

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
Senate Educational Policies Committee
October 27, 2014
Meeting Minutes

Present: Aggelou, Amy; Beck Jr, David; Falcione, Bonnie; Horvath, Zsuzsa; Kelly, Kathleen; Leibold, Mary Lou; Manfredi, Juan; Roberts, Laurel Bridges; Sbragia, Alberta; Skledar, Susan; Tananis, Cynthia; Weinstein, Aliyah

Excused: Kaynar, A. Murat; Petracchi, Helen E

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Zsuzsa Horvath (Chair) at 3:00pm.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the September 2014 meeting were approved as written.

New Business

- **Course summary form/enhanced course description**
 - A summary of SEPC work was presented by past-Chair Kathy Kelly who highlighted committee work, prompted by the request from past Student Government Board representative, leading to a report of findings and recommendations to the Faculty Assembly last spring. Members discussed the previously identified need for updated, enhanced, centrally located course descriptions for students to make informed course selections. Committee members agreed action was needed to bring further attention to this student-centered matter.
 - **ACTION:** A draft recommendation to the Faculty Assembly¹ and the previous SEPC drafted "course description template"² will be circulated by email to committee members and finalized at the next SEPC meeting before the formal recommendation will be submitted by the SEPC to the Faculty Assembly.

- **Creating working groups on two expanded senate executive committee requests:**
 - Digital ethics training and related social/digital media issues, in collaboration with CIDDE, TAFC and the TAFC Subcommittee on Academic Speech and Electronic Media.
 - Chair Horvath reviewed when SEPC guest last year, Joe Horne, Director, Instructional Services, CIDDE, spoke about the hybrid/online course structure and best practices and also discussed resources available for plagiarism awareness. There was interest from the committee in creating modules that can be used for plagiarism awareness. In addition, the committee agreed to work with CIDDE to create those modules. Dr. Horne had referenced a Digital Ethics series at Georgia State focusing on Plagiarism, Social Media and Copyright [<http://technology.gsu.edu/help-center/digital-ethics/>]. The committee at the time was enthusiastic about creating similar series here at the University of Pittsburgh. The Senate Extended Executive Committee asked the SEPC to work with TAFC and the TAFC Subcommittee on Academic Speech and Electronic Media to accomplish this and to create a central repository for such resources.
 - Chair Horvath summarized issues that have been identified (See Senate group to look into electronic speech issues at <http://www.utimes.pitt.edu/?p=30181>) and anticipated tasks of the workgroup including:
 1. Review of related university policies related to academic freedom and electronic media, including the existing classroom recording policy.
 2. Determine if existing university policies are adequate.

3. Provide faculty with summary materials and assure ongoing access.
 4. Study the need for a subcommittee to provide proactive measures and assist in response to any such situations.
- Chair Horvath requested volunteers for this workgroup and members Kathy Kelly and Amy Aggelou offered their service. An email request has already been communicated by the Chair to initiate collaborative efforts with TAFC and the NTS Ad-Hoc committee leadership.
 - **ACTION:** The Chair will send an email request to SEPC members for additional volunteers.
- Multifaceted issues related to OMET student opinions of teaching, in collaboration with TAFC and the NTS Ad-Hoc committee
 - Chair Horvath reviewed issues related to OMET student opinions of teaching
 1. Student Government Board work to make OMET evaluation results public
Senate Council September meeting: “SGB student representative reported Academic Affairs Chair, Alyse Johnson, is also working with the OMETs to develop a proposal that would make some of the results from teaching evaluations available/public for students so that they can more effectively choose classes. Students request availability of the results, faculty request increased participation rates. As a compromise, a proposal that would tie an individual’s ability to see the results to their participation in a survey is being developed.” From the September Senate Council minutes
(<http://univsenate.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Sep%2017%202014%2C%20sc%20minutes.pdf>)
 2. Role of OMET evaluations as a tool of evaluation of teaching in promotion.
 3. Considerations around the implementation of the online evaluation.
 4. Align student evaluations to measure learning.
 - Chair Horvath requested volunteers for this workgroup and members Cynthia Tananis and Laurel Bridges Roberts offered their service. An email request has already been communicated by the Chair to initiate collaborative efforts with TAFC and the NTS Ad-Hoc committee leadership.
 - **ACTION:** The Chair will send an email request to SEPC members for additional volunteers.
 - **Policy on student volunteers in research labs**
 - Chair Horvath reported that Senate Vice President Irene Frieze requested the committee look at a recent policy change that students are no longer allowed to volunteer in a lab or a research group if they are not formally registered or on the payroll.
 - Committee members discussed instances when students request to work on research as a volunteer over the summer, when they have lighter course-loads but when they are not registered.
 - After thorough discussion the committee agreed that this topic would be best addressed by the Office of Research and directed the committee’s response to Dr. Frieze to indicate this.

