

**Faculty Assembly Meeting Minutes
Via Hybrid
2700 Posvar Hall and Zoom**

Thursday, October 6, 2022

1. Call to Order

President Robin Kear called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Past Faculty Assembly Meeting

Kear asked for a motion to approve the minutes. On a motion duly made (Bircher) and seconded (Parker) the minutes of the September 7, 2022 Faculty Assembly Meeting were approved as written.

3. Items of New Business.

None

4. Report of the Senate President, Robin Kear (submitted in written form)

Time moves forward at a relentless pace even though monumental events in your life sometimes make you beg it to slow down. I have had an ongoing family emergency over the past month, and I thank the Senate Officers and the administration for their support.

I have spent much of September attending the first meetings of the academic year of our 15 Senate Committees. They are off to a great start. I have also met with the new Staff Council President, and we will be collaborating on several initiatives. There are so many wonderful events happening on campus this month, including get out the vote efforts and voting related discussions.

Faculty Representation on Chancellor Search Committee

- Thank you for your participation in this process. The full committee membership was announced by the Board of Trustees on September 20th. The elected faculty to the search committee are:
 - School of Medicine: Sarah Gaffen
 - Regionals: Jeff Guterman (Bradford)
 - Professional Schools of the Provost's area: Larry Feick (Business)
 - A&S – Lara Putnam (History)
 - Other schools of the Health Sciences: Debbie Miller (SHRS)

- 1578 faculty voted in the elections - the breakdown is as follows:
 - Arts & Sciences 367 voted – 52% participation
 - Health Sciences 325 voted – 55% participation
 - Professional Schools 307 voted - 54% participation
 - Regionals 116 voted - 49% participation
 - School of Medicine 463 voted – 19% participation
- As I have received a couple of questions, I will share a note about HR coding. The Senate determines a person's eligibility for faculty assembly, search committees, and other kinds of nominations by the HR code they have. The HR coding is done in the units. I discussed this with the Provost, as this can impact shared governance eligibility, and I will explore this with Lori and HR.

Chancellor Search Process

- The search committee is working with Storbeck Search, a diversified search group.
- I attended the Monday October 3rd in-person forum for faculty, staff, and students. It was sparsely attended, by 11 people, with perhaps 6 of the search committee members in attendance.
 - I think this was due to untimely communication around the event.
- On behalf of the Senate Officers, I have expressed concern about the process, including the timeliness of the communication for gathering community feedback.
- There are more forums being finalized in a short timeframe, including a virtual forum next Wednesday October 12th at 7:30 pm.
- Everyone is invited to share feedback by completing an online survey which will remain open until Oct. 14. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PittChancellor>
 - As of Monday, there were 1,000 responses.
- Search committee members are hosting small group forums throughout the University. If your unit is interested in hosting a forum, please contact PittChancellor@storbecksearch.com
 - Professional Schools faculty and staff – Larry Feick has organized 2 upcoming forums
 - Monday, October 10th from 8:30-9:30 in 2200 Sennott Square
 - Thursday, October 20th at 4 PM in Alumni 532
 - Schools of Health Sciences (excluding SOM) – Debbie Miller working with Deans
 - Medicine
 - Regionals – Jeff Guterman is working on 2 sessions next week
 - Arts & Sciences
- Anyone can submit suggestions for candidates for this position through the search email address PittChancellor@storbecksearch.com
- The Senate Officers will be meeting with the Eva Tansky Blum and Anantha Shekar, chairs of the search committee as well.

Policy Updates

- Although we don't have any Policies this month to discuss, there are two policies open for public comment through October 19th.
 - [Intergovernmental Personnel Act \(IPA\) Assignments](#) - open for comment 9/22/2022 to 10/19/2022
 - [Management of University Facilities & Grounds](#) - open for comment 9/22/2022 to 10/19/2022
 - You can find these on the Policy Office website:
<https://www.policy.pitt.edu/policies-open-comment>
- The Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Assignments has a Senate Research Committee representative and will soon move through the Research Committee before coming here.

