

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
Senate Educational Policies Committee
April 18, 2016
Meeting Minutes

Present: Amy E. Aggelou, Michael Beach, David Beck, Mario C. Browne, Boryana Dobрева-Schalk, Leslie Eibl, Bonnie Falcione, Micah Gross, Zsuzsa Horvath, M. Kathleen Kelly, Douglas Landsittel, Juan Manfredi, Alberta Sbragia, Aliyah Weinstein

Excused: Mario Browne, Leslie Eibl, A. Murat Kaynar, Helen Petracchi, Susan Skledar

Not Present: Arash Mahboobin, 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 February 2016 meeting were approved as written.

Special Topics

- **Annual Update on Admissions**

- Marc Harding, Chief Enrollment Officer and Kellie Kane, OAFAs Director of Operations and Strategic Planning provided the annual update to the committee. This included a comprehensive overview of information and data that informs current and future processes utilized for student admissions. Questions posed by the committee pertaining to the use of SAT and ACT scores in the admissions process were addressed by Mr. Harding and Ms. Kane. Brochures utilized by the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid to provide general information to students were provided for committee members to review.

New Business

- **Pro-tem member**

- Chair Horvath introduced the committee's newest pro-tem member, Boryana Dobрева-Schalk, Director of Academic Programs in the College of General Studies and committee members provided a warm welcome.

- **Senate President Guidance on Press Visits**

- The committee discussed the guidance provided by Senate Wilson in his recent letter regarding press visits at committee meetings and the suggestions raised by committee members at the previous meeting. Committee members suggested that the meeting agenda be organized such that members of the press and others interested could attend from the beginning of the meeting and any items requiring executive session occur towards the end of the meeting when necessary and appropriate for dealing with confidential matters in accordance with the bylaws and President Wilson's guidance. The committee members agreed on this approach.

- **Proposed Changes for Course Drop Period**

- Chair Horvath proposed that the committee receive the report for the Vice Provost on Undergraduate Affairs as it would provide the background for this topic. The committee was presented with the report (see below) and discussed relevant issues.

Old Business

- **Elections Planning for Committee Leadership**

- Chair Horvath thanked the committee for their support during her two terms as committee Chair and encouraged members to consider making nominations or self-

nominations for leadership positions on the committee for the upcoming academic year. She also reminded the committee that elections for committee leadership would occur after new committee members were determined in the upcoming May Senate Standing Committee elections. To date, member Doug Landsittel has expressed interest and willingness to serve as the next Chair of the committee. Chair Horvath will continue providing service to the committee in the upcoming academic year as a pro-tem member.

- **Academic Integrity Training**

- Chair Horvath proposed and committee members agreed that due to the scheduled meeting time expiring when this agenda item came due for discussion that it be rescheduled for the May meeting.

Vice-Provost updates

Undergraduate

- Vice Provost Juan Manfredi provided his report:
 - The Periodic Review Report (PRR) for the Middle States Accreditation process is due on June 1, 2017. Two committees have been formed, the Compliance Committee which will function to demonstrate the University's compliance with various applicable federal regulations, a new aspect of the Middle States Accreditation requirements, and also the PRR Committee itself which will draft the PRR and which will be charged by the Provost before the end of the term. Dr. Manfredi distributed the current draft of the University policy to define the credit-hour, provided the rationale for the current draft including a review of policies on this topic at other institutions and state requirements for degree programs (for example 30 credit hours for Master's degree) and academic calendars, and he asked the committee to provide input by sending any comments to him. He indicated that programs identified through this process as not meeting defined credit hour requirements would be addressed. He also indicated that this policy will not preclude individual schools and units of the University from further refining a credit-hour policy to meet their otherwise defined requirements. Finally, he also described that the current Bulletin, a static list of courses available through the registrar will be changing to a dynamic catalog document and he encouraged the committee to invite the Registrar to an upcoming committee meeting next year to detail the new catalog including its search capabilities.
 - A proposal was submitted by students in December to adjust the course "drop-period" for undergraduate students. Both the current "add" and "drop" periods are 2 weeks in duration and students can add or drop courses without restrictions or oversight. The proposal called for increasing the length of the drop period to four weeks. The proposal included benchmarking data with other institutions and was reviewed by the Provosts Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Programs to understand the consequences of dropping a course in this longer timeframe. Input was provided from Student Financial Services and Financials Aid who explained that if a student inadvertently as a result of dropping courses changes status from full-time to part-time this could pose adverse financial consequences to the student. After substantial discussion and further input sought from across the university and from students it was suggested for the drop-period to be increased by one week and in which a signature from the students' academic advisor indicating that they have been sufficiently informed of all options and consequences of dropping courses in this extended time period will be required. A draft

of this revision to the drop-add period is in process and will be brought back to this committee. People Soft processes will also need to be accordingly adjusted. Dr. Manfredi noted the benefit to students with this change that should help to prevent students from withdrawing from courses and also noted that individual schools and units may further refine this process to meet their needs. Questions were posed by the committee including the consequences to low enrollment courses in which case Dr. Manfredi indicated the individual schools and deans would address such issues.

Graduate

- **Vice Provost Alberta Sbragia provided her report to the committee:**
 - For the Director of the University Library Systems (ULS) search, there were three finalists identified, due to one not being able to interview the search will continue to move forward. Additionally, one member of this search committee has stepped down, and a replacement, Clark Muenzer, has been appointed. The search for the Dean of the School of Education continues to move forward.
 - Dr. Sbragia recently met with members of the Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) and addressed a number of their questions.

Faculty Assembly update

- Committee member Doug Landsittel provided an update from the Faculty Assembly held on April 12th. The update included that at the assembly it was recommended that the upcoming year be the Year of Diversity and Inclusion. He also shared that the Student Admissions, Aid & Affairs Committee (SAAAC) requested and received endorsement on recommendations for improved communication, institutional support of Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) and graduate student support outside the Provost's area. The Budget Policies Committee reported on their survey that indicated concerns about faculty needing to participate and be more knowledgeable about the budgeting process. Lastly, the Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee presented the final resolution and received support on the moratorium on salary reduction for tenured faculty to be in effect and that it be retroactive to April 29, 2014. The committee members were referred to the University Times for additional details from the assembly.

Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence (ACIE) update

- Liaison Falcione indicated that the council last met on March 15th to make recommendations to the Provost on the ACIE Innovation in Education awards proposals. Twenty proposals were submitted this year, substantially increased from the eleven proposals submitted last year. After the Provost reviews the recommendations of the council and makes her final decision the results will be made public.
- Also shared with the committee by the liaison were the upcoming events scheduled for the Provost's Diversity Institute for Faculty Development 2016. A copy of the institute's flyer describing the upcoming events was provided to members. Chair Horvath highlighted that committee member Mario Brown is one of the planned discussants for the upcoming event, "Film Viewing and Discussion: "What's Race Got To Do With It?" on April 21st.

Next meeting is May 16, 2016 3pm in CL 826

Adjournment: at ~4:30pm.