

Senate Council Meeting Minutes

Via Zoom

Thursday, May 20, 2021

I. Call to Order

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

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

The distributed minutes from the April 22, 2021 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 said that his report would have a different structure today and be focused on what is going to happen over the summer.

Covid-19: We have the vaccine resolution on the agenda and there is a lot of talks in the country. Everything is on the table. The virus is still present, but the availability of vaccine is a positive change from last year. The desirable situation would be if everyone was vaccinated, but mandating vaccine is not a simple matter. He recommended Geovette Washington's interview in University Times, in which she talked about some of the complexities surrounding such decision. Chancellor Gallagher said that they would be watching the rates of vaccination in the community and encouraging people to get vaccinated over the summer.

State Budget: Budget season is heating up. The appropriation bill most likely will move late June. Pitt as a state institution is subject to non-preferred appropriation, which can be done after the main budget is passed and it requires 2/3 majority of votes. This changes dynamics. Especially this year with new members and new leadership, the situation is more uncertain. There is no budget issues but a lot of other issues that may influence the support for our bill. We are monitoring situation, but it is difficult to gage the support. State funding allows us to offer discount to students from Pennsylvania.

Then, Chancellor asked Kellie Kane for an update on admissions for the fall.

Admissions: Kane had good news for the SC. With our current deposits, we will meet or exceed the enrolment goals. It is quite a miracle in a year of covid-19 and virtual visits. We are also up in recruiting the underrepresented minorities (African Americans and Latinex students). And we are going to have the largest Pennsylvania class in Pitt's history. We are down in numbers of international students, but we successfully increased our recruitment of the transfer students.

Gallagher added that we may be bursting in the seam in the fall, which exciting for us coming out of COVID year.

Unionization: Referring to the effort to organize a bargaining unit including Pitt faculty, Gallagher mentioned the recent decision made by the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board, in which the Board agreed with the University to exclude SOM faculty from the bargaining unit. Therefore, now we are on a path to election.

Chancellor concluded his report with some acknowledgments and thank you remarks:

- Successful graduation and the plans for special event for 2021 graduates during the Homecoming in the fall.
- Anna Balazs elected to the National Academy of Science
- Pitt soccer team in 3rd team in the nation
- Thanks to Frank Wilson, David Salcido and Andy Stephany for their service to the University Senate and Staff Council

There were no questions for Chancellor after he finished his report, but there was a sudden commotion in President Bonneau's office. Senate officers dropped in unexpectedly to deliver a parting gift, a chair engraved with a Taylor Swift quote. Molinaro, Wilson and Fort handed the gift in person, while Salcido participated in the event virtually, from behind the pig surgery table. In addition the officers honored President Bonneau with a poem recorded and performed over zoom.

V. Report of Senate President, Chris Bonneau

President Bonneau delivered his last report and open with the presentation of the Senate Service Award to Professor Linda Tashbook. He introduced Linda and her contributions to Senate and Pitt community (long standing member and chair of Benefits and Welfare Committee, Faculty Assembly, initiator of Mental Wellness Taskforce, integral force in organizing two Senate Plenary sessions on mental health issues, creator and manager of The Homeless Law blog and author of Family Guide to Mental Illness and the Law).

Then Bonneau moved to the issue of vaccination resolution and shared with the audience information about Penn State and Temple Universities considering the similar resolutions. He also shared a map of the country illustrating how colleges and universities deal with the vaccine mandates which shows the similar polarization between states as on the political issues.

Looking back at the last list we have a long list of things we accomplished through shared governance: new Provost, Campus master plan, Pitt Success Program, extension of a tenure clock in SOM, Title IX stats more public, appointment stream faculty (ASF), institutionalized senate officers with compensation, COI portal and policy, promise of Pitt carbon neutral by 2037, Provost Committee on Tenure and Promotion, closing for COVID-19 and reopening, Title IX rules change, new guideline for review of faculty, new SVC for Health Sciences, gift and

renaming policy, IP policy, Plan for Pitt, antiracism class and resolution, no layoffs, budget ReSTART, and some bylaws modifications. It was a busy three years.

VI. Reports of Student Members of Senate Council:

A. Student Government Board (SGB), Harshitha Ramanan

SGB report will be short, as we are taking a summer break, but we continue to train and transition with biweekly meetings, plan for the Mental Health Awareness Week, and reorganize our budget and website.

B. College of General Studies Student Government (CGSSG)

No report

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

Also short as Pierce said that the new Executive Board was excited to start planning for the next year and she introduced new members of EB.

VII. Report of the President of the Postdoctoral Association, Dave Gau (*submitted in written*)

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

While COVID-19 vaccines are becoming more readily available now, COVID-19 remains prevalent throughout the world and especially now in India where over 4000 people are succumbing to the infection daily and where many of our postdoctoral and members of the community are from. This past week, we hosted a virtual coffee hour and encouraged postdocs to utilize University resources to help during these stressful times. Thank you to Dr. Godley for connecting us with University Counseling and Life Solutions and for Counseling and Life Solutions for being at the coffee hour and joining in on the conversation regarding physical and mental well-being. UPPDA encourages anyone with colleagues from India, or with family and friends in India, to make sure they are aware of available University resources and understand that this may be a stressful time for them.

We recently concluded our elections for the 2021-2022 academic year and I would like to introduce the next board UPPDA. I will be returning as president alongside two other returning board members, Cristina Espinosa, in the Vascular Medicine Institute, and Mariarosaria De Rosa, in the Hillman Cancer Center. We will be joined by new board members Stephanie Mutchler, Department of Medicine, Santiago Panesso, Magee-Womens Research Institute, Ramanujan Srinath, Center for the Neural Basis of Cognition, and Vaishali Aggarwal, Department of Pharmacy.

