

3
4 **PRESENT:** Abraham, Aktan, Alford, Andreopoulos, Brillante, Christensen Diamond, Duffy,
5 Ellis, Fuentes, Gazzillo Diaz, Hack, Helldobler, Hill, Jurado, Kaur, Kearney, Kecojevic,
6 Kollia, Liu, MacDonald, Marshall, Martus, Monroe, Mwaura, Natrajan, O'Donnell, Powers,
7 Powers, Rebe, Rosar, Sabogal, Ro. Schwartz, Shekari, Silva, Simon, Snyder, Steinhart, Swanson,
8 Tardi, Tosh, Vega, Verdicchio, Wallace, Watad, Weisberg, Mag. Williams

9
10 **ABSENT:** Crick, Jubran

11
12 **GUESTS:** Alaya, Astarita, Bannister, Bartle, Boucher, Bowrin, Brenensen, Broome, Brown,
13 Cammarata, Cannon, Cauthen, Chauhan, Chen, Corso, Coyne, DaSilva, Datchi, Davis,
14 DeLoatch, Diaz, Feola, Ferguson, Galetz, Ginsberg, Goldstein, Griffin, Gramiccioni, Gritsch,
15 Hertzog, Jackson, Jones, Kalaramadam, Lincoln, Lubeck, Lockhart, Matthew, Mattison,
16 McLaughlin-Vignier, McNeal, Miles, Mongillo, Nassiripour, Ortiz, Owusu-Ansah, Plasko,
17 Potacco, Refsland, Ricupero, Ra. Schwartz, Spero, Tiernan, Tormino, Vasquez, Victor, Mar.
18 Williams, Zeleke, Zeman

19
20 **PRELIMINARIES:** Chairperson Natrajan called the online meeting to order at 12:30pm. Hill
21 and Martus moved acceptance of the Agenda which was approved by acclamation. Hill and
22 Wallace moved acceptance of the Draft Minutes of the October 27th meeting, which were also
23 approved by acclamation.

24
25 **PROCEDURAL NOTE:** All senator's microphones should be muted. When one wishes to
26 speak s/he should type SPEAK in the Chat box. Duffy and Ricupero will keep track of those
27 desiring to speak and the Secretary will recognize each in order. When recognized, the
28 speaker will then unmute the microphone. Only the Chair's screen will be visible. The session
29 will be recorded, but only the Secretary will have access to the recording.

30
31 **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: CERTIFICATE IN GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**
32 **SYSTEMS (GIS):** Broome and Hill moved acceptance of the Council's resolution. After brief
33 discussion, the certificate was approved unanimously.

34
35 **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: CERTIFICATE IN GENDER AND SEXUALITY:**
36 Broome and Aktan moved acceptance of the Council's resolution. After brief discussion, the
37 certificate was approved unanimously.

38
39 **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: PROFESSIONAL ETHICS CERTIFICATE:** Broome
40 and Hill moved acceptance of the Council's resolution. The certificate was approved
41 unanimously.

42
43 **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: HEALTHCARE ETHICS CERTIFICATE:** Broome and
44 Kecojevic moved acceptance of the Council's resolution. The certificate was approved
45 unanimously.

47 **TEACH OUT POLICY:** Associate Provost Lincoln showed a PowerPoint [archived in the
48 Packet of this meeting] and described the Teach Out Policy. A Teach Out Plan is a statement of
49 how an institution will enable students in a program that is being discontinued to complete their
50 degrees. The State requires institutions to have such a policy for teacher certifications to be
51 approved. Natrajan noted that whenever a program is going to be terminated, it would be brought
52 before the Senate.