Old Business:

- A date will be determined for the SEPC annual report at the Faculty Assembly.

Vice-Provost updates

- Undergraduate Students
 - Vice Provost Manfredi presented the following items:
 1. New website for the Office of the Registrar (www.registrar.pitt.edu) includes a new service for students to indicate a “preferred name” in addition to their legal name.

2. The University continues its efforts to comply with new Commonwealth of Pennsylvania law (PA Act 46) described at the last SEPC meeting pertaining to registration for veteran students and expects the university to be in full compliance.
- Graduate Students
 - Vice Provost Sbragia presented the following report:
 1. A new Director of International Studies has been hired, Ariel Armony, from the University of Miami and will arrive next Spring.
 2. Dr. Sbragia recently attended a meeting in Washington, DC for the AAU's Graduate Deans. The major theme at the meeting was: an institution cannot be a research university without graduate students
 3. Dr. Sbragia will be chairing the search for the new Director of the University Library System. The faculty who have been elected to the Search Committee are: Mark Anderson (English), Sheila Corral (SIS), and Andrew Strathern (Anthropology) <http://www.universityannouncements.pitt.edu/openforum.pdf>
 4. Four out of five Centers at the University won Title VI Center competitions which will result in continued funding for foreign language students.
 5. Dr. Sbragia provided a brief update on the event she attended at CMU in April 2014 about the importance of humanities and social sciences, "Heart of the Matter," a comprehensive report on the current state of the humanities and social sciences [\[http://www.cmu.edu/homepage/society/2014/spring/heart-of-the-matter.shtml\]](http://www.cmu.edu/homepage/society/2014/spring/heart-of-the-matter.shtml)

Faculty Assembly update

- Faculty Assembly September meeting minutes: <http://univsenate.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Sep%2009%202014%20FA%20Minutes.pdf>
- Faculty Assembly October Meeting (10/08) <http://www.utimes.pitt.edu/?p=32502>
 - Minutes: <http://univsenate.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Oct%2007%202014%20FA%20Minutes.pdf>
 - The Senate's fall plenary session, "Managing Research Data: Challenges and Opportunities at the University," took place on October 23rd, it was streamed and recorded. The keynote speaker was Liz Lyon, former associate director of the UK Digital Curation Centre, a visiting faculty member in the School of Information Sciences. Her talk was titled: "Gearing up for Data? Institutional Drivers, Challenges and Opportunities."
 - The Senate executive committee has begun meeting informally in the University Club College Room, typically on the Thursday before the Assembly meets. Its next gathering, open to faculty, is at noon October 30th.
 - The Senate's expanded executive committee plans to meet with Chancellor Patrick Gallagher on November 7th.
 - Dedication of the pair of benches installed outside the chancellor's Cathedral of Learning office windows in honor of Chancellor Emeritus Mark A. Nordenberg and his wife, Nikki Pirillo Nordenberg, was October 15th. The benches were sponsored by the University Senate and Staff Association Council.
 - FA approved unanimously a motion to change the name of the Senate commonwealth relations committee to the governmental relations committee.
 - Commonwealth relations committee co-chair Debora Rougeux presented the committee's motion, explaining that the committee was formed shortly after the University became a state-related institution and the original name reflected that its relationship with the commonwealth was a high priority.

- The new name reflects that the committee's mission has since expanded to include fostering rapport and understanding between Pitt faculty and members of federal, state, county and local governments that have an impact on the Pittsburgh and regional campuses. Because the name change involves a change to Senate bylaws, Senate Council also must approve the motion.
- **Expanded Executive Committee Meeting:**
 - Convened on October 13, 2014 to review the past year's accomplishments and set goals for the coming year. The SEPC Annual Report was submitted in writing.³ Specific questions were addressed to each committee. Above discussed working groups were focus for SEPC.

ACIE update: Liaison Falcione reported the first meeting is tentatively planned for November 18th at 12noon.

SEPC future planning:

November: Guest Cynthia Golden, Director of CIDDE to present an update from CIDDE

January: Marc Harding, Chief Enrollment Officer to present an update on the 2014-2015 Freshman class

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 4:48pm

Attachment and Documents posted in SEPC Box folder

Location: SEPC recourses >> References Resources from Meetings

Link to folder: <https://pitt.box.com/s/x3d6qb24xo9sc79i2xzm>)

Documents:

¹ Draft recommendation on the Expanded Course Descriptions for Student Use to the Faculty Assembly

² Previous SEPC drafted Course Description Template

³ SEPC 2013-2014 annual report as submitted to the Expanded Executive Committee and presented at its meeting on October 13, 2014.