Expanded Executive Committee Meeting

- The Expanded Executive Committee Meeting, consisting of the Senate Officers and the chairs/co-chairs of the Senate Committees will meet next Friday October 14th for an extended meeting. We will discuss committee functions, next year's plenary, and top issues the committees are working on this academic year.
- The Expanded Executive Committee will also be meeting with the Chancellor and Provost on October 18th.

Invitation

- Reminder: Rebecca Keiser, (Chief of Research Security Strategy and Policy, National Science Foundation), is visiting Pitt on Monday October 10. She is a national leader in evolving research security practices. While the Research and TAFC Committees have been invited specifically, any Faculty Assembly member is invited to attend these three meetings, all in William Pitt Union, Lower Lounge, between 10 am and 1 pm.

This month marks the 4-year anniversary of the Tree of Life massacre. I ask that we remember those still grieving and dealing with the repercussion of this violence and other violence in our city.

Any questions or comments on my report?

Reed: where will the Keiser event take place

Kear responded that it will take place in the lower lounge of the Pitt Union

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

None

6. Unfinished Business and /or New Business

United Way Campaign

David DeJong, SVC for Business and Operations

DeJong introduced himself as the Chair of the United Way campaign. He also introduced Victoria Lancaster who is working on operations of the campaign.

The theme of the campaign this year is inclusivity and this is manifested in different ways. This is the first year that there is a unified campaign across all 5 campuses, and we are sharing ideas and messaging. The campaign aims to use as much in person outreach as possible. We are been visiting with all of the folk working in operations and maintenance. We went to visit all of our trade groups on Melwood. This means meeting with people as they start and finish work to inform them of the aims of the campaign are. We have heard concerns raised by from faculty about coercion in which some people may appear too aggressive, especially when dealing with their subordinates. The office is addressing this by sending messaging out to higher levels of aggregation, rather than have the supervisor deal directly with the people under them. He also stated that they are strengthening the ability for people to participate anonymously.

DeJong shared his personal interest in the United Way, and described two things that are important to him. One is the amazing impact of the direct actions funded by the general fund. This includes the 211 hot line which is available 24/7 to anyone who needs any kind of help with personal crisis. Many 100,000s of connections have been made through 211. The United Way also supports many non-profits in SW PA. DeJong described how as a board member for two organizations that help children he has been impressed by the collaboration and help provided through the United Way does a great thing for them

DeJong also pointed out that the United Way campaign is the only campaign that is officially allowed to take place on campus, and this is to avoid being inundated with requests from many worthy non-profit organizations. This is a valuable thing and all of the requests from local non-profits are made through the United Way campaign.

DeJong provided some additional facts. Last year 80% of individuals in our trade groups supported the United Way campaign, support was 50% in maintenance staff, but only 8% of faculty support the campaign. When he saw this statistic, he asked to come address Faculty Assembly to inform the faculty about the campaign and seek input on why participation is so low among the faculty.

DeJong then introduced Sheila Rawlings who is the Director for Development for the Neighborhood Academy, and invited her to describe the work that this organization does. The Neighborhood Academy, a private independent faith-based school, has been in existence for 21 years and was founded by people who ran summer schools for at risk youth and were struck by

the number of their students who dropped out of school. The Academy serves students from 19 different zip codes and provides a college preparatory education to students from at risk communities. 70% of students attending the Academy are from families earning \$30,000/year or less. To date, 100% of graduates have entered college; the majority graduate from college and many return to Pittsburgh. The Academy provide 3 meals a day, counselors, transportation, arts and sports, and no class has more than 15 students. All students have an individual learning plan and the Mission is to break the cycle of generational poverty. Most of the support for the Academy comes from individuals.

DeJong mentioned that faculty can support the United Way by going to the portal and support either the general fund or any individual organizations including the Neighborhood Academy.

Questions?

Kear thanked DeJong for his presentation.

