-year term of office to two-year term for all senate officers with only two consecutive terms allowed. To assure continuity, the election of President and Vice President will happen in odd numbered years and the election of Secretary will be held in even numbered years.

Stephany commented that this was exactly how the elections were done in the Staff Council and it works very well.

Voting poll launched.

YES –23, NO – 0, ABSTAIN – 1

Passed.

9. Unfinished Business and/or New Business

None

10. Announcements

No official announcement, but Hirsch shared her personal news for after graduation.

11. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 4:32 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:

Bonneau, Bonner, Brodt, Cilli, Cousins, Cudd, Doty, Fort, Gallagher, Gau, Goundappa, Gregerson, Hirsch, Henker, K. Humphrey, Jeong, Kieselyov, King, Kleebank, Klem, Loughlin, Macadangdang, Molinaro, Poljak, Rauptis, Rhein, Roberts, Rutenbar, Salcido, Sastry, Scott, Shekhar, Stephany, Swigonova, Vento, Wilson, Wood

Members not attending:

Abubaker, Almarza, Aziz, Bratman, Bunger, Hall, C. Humphrey, Jones, Kanthak, Khan, Kiesling, Kohanbash, Kory, Kucan, Mostern, Mulcahy, Munro, Murtazashvili, Nelson, Popovich, Potoski, Sukits, Vilijaste

*Excused attendance:

de Vallejo, Judd, Mulvaney, Washington

Others attending:

Ayers, Balaban, Bircher, Christof, Davitt, De Jong, Denman, Floyd, Gabler, Harding, Harrell, Hitter, Jeffrey, Jones, Johnson, Labrinidis, Lalo, Leifson, McGivney, McGrane, Moran, Pelt, Pickett, Ramanan, Roadman, SantaCasa, Seldin, Staresinic, Supowitz, Tananis, Tenney, Toner, Turner, Walker, Williams, Zwick

*Notified Senate Office