Looking forward to working with you all again next year and that concludes my report.

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

Staff Council continues to monitor issue of job creep on campus. Next month they will survey staff about their work environment and be sure to update this body on the results. Stephany thanked for the presentation on the budget ReSTART done especially for the Staff Council. At the general meeting, they hosted Q&A with the four candidates for president. All officer positions are open for reelection. He introduced all candidates and reminded that the election would be held next month. Finally Stephany had some parting thank-you words to Senate Officers, committee chairs and members of the Senate for their mentorship and cooperation. He expressed gratitude to the University Administrators for their openness and willingness to communicate in order to improve staff experience.

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

A. Budget Policies Committee – Professor Tyler Bickford, Chair

Bickford introduced the resolution related to the ongoing process to reform the budget model at the University. He gave the background for the resolution, which explained in detail what work had been done and why the resolution asks to strengthen shared governance in the new model. The RCM model works the best when there is shared governance participation not only at the design stage, but also in its ongoing management. We feel it is better to depend on the existing structures than create new ones. The shared governance structures need to be strengthened at the unit level if the decision-making is being pushed into the units. **The Resolution on strengthening shared governance as part of the University of Pittsburgh's budget model revision** has already passed through the BPC and Faculty Assembly and it is presented for Senate Council consideration today.

Gallagher expressed thanks for Tylor Bickford's and BPC's work. Stephany added that Staff Council passed similar resolution this month.

Voting poll was launched.

Results: YES - 25, NO - 0, ABSTAIN – 4

PASSED

B. PACUP and UCGS Policies – Professors Bonnie Falcione & John Stoner, EPC Co-Chairs

On behalf of Educational Policies Committee, Stoner introduced two policies, which were recently revised and updated: Provost's Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Programs and University Council of Graduate Studies. The intent of this overhaul was to bring them in agreement with how these bodies operate and to align policies with each other. Thanks to the period of public comments, one significant change was introduced. The newly revamped policies call now for a member of EPC to serve on each respective body.

Pierce made a comment about the appointment of student representatives to these committees and suggested to add presidents of student organizations since they are the elected representatives of student population. In the short discussion that followed her comment, it was agreed that a friendly amendment "appointed in consultation with respective student government boards" as suggested by

Chancellor should be added. Other suggestions followed. Bonneau suggested leaving the final wordsmithing to the Office of Policies, to make sure that consultations with student leaders are written into policies but the language is general enough as not to require any changes to policies if student organizations evolve or change in the future.

Voting poll was launched separately for each policy.

Results for PACUP policy: YES - 23, NO – 0, ABSTAIN – 4

Passed.

Results for UCGS policy: YES - 23, NO - 0, ABSTAIN - 4

Passed.

X. Unfinished Business and/or New Business

A. Vaccination Resolution - Professor Chris Bonneau, Senate President

Bonneau said that the presented resolution passed at FA with an overwhelming approval and invited people to comment.

Loughlin said that he wished the resolution was less punitive (banning from campus unvaccinated people) and had more positive reinforcement (incentivizing people to get vaccines and share their vaccination status)

Gallagher added that making this decision is complex, but whatever decision we arrive at, it would be made to protect people not to exclude them.

Bonneau said that the best ways of incentivizing people were also discussed at the Resilience Committee meeting.

Ramanan wanted to know if unvaccinated students could arrive and then get vaccine in the campus vaccine clinic instead of not being allowed on campus from start.

Bonneau explained that the resolution does not prevent having vaccine clinic available in this way. The main goal is to express our views on mandatory vaccination, raise the issue with administration and encourage them to consider it. We want students to be vaccinated as soon as possible and to facilitate equitable access to vaccines. It is a general resolution, while all details are a matter of policies and procedures.

Chancellor reinforced that administration will abstain from voting, but they appreciate this resolution and will take it as input when making the decision.

De Vallejo: I strongly encourage passing this resolution and leaving the details and language to administration.

Voting results: YES - 22, NO - 1, ABSTAIN - 5

Passed.

XI. Announcements

As this was his last Senate Council meeting, Wilson expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to participate in SC and to interact with its members (faculty, students, staff and administration), and to see shared governance in action. He singled out Andy Stephany, Robin Kear, Chris Bonneau and Lori Molinaro and thanked them for their work. He concluded his final announcement with a call “Do not forget about regional campuses. Thank you all”. Gallagher said that it is also the last meeting for Kathy Humphrey and thanked her for her work.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 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, Bratman, Cousins, Cudd, de Vallejo, Doty, Floyd, Fort, Gallagher, Gau, Goundappa, Gregerson, Henker, Humphrey, Jeong, Kanthak, Loughlin, Molinaro, Mulvaney, Pierce, Ramanan, Roberts, Rutenbar, Salcido, Sastry, Stephany, Swigonova, Vento, Washington, Wilson

Members not attending:

Abubaker, Almarza, Aziz, Brodt, Bunger, Cilli, Hall, Jones, Judd, Khan, Kieselyov, Kiesling, King, Kleeban, Kohanbash, Kory, Kucan, Mostern, Mulcahy, Munro, Murtazashvili, Nelson, Poljak, Popovich, Potoski, Rauptis, Scott, Sukits, Wood, Yates

*Excused attendance: Klem, Shekhar

Others attending:

Bickford, Chou, Dostilio, Godley, Harrell, Hitter, Jones, Kane, Labrinidis, Lalo, McCarthy, McGrane, Moran, Radziwon, Ringler, SantaCasa, Seldin, Stoner, Tashbook,

*Notified Senate Office