

1 WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY – **FACULTY SENATE MINUTES** – March 24, 2009

2 FACULTY SENATE WEB PAGE <http://www.wpunj.edu/senate>-- EMAIL DISCUSSION <mailto:mfacultysenate@list.wpunj.edu>

3

4 **PRESENT:** Andreopoulos, Becker, Bliss, Bhat, Cho, Davis, Diamond, Duffy, Ekmekjian, Falk-Romaine,
5 Ferris, Finnegan, Gardner, Gazillo-Diaz, Godar, Kaufman, Kim, Knaus, La (for Chung), Lawrence, Levitan,
6 Liu, Lorenz, Malanga (for Wagner), Martinez, Martus, Mbogoni, McCallum, Mongillo, Natrajan, Olaye,
7 Pavese, Pinkston, Potacco, Rice (SGA), Rosar, Scala, Speert, Steinhart, Stroppel, Suess, Tardi, Thiuri,
8 Van Boerum, Verdicchio, Walsh, Weil

9 **ABSENT:** Healy, Mulrine

10 **GUESTS:** Basu, Bates, Bolyai, Brown, Chadda, Ciliberti, Daniel-Robinson, de la Suaree, De Young, Ellis,
11 Fuller-Stanley, Goldstein, Gonzalez, Griswold, Guerrieri, Hahn, Hamalian, Hauser, Jemmott, Kaplan,
12 Kashyap, Kelly, Kim-Yoon, Lee, Lisbe, Maheshwari, Mason, Miller, Parras, Peterman, Rabbitt, Refsland,
13 Rosengart, Sabatino, Schumann, Seal, Schaeffer, Sheffield, Tirado, Wahrman, Watad, Weiner, Wilder,
14 Williams, Zeleke

15 **PRELIMINARIES:** Chairperson Godar called the meeting to order at 12:35 PM. The Agenda, moved and
16 seconded by Duffy and Bliss, was approved unanimously. The Minutes of the March 10, 2009 meeting,
17 moved and seconded by Martus and Duffy, were accepted without amendment.

18 **CHAIR'S REPORT:** Godar asked President Speert, regarding his memorandum on the budget crisis, if
19 "underperforming" departments or programs would include administrators. He replied: Yes. He also
20 noted that, unlike some other states, New Jersey would not use stimulus package money to support
21 higher education. He somberly reiterated that bad times call for significant decisions. He will be holding
22 numerous discussions to plan deliberative actions. There will be an expanded Provost's Council meeting
23 on April 1st, and a special e-mail account, budget10@wpunj.edu, has been established, to which the
24 entire campus community is invited to submit suggestions for cost savings, and other planning and
25 budgeting issues.

26 **VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT:** Finnegan reminded council chairs to start preparing year-end reports of their
27 council's activities, and to be prepared to present a brief synopsis of that report at an upcoming Senate
28 meeting. He also noted that anyone wishing to serve on a Senate council next year must respond to the
29 e-mail he will be sending out soon.

30 **GRADUATE COUNCIL:** Rochelle Kaplan, Chair of the Graduate Council, introduced and recommended
31 approval of the English Department's MFA in Creative and Professional Writing. Linda Hamalian, Chair of
32 English, described the program and entertained questions. Stroppel asked why it was a 41 credit
33 program. Parras replied that 41 is the modal number of credits for similar programs nationwide, and
34 that 6 of those credits are for studio work.

35 Martus expressed a number of concerns. First, it seems to project very low-enrolled courses. Hamalian
36 responded that enrollments will be low at first, but will soon rise. Second, will independent study
37 projects include the College of Business and Arts & Communication? (Falk-Romaine asked specifically

38 about playwriting.) Hamalian responded affirmatively. Martinez noted that students in other disciplines,
39 such as science, might also profit from such courses. Third, he believed the matter of “banking credits”
40 was a union issue, not a Senate issue. He moved (Martinez seconded) that banking credits be removed
41 from the proposal, and the motion was approved unanimously without debate. Fourth, he was
42 reluctant to approve a proposal that calls for new faculty lines depending on enrollment. Hamalian
43 replied that the new program could be run without additional lines. Fifth, he asked about graduate
44 assistantships. Parras explained some of the many tasks such assistants would perform.

45 McCallum asked if the program was geared mainly to those interested in college teaching. Hamalian said
46 she expected it to serve many constituencies. Verdicchio added that it would be attractive to high school
47 teachers, especially those with AP courses. Pavese inquired if Adjuncts will be used. Hamalian responded
48 that they would be used, as needed. Bliss noted that the program asks for considerable money, and
49 asked if it could run if there were no new money forthcoming. Hamalian said that it could run, but that it
50 would be greatly enhanced by the requested funds, especially for writer’s conferences, a literary
51 magazine, etc. Diamond asked how this program would differ from Rutgers. Hamalian replied that
52 Rutgers is taught 100% by adjuncts, while ours would be primarily taught by full-time faculty. Diamond
53 also urged the English Department to seek grant funding, and was told that they have done so for many
54 years. When the proposal came to a vote, it was approved unanimously.

