

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
Senate Educational Policies Committee
November 16, 2015
Meeting Minutes

Present: Amy E. Aggelou, Michael Beach, David Beck, Leslie Eibl, Bonnie Falcione, Zsuzsa Horvath, A. Murat Kaynar, M. Kathleen Kelly, Juan Manfredi, Helen Petracchi, Alberta Sbragia, and Aliyah Weinstein.

Excused: Douglas Landsittel and Susan Skledar

Not Present: Shelly Renee Brown, Micah Gross, Lori A. Molinaro, Naomi Stoll, and Frank Wilson.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Zsuzsa Horvath (Chair) at ~3pm.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the October 2015 meeting were approved as written.

Old Business:

Working Group Updates

- A request was made to the new committee members to consider joining one of the working groups.
- Working Group on Issues Related to Student Opinions of Teaching Online Surveys
 - Chair Horvath updated the committee that the upcoming schedule for the working group meetings is being planned.
- Working Group on Digital Ethics
 - Chair Falcione reported that the next meeting is being planned. Committee member Michael Beach volunteered to join this working group.

New Business:

Discussion of University Strategic Plan, Goal No.1 Advance Educational Excellence, as it relates to EPC work.

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Discussion of University Strategic Plan, Goal No.1 Advance Educational Excellence, as it relates to EPC.

- Chair Horvath introduced this new business item, stemming from the recent Faculty Assembly where it was recommended that multiple committees may have opportunity to be involved with each goal, and similarly that each committee may be able to explore and contribute to multiple goals. Vice-Provost Manfredi provided an update on the progress related to the Strategic Plan and Strategic Goals, including what has been approved and what continues as ongoing and dynamic work since the last EPC meeting. For example, Vice Provost for Planning, David DeJong has requested of individual university units to align their strategic planning with the University's Strategic Goals. Additionally Vice Provost Manfredi provided an update on the work and progress of the University Strategic Plan Goal No.1 Advance Educational Excellence Working Group (one of the seven working groups) for which he is the Chair. A draft of this working group's preliminary draft of strategies for possible exploration was shared with the EPC previously, and was redistributed at this meeting with a request for any additional input, highlighting that aspects include strategies to improve access and affordability, such as combined degree programs, and other approaches to reduce costs for students. The working group has also progressed to developing possible

suggestions for outlining implementation of the strategies at the unit level. The seven working groups have provided opportunities during this process to meet with university communities. For example, meetings have been held with students, the staff association council, and faculty members, for example by attending faculty assembly. Additional meetings are already planned or being planned with various groups. These meeting opportunities have been extended with the goal of providing forums for university communities to ask and answer questions about the strategic planning and strategic goals and for them to provide input. Students and student groups, for example GPSG (Graduate and Professional Student Government) and SGB (Student Government Board) have expressed interest in taking a more active role including participating on the working groups and this is being addressed. An update from the working groups is planned and could be provided to the Board of Trustees in February. The committee posed questions related to the possibility of bringing other working group representatives to future EPC meetings to provide information that may be relevant to the EPC – and this was determined to be a possibility; also posed was if considerations for budget impact are being addressed for the possible proposed strategies – and it was explained that all of the evolving suggested strategies will need to undergo budgetary impact evaluations relative to the units that would consider them; and also posed included inquiry about if professional degree programs that are being transitioned at a national level for their respective entry degree programs from, for example, bachelors to master degree programs, will have the ability to accomplish this with 2+3 or 3+3, etc. types of programs - it was explained that the university is interested to remove barriers that would prevent appropriate implementation of such programs; and finally questions were posed regarding how implementation of aspects of the draft strategies in particular related to discipline based teaching and learning centers will not promote silo-type education – a broad discussion evolved with input from committee members that included a number of considerations, examples, and available resources, that could be highlighted to avoid this consequence and instead promote collaboration across units for the advancement of educational excellence within and across discipline based teaching and learning centers.

- Members of the committee agreed that committee work related to the University Strategic Plan should focus on Goal No. 1 Advance Educational Excellence.

Vice-Provost updates

- **Undergraduate**

Vice Provost Manfredi presented his report :

- An update was provided pertaining to a recent meeting for graduate and undergraduate programs that are subject to gainful employment reporting requirements. This included that PITT is required to prepare a report on financial information pertaining to non-degree seeking students who obtain federal aid under Title IV programs.
- Available functionality in People Soft, including an advising module for the student record, is being explored. Use of this capability aligns with the strategic plan of the university to serve as a leader in personalizing the educational experience of our students through advising and by harnessing technology solutions. He attended a recent demonstration of the functionality of the advising module. A number of details pertaining to how it will be used, and what documentation will be viewable, will need to be worked out. An update to People Soft will make these records available to students. In order to assure that student privacy is maintained the university will make sure that records are viewed by individuals only as a function of their role within the university.

- The ACC Provosts meeting was held at PITT recently, this will be followed by the ACC Vice Provosts meeting. PITT will host the ACC Vice Provosts meeting in February. Anticipated agenda items that will be determined at the Provost level include ACC's support for inter-institutional learning opportunities within the ACC for students and faculty to garner the combined expertise of the 15 ACC institutions. Further details will be reported to the committee when they are available.
 - There is a search committee for the position of Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Student. Applications for this position were due on November 15, 2015; more than 60 applications were received.
- **Graduate**
Vice Provost Sbragia presented her report:
 - The search to fill the position of Hillman University Librarian and Director, University Library System (ULS) is ongoing. The search to fill the position of Dean of the School of Education is also ongoing; the profile has been completed and posted, and the members of the search committee have been finalized.

Faculty Assembly Update

- <http://www.utimes.pitt.edu/?p=37382>
- 2015-11-04
 - Presidents' address - highlights:
 - Strategic Planning
 - More than one committee may be appropriate to address this work
 - Emeritus status for NTS faculty
 - The Provost amended the proposal and this was unanimously passed
 - Senate plenary:
 - Will be held on Wednesday March 30, 2016
 - Topic is academic freedom in the 21st century
 - The keynote speaker has been identified, and has accepted the invitation.
 - Faculty panel speakers within the university are being identified.
 - Good responses and input have been posted on the senate website
 - The Provost formed a working group to develop guidelines on the topic of salary reductions
- Report from new University Senate Research Committee
 - Currently in process of writing mission statement
 - Goal of the committee is to provide a link between administration, related offices, and the senate
- A broader discussion regarding what is defined as research and if this should be examined by a Senate sub-committee or a broader university group. No conclusions were made.
- Report from University Senate Student Admissions, Aid and Affairs Committee
 - This is a new committee that was formed from the merger of two previous senate committees. As a result of this they are in the process of writing a mission statement
 - Interest in providing a distinction in how to best serve the needs of undergraduate and graduate students
 - Plans to join the efforts of Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) to address graduate student concern including expressed perception of disconnect from the larger university. The GPSG representative present at the assembly acknowledged their interest and willingness to work together on this.
 - The committee will return with specific recommendations

Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence (ACIE) update

- Liaison Falcione reported that the council has not yet met but will provide the committee with an update after the first meeting. It was noted that the RFP for the Innovation in Education Awards had been distributed by University email earlier that day, Committee members were asked to encourage faculty in their units to submit proposals and to utilize the services offered by CIDDE for proposal preparation. Proposals are due January 25, 2016.

SEPC future planning

The December meeting will take place on December 14th at the University Club at 4pm and will be a social meeting for the committee.

Adjournment @ ~4:30pm