Kear is helping DeJong to identify faculty to serve on the United Way steering committee. If anyone knows someone who might be interested, please contact Robin Kear or Dave DeJong. DeJong noted that only one of the 15 members of the steering committee is a faculty member and they would be happy to welcome more and hopefully improve faculty participation in the United Way.

Human Resources Strategic Plan

James Gallaher Jr., Vice Chancellor Human Resources

Gallagher noted that he is sharing the strategic plan in the spirit of getting feedback as it is still in progress. This is one of many sessions to educate campus constituents and get feedback on the new plan

Gallagher made a presentation describing the new strategic plan

He first talked about the Office of Human Resources (OHR) guiding principles:

- Mission; Recruit, develop, retain, and support a diverse and talented workforce, and partner in maintaining a productive, dynamic and inclusive work environment
- Vision: Serve as a center of excellence in providing foundational support for advancing the University's mission by helping make Pitt an outstanding place to work, grow, and thrive.

A lot of what is in the place is focused on the grow and thrive piece. There is a [form](#) on the website to provide feedback on the plan and faculty are encouraged to respond to this.

Shaping the workplace was put in place in 2019 and was quite successful in addressing challenges. Five areas were focused on such as work-life balance, benefits, performance review and talent, climate culture and work environment, and salary. So far, the salary piece has not been put together as yet. This plan will sunset as the new plan comes into effect

OHR strategic plan is a 5 year plan; 2022-2027

There are 4 major priorities. The details behind these priorities can be found on the [website](#) and are outlined here.

DEI partnerships

- Targeted recruitment and retention to support generational differences
 - Encourage Pitt students to work at Pitt
 - Develop Pathways to Pitt programs
- Partner with OEDI on strategic DEI initiatives
 - Campus climate survey
 - Diversity recruitment and retention strategies and policies
- Use Equity diversity and inclusivity lens in all OHR work

Employee engagement and experience

- Compensation modernization
 - career ladders and cross training,
 - Create career paths and discipline-based communities of practice
- Develop talent management processes and tools;
 - Create mentorship program
 - Enhance education and talent development
 - Integrate professional development and continuous learning for current and new employees
 - Redesign on-boarding and off-boarding processes.
- Advance UCDC through updated policies and staff engagement
- Improve benefit plan
- Develop Pitt employment brand and strategy – create materials
- Develop total compensation philosophy and tools
- Promote policies that prioritize wellbeing and mental health
- Embrace new approaches to work/life balance and flexible work

HR community, capability and capacity

- Create an HR advisory committee
- Evolve HR delivery model
 - Implement HR business partner model
 - Ensure adequate staffing
- Develop HR community of practice
- Institute OHR rotation program for HR staff so they can develop broader experience.

Process efficiency and customer service

- Foster a talent and performance driven culture to provide better and timely customer service
- Develop feedback opportunities to determine whether this is successful.
- Develop disseminate HR data dashboards for all RCs
- Redesign temporary employment service (all temps)
- Advance HR technology

Please go to form and provide feedback.

Kear thanked Gallagher for the presentation as HR issues come up in several committees and having a dashboard and more communication will be much appreciated. She encouraged everyone to fill out the form.

Questions:

Labrinidis: Thanks for the presentation. One issue that we are facing is the fact that the undergraduate hourly rate is capped at \$15/hour and this has made it difficult to recruit students. They are able to earn more money doing more menial jobs in fast food restaurants for example. This should be addressed as we are encouraging our students to get the research experience, and this good for their career.

Gallagher: - Thanks for that point we have an avenue to have that discussion.

Taboas: Are you differentiating between the needs that staff paid on hard versus soft money?

Gallagher: Yes, it is part of the discussion

Taboas: What are the things that you are identifying as different?

Gallagher: The focus is around compensation and career development. For people on soft funds who are successful we need to determine how we provide career paths and ramps into the institution.

Taboas: Recruitment is also very different for both types of staff. It is hard to recruit people for soft money positions and revamping recruitment fairs that target these workers would be valuable.

Gallagher responded that they are looking at changing the nature of recruitment fairs and will be having one focused on students in November, and could consider doing something similar for workers on soft money.

Taboas: How is HR thinking about how PI can have more leeway on restrictions on what researcher can pay? What prevents us from paying students \$18/hour for example?

Gallagher: We are exploring this, although I cannot answer concerning students since this is an issue for the Provost.

Maier: Raised the issue that although we have budgeted money on a grant and have identified a qualified Pitt employee for the job we cannot pay that person as it would be increasing their salary too much. It is not clear what is causing this but it has gotten in the way of advancing people in their careers

Gallagher: That is part of the flexibility piece and we are working on this in order to retain the best employees. Since arriving here, we have worked to scale back on rules for rules sake.

Bonneau commented that we do not place rules on hiring and paying faculty, they can be paid at quite different rates based on the unit. If we are not putting artificial caps on faculty salaries we should not be doing that on staff, and if the money is available on grants PIs should be allowed to pay what is budgeted.

Parker: Asked for more detail on the online management performance system. There have been reports that there is more monitoring of employees at their desks and whether they open certain read greens. Is there a climate of more monitoring or is it a way to manage the performance evaluation process?

Gallagher: This is not about monitoring or surveillance but we are talking about a management process, that allow for the evaluations stored on the cloud.

Balaban: Asked whether there could be a mechanism for faculty to consult with HR on job description and market value before grants go out.

Gallagher: This is a great idea and one that we have not heard yet. It might add more time to the process but this is something that we will look into

Morel: Asked for more detail on the plans for the UCDC advance since there is a lack of affordable child care in this area and this affects all university employees. Is there a plan to increase the number of facilities or expand UCDC?.

Gallagher: Yes, we are thinking of this but we have not come up with a plan as yet. We are looking for partners in this area and we are having discussions.

Jacobs: Is there a plan to get staffing up to prepandemic levels?

Gallagher: Yes, the goal is to get back there, but there has been a lack of the number and quality of applicants

Bove: Asked for more transparency on the wait list. She noted that shas been on the wait list for 5.5 years and is now expecting her first child and does not know where she in on the list and has not been offered the opportunity to visit UCDC to see if they would want their child there. This adds stress to an already stressful situation.

Gallagher indicated there are discussions on how best to manage this problem, and they realize the need to improve the system

Wert: Asked about benefits for those working in a hybrid format, and whether these will be adjusted for these employees. There are unique challenges regarding benefits packages since many of these workers may not be in Pittsburgh

Gallagher: Indicated that HR realizes the need and that they are working on it.

7. Announcements

None

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:09 pm.

Documents from the meeting are available at the University Senate website:

<http://www.univsenate.pitt.edu/faculty-assembly>

Respectfully submitted,

Penelope (Penny) Morel
Secretary, University Senate

Members attending: Almarza, Archibald, Balaban, Bell, Bircher, Bonneau, Bove, Burton, Conley, Cousins, Cutsumbis, Dallal, Epitropoulos, Fort, Guterman, Jacobs, Kanthak, Kear, Labrinidis, Lemery, Mahboobin, Maier, Mauk, McCormick, Melnick, Molinaro, Morel, Morris, Newman, Oyler, Pacella-LaBarbara, Paljug, Parker, Pitetti, Potoski, Reed, Scott, Shafiq, Shephard, Songer, Stoner, Streeter, Swigonova, Taboas, Tokowicz, Tudorascu, Wert, Wood G, Wood K

Members not attending: Bratman, Buchanich, Damiani, Denman, Falcione, Giandomenico-Meaner, Hall, Jones, Kohanbash, Lewin, Murtazashvili I, Paterson, Salcido, Sant, Schmidt, Schuster, Triplette, Yates, Yearwood, Zack

*Excused attendance: Bench, Glynn, Kovacs, Livingston, Massanelli, Murtazashvili J, Nguyen, Tashbook

Others attending: DeJong, France, Frieze, Gallaher, Jones, Lancaster, Ledger, Manges, Paul, Rawlings, SantaCasa, Stonesifer, Tuttle, Wallace, Wells, Zullo

* Notified Senate office