55 **GENERAL EDUCATION:** Duffy moved (Davis seconding) that the Senate move into Quasi Committee of
56 the Whole. Godar parsed the subtle parliamentary distinctions between “committee of the whole” and
57 “quasi committee of the whole.” In essence, our long-standing practice has actually been quasi
58 committee of the whole. The motion was approved unanimously. Jean Levitan briefly summarized the
59 General Education Council’s work for the past 18 months, and put it in historical context. She also
60 reviewed the many relevant documents available on the Senate homepage as she outlined the genesis
61 and metamorphosis of the GE Proposal. John Peterman distributed the latest iteration of “the grid.” He
62 emphasized that critical thinking is the primary factor that defines the change from high school to
63 college, that it unites and distinguishes the different ways of knowing, and that there is a symbiotic
64 relationship between subject matter and critical thinking.

65 Gardner opened a wide-ranging discussion by asking what would prevent a student from taking 100
66 level courses as electives. Levitan replied that there is a graduation requirement of 9 credits of upper
67 level electives, and that a smaller GE credit requirement would lead to more students pursuing minors.
68 Bliss asked for clarification of the total number of credits in the proposed program, which seems like it
69 might be as high as 66 credits. Levitan said that many of the courses could be double counted, so the
70 basic number would be around 43, with a range from 34-52, depending on major and language
71 requirements. Cho had problems with the Global Issues section, especially the use of the words
72 “understanding” and “resolving.” Peterman responded that there would be two theoretical courses and
73 one applied course. Ferris felt that the plan lacks specifics in regard to implementation. She was also
74 concerned that more needs to be done to assure that all areas of the campus have sufficient
75 representation on the various subcommittees that will be filling in the boxes later on. She also expressed
76 concern about faculty development. Pavese and Peterman briefly discussed the differences between
77 how high schools and colleges approach critical thinking. Potacco presented data on the number of GE

78 credits nationally. If we reduce our GE requirements, we will be more in line with the majority of
79 colleges. She also presented data about foreign language requirements.

80 Tardi reminded the body that such comparisons are interesting, but that we must look at our students,
81 most of whom will not be attending graduate school. Their only exposure to the panoply of courses
82 offered by a GE program will be what we give them. She had concerns about perhaps too much
83 flexibility in the program, and she, too, would like more clarity on the implementation process before
84 the program is approved. Martus said that this program would be ideal for honors students and faculty,
85 but not for our regular students. He was troubled by the lack of a firm foundation of knowledge in the
86 current proposal, territorial issues, the Global Issues aspects, and the appropriateness of much of it for
87 our students and their future lives. He asked for a straw poll of senators to see how many support the
88 proposal, but this was ruled out of order by the Chair. Peterman responded that the framework was
89 based on programs at institutions with similar student populations, and should not be viewed as too
90 ambitious for our population. We cannot be Chicago or Columbia, but we can give our students essential
91 tools for success. Steinhart spoke warmly in favor of the proposal, and agreed our students can and will
92 be challenged by it. He agreed with other speakers that implementation details need to be worked out.
93 He also suggested developing a transfer map for courses taken at other schools. Kaufman acknowledged
94 that the proposal promotes critical thinking, but not problem solving. She saw nothing good for math
95 students, and thought that the sciences would be killed by the proposal. She also questioned who will
96 teach the software and hardware skills stated in the outcomes.

97 Levitan stated that the GE Council was well aware of the need for greater specificity in regard to
98 implementation details, but that the Council saw no point drafting an extensive implementation plan
99 without an initial buy-in for the basic conceptual framework. Certainly there will be further work on
100 filling in the boxes later on, and the proposal has been and will continue to be a dynamic, changing
101 document. Lawrence suggested that professional development be addressed in the implementation
102 plan, and urged the GE Council to seek further feedback on important issues. Falk-Romaine commended
103 the First Year changes and the Values in Action category. She also agreed that the program is not too
104 ambitious for our students. The proposal does not address technology issues adequately. Finnegan
105 expressed doubt that the framework would meet AACU goals. He also feared that there will be
106 competition among departments to get into a box. Liu shared his concerns about Global Issues, and
107 suggested that the GE Council prepare some examples. The competition will be between colleges, not
108 just departments. Faculty will be able to develop higher level courses and give students more choices.
109 Gardner asked if there will be prerequisites, or if students can take 300 level courses in the Historical
110 Approaches category.

111 **ADJOURNMENT:** Steinhart noted that the vigorous discussion had gone well past normal adjournment
112 time, thus the Senate adjourned at 1:53 PM. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be on Tuesday,
113 April 14th at the Valley Road Building, Auditorium.

114 Respectfully submitted, Bill Duffy, quondam secretary

115 THIS AND OTHER SENATE DOCUMENTS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT <http://www.wpunj.edu/senate>

116