

1 WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY – FACULTY SENATE MINUTES – April 28, 2009

2 Faculty Senate Web Page: <http://www.wpunj.edu/senate> -- E-mail discussion: <mailto:facultysenate@list.wpunj.edu>

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4 **PRESENT:** Andreopoulos, Bliss, Bhat, Bolyai, Cho, Chung, Davis, Diamond, Duffy, Ekmekjian, Falk-Romaine, Ferris, Finnegan,
5 Gardner, Gazzillo Diaz, Godar, Hahn, Healy, Kaufman, Kim, Knaus, Lawrence, Levitan, Liu, Lorenz, Malanga (for Wagner),
6 Mbogoni, Martinez, Martus, McCallum, Mongillo, Mulrine, Natrajan, Pardi (for Becker), Parras (for Suess), Pavese, Pinkston,
7 Potacco, Rice, Rosar, Scala, Steinhart, Stroppel, Tardi, Tesfaye, Thirui, Van Boerum, Verdicchio, Walsh, Weil

8 **ABSENT:** Speert

9 **GUESTS:** Cunningham, Daniel-Robinson, De Young, Deller, Ellis, Fanning, Feola, Fuller-Stanley, Griswold, Gonzalez, Gundling,
10 Hayden, Mason, Olaye, Overdorf, Peterman, Rabbitt, Refsland, Schaeffer, Schumann, Seal, Silgalis, Tirado, Torres-Santos, Trelisky,
11 Villar, Wahrman, Watad

12 **PRELIMINARIES:** Chairperson Godar called the meeting to order at 12:37PM. The Agenda was moved
13 and seconded by Duffy and Martus. McCallum’s motion to have the three graduate education proposals
14 considered at the May 7th meeting was approved unanimously. A motion to set an order of the day for debate
15 on the GE proposal was defeated. The amended Agenda was then approved unanimously. The minutes of the
16 April 14, 2009 meeting, moved and seconded by Martus and Ferris, were also approved unanimously.

17 **CHAIR’S REPORT:** Godar reported on the Board of Trustees Finance and Audit Committee meeting she
18 attended. There will be large cuts in the budget – Bolyai stated the deficit is in the range of \$10.6 million –
19 and possible closures will be further discussed at the May 15th Board meeting. Overdorf, reporting on the
20 Board’s Educational Policy Committee, noted that the Academic Plan was accepted in concept, but that the
21 specific goals included seem to conflict with some Board benchmarks. The Provost will work to resolve the
22 problem.

23 Finnegan asked if the Board will act upon a reduction in the number of credits required for graduation to 120
24 without the advice of the Senate. Godar replied yes, and said that the Board is aware that the Senate did not
25 vote on the issue. Tardi asked if the Chair knew of the time pressure and that the Board would vote without
26 Senate input. Godar said she knew it was an issue, but not the time line. Thiuri asked why this happened.
27 Davis responded that the Executive Committee wanted to take up the 120 credits after GE had been
28 considered. Godar said the Education Policy Committee did not discuss where the curricular cuts would be
29 made. Finnegan asked how the cuts would be implemented. Weil stated that he clearly expects Senate input.

30 **UNIVERSITY STUDIES PROGRAM (GE):** Lorenz stated that Art and Music would be reduced, with
31 students choosing one or the other. Bliss said there would actually be more student choice. Lorenz asked how
32 students would know, and the answer was: advising. Bliss said that currently there is little flexibility for
33 electives in the major, and that the proposed program would give students room for more choices. Tardi said
34 that the proposal wasn’t considering the students we have, and stated that we are predicted to have a large
35 increase in first generation Hispanics.

36 Davis commended the GE Council for its year and half of work. She stated, however, that senators cannot
37 simply trust the Council, but must be critics and debate the academic issues deliberately. She questioned the
38 “choice” argument, noting that majors prescribe and direct student choices, and that many students do not
39 sufficiently appreciate the academic world well enough to select courses without help. She said that some like
40 the existing GE and will resist making things more difficult. She raised questions about the First Year Inquiry
41 course. She would like the idea if the courses were taught by full-time faculty, but she fears it will be staffed
42 by underpaid adjunct faculty.

43 Davis then moved (Tardi seconded) to take the FYI course off the grid. Mongillo said that she wouldn’t want
44 to take FYI away from Basic Writing students. After an attempt to call the question failed (16-15), Peterman

45 stated that the document is dynamic and that changes will occur. Tardi said that FYI should not be in the grid
46 and that it would be impossible to implement. Finnegan complained that he didn't know what he was being
47 asked to vote for. Ferris said that, unlike the current Freshman Seminar, the new FYI would be plugged into a
48 broader conceptual framework. Peterman noted that the grid is a framework and that all courses, including
49 FYI, would be brought back to the Senate in the Fall. Gardner, Davis, Godar and Finnegan briefly debated
50 whether the FYI would be a 3 credit course. Ferris, Thiuri, Davis, Parras, McCallum, Lawrence and Cho
51 discussed various aspects of the need to vote now as opposed to waiting until the Fall. Gardner called the
52 question (Pardi seconding), and the question was called with three votes in opposition. The vote on removing
53 FYI from the grid was then defeated by a vote of 14-19-0.

54 Martus expressed displeasure at the disparity of credits and issues involved with transfer agreements.
55 Verdicchio exhorted the senators to trust each other and noted the 18 months of open and transparent
56 discussions. Natrajan said there are structural problems beyond trust. He felt that the proposal won't work for
57 small departments and would lead to a dilution of the liberal arts. He wished there were a simulation showing
58 a student's progress through the grid. He concluded that working class kids should have the same chances as
59 students in Ivy League schools, and that we must think beyond "the job." Pardi said that voting on the grid
60 now opens the way for solutions on all the other issues in the Fall. Steinhart and Falk-Romaine called the
61 question, but the motion failed. Kaufman noted that WPU has the lowest percentage of science and math
62 requirements in New Jersey, and the proposal would lower it even further. Bhat also noted problems faced by
63 smaller departments. Falk-Romaine reminded the body that this is the last meeting of the current Senate, and
64 that we need to conclude something on this issue. She again called the question (Bliss seconded), but the
65 motion failed by a vote of 17-18-0.

66 **ADJOURNMENT:** Pavese and Kim made brief comments before Tardi moved for adjournment (Pavese
67 seconded), and the last meeting of the 2008-2009 Faculty Senate adjourned at 1:45PM. The next meeting of
68 the Faculty Senate – the first meeting of the newly-elected 2009-2010 Senate – will be held on THURSDAY,
69 May 7th at 12:30 in the University Commons Ballroom.

70 Respectfully submitted, B. Duffy, quondam Secretary.

71 THIS AND OTHER SENATE DOCUMENTS CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT <http://www.wpunj.edu/senate>