53

54 **CHAIR'S REPORT:**

55

- 56 1. The SEC is deeply concerned about the announced plans for **'right-sizing'**.
- 57 a. We have conveyed our concerns to the P&P with full knowledge that negotiations are
58 underway with the Union. Our focus has been on impacts on the Curriculum, on
59 morale, on students, and on the changes in vision and mission of the university. We
60 asked admin: What are you hoping to preserve at this university and how will that be
61 accomplished? What will the university look like moving forward? Are we looking at
62 a changing mission? Will we be more vocational oriented?
- 63 b. We were assured that the administration does not intend to close departments or
64 programs at this point. Nor do they wish to see any change in the mission. Instead, we
65 need to do deep thinking about what makes us distinctive in delivering our mission –
66 the HOW side. Careful reflection on new markets, but not necessarily turning us into
67 a vocational school.
- 68 c. We asked for follow-up plan after the release of the data. How do we get innovative
69 in our approaches? How do we get proactive on changing dynamics of who are
70 students are? Our students work more, so how can we have a mechanism to meet their
71 needs and ours too? Can we think differently about when it is offered? 7 weeks work
72 better especially with COVID impacted students.
- 73 d. I personally also let the President know that placing the entire enrollment drop at the
74 feet of faculty is not acceptable since we know that enrollments and retention are
75 multi-factor phenomena. Our retention rates are also showing improvement. We need
76 to work on this together. The President is aware of this.
- 77 2. **On RTP:** there will be a communication very soon from the Provost to all departments.
- 78 3. The Provost and I attended a listening-in session with student leadership from **the SGA.**
- 79 a. The main theme was to convey to faculty and admin the deep and varied stresses that
80 our students are under and to request faculty take serious and immediate cognizance
81 of this. The main ask was for a P/NC option. There were also some particular issues
82 raised – students perceive higher levels of work and harsher grading than usual in
83 some courses; and there seems to be a lack of concern about student context of work
84 hours and stress levels. The request was for syllabi to be better able to deal with
85 online delivery during pandemic (e.g., need some 'breathing room' – meaning some
86 room to accommodate student needs and realities; and the issue of textbook costs).
- 87 b. For my part I thanked the students who were very clear and represented their
88 constituency very well. I also assured them that faculty at WPU typically care for our
89 students and that we are here to teach, and that we also have several institutional
90 informational supports that allows us to appreciate the complexity of student lives. Of

91 course there would be some unevenness within faculty, but a large number have
92 attended BB training sessions and continue to be learning. That faculty operate by
93 trying to find a balance between what we would like them to learn while at WPU and
94 the realities of their lives (work, home care). And that the Senate Exec had worked
95 closely with the Provost to have the diversity of delivery modes. The student leaders
96 appreciated the candidness and assured us that they do like WPU.

97 c. While the SEC and admin will work out a clear but minimal option for P/NC keeping
98 in mind the impacts on student careers, we will also facilitate regular meetings with
99 the SGA and mechanisms by which concerns can be addressed in a timely fashion. At
100 this point if the SGA reps wish to say a few words very quickly that would be good.
101 Else, we will make time at the next Senate.

102 Abraham, the SGA representative said that students were peacefully demonstrating in support of
103 the continuation of the Pass/No Credit option, pointing out the changing modalities of
104 instruction, the hardships many students are experiencing now, the heavier workload that many
105 students perceive, and other problems caused by the pandemic.

106
107 Powers assured Abraham that a decision would be made in the very near future.

108
109 Snyder pointed out the problem of how employers and graduate programs will view such
110 grading. He also noted that faculty have a certain amount of material that they must cover during
111 a semester and the compressed timeline of this semester may have created the impression of
112 more work than usual.

113
114 Jurado reiterated that accredited programs, such as Nursing, are not involved with the P/NC
115 grading and would like to keep it that way. He also noted that he has consulted every nursing
116 program in the State and none of them allows the P/NC option. Powers assured him that it's
117 being kept in mind.

118 119 **CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION ON SENATE REPRESENTATION:**

120
121 Chair Natrajan (SLIDES – in packet)

122 In his maiden speech, President-elect Joe Biden insists on something that we could do
123 well to reflect upon in our Senate: “I said from the outset I wanted a campaign that
124 **represented** America, and I think we did that. Now that’s what I want the administration
125 to look like.” And standing on the shoulders of a long line of women and immigrants who
126 have struggled for dignity and representation, vice-President elect Kamala Harris
127 channeled a basic vision of democracy from the legendary John Lewis that “Democracy
128 is not a state. It is an act.” And Kamala went onto insist that “what he meant was that
129 America’s democracy is not guaranteed. It is only as strong as our willingness to fight for
130 it, to guard it and never take it for granted.”

131 If our Senate is a representative body and if it is not meant to be taken for granted, then it
132 is key for us to ask ourselves: how well do we represent who / what we claim to
133 represent? How well does our representativeness shape our effectiveness as a Senate?

134 How well does our effectiveness get reflected in faculty participation in shared
135 governance – which is our main mobilizing idea.

136 Each of us on a senate seat is a representative. Now the English word ‘represent’ has two
137 senses within it: a sense of ‘speaking for’ (as in politics) and a sense of ‘image or
138 likeness’ (as in art or philosophy). The latter is the old sense of the term, and the former
139 is a later sense (only 18th century). These two senses are assumed to be combined in our
140 bodies today, but there exists a tension, which I would like to represent (politically) as a
141 question: **On what grounds can one claim to represent without being in the image or**
142 **likeness? And, does one need to be in the image or likeness in order to represent?**

143 These questions are at the heart of what we do in the Senate, or more precisely what we
144 claim to do in the Senate. To ensure that we engage with the document, I have picked 2-3
145 parts that are especially in need of Senators’ deliberations. I have also asked the co-chair
146 of the Governance Council to say a few words about what they are upto in this regard.

147 Natrajan then opened the floor for further discussion.

148
149 Sabogal stated that it would be useful to know the racial and ethnic composition of the
150 administration. Research shows that faculty of color do better in environments in which they
151 have a voice and are not ignored or used as tokens. Our identities and experiences should be
152 recognized and included.

153
154 Simon asked if the data on the slides (SEE PACKETS) include adjunct faculty. Natrajan said that
155 it does not but that data are still being collected. Simon also asked about gender, disabilities,
156 LGBTQ, etc. Natrajan said that he is preparing intersectional data to be included in the Packet.

157
158 Galetz said the Governance Council is preparing a set of five models, inclusive of our current
159 structure, to present to the Senate next week.

160
161 Hill asked: How can we best represent the issue of faculty? What model is best for us?
162 Traditional? Influential? Dormant? Cultural? How can we earn power, credibility, influence and
163 value in governance?

164
165 Kaur thinks its’s ironic that we’re talking about representation while we’re speaking of right-
166 sizing the University and we don’t have agency in that decision – and we should have agency in
167 both. The English department is anguished over the situation. Natrajan asked couldn’t both be
168 done together. Kaur responded that we don’t have enough information about the restructuring
169 and no voice in that process. They both agreed that faculty have a voice in the Senate.

170
171 Hill said that despite the cloud over us, we can act to create change. We must act out our
172 responsibility. Kaur agreed that the discussion must go on.

173
174 Christensen said we need to create a Senate structure that can protect the voices that need to be
175 protected. She noted that half the proposed cuts would come from Humanities and Social
176 Sciences, which raises serious issues of representation. She hopes we can create a structure that
177 will protect what we value in the Senate.

178 Marshall agreed with the three previous speakers and pointed out that our voices will be heard
179 through the Union regarding downsizing (she rejects the term rightsizing). The Senate has a
180 different voice. It speaks about curriculum, how we see ourselves as faculty, and how the Senate
181 represents all of us.

182
183 Snyder addressed the issue of not having biased outcomes in the Senate and having substantive
184 representativeness in who gets a seat at the table going forward. Since there are great differences
185 among disciplines, it is important to have enough points of view at the table to reflect those
186 differences. The needs of all programs need to be represented.

187
188 Natrajan said we have to understand the differences between deliberative representation and
189 substantive representation. What are the interests being represented? We are a heterogenous
190 faculty with many differences in many dimensions among us, and we must decide which of them
191 need to be at the table.

192
193 Helldobler stated that early budget numbers predict a \$16,000,000 deficit. Enrollment trends
194 aren't in our favor. Problems we expected to face in 2026 have been accelerated by COVID. Our
195 student population has been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. He suggests that we
196 not think of a governance structure locked into specific unit but rather in terms of voices that we
197 need at the table in terms of the collective faculty body. Senior faculty who have a sense of
198 history and gravitas. Junior faculty and minority and marginalized voices who don't have the
199 power of number but are more reflective of our student body. He pointed to two previous times
200 when we engaged in disruption that have led to success: WP101 and Will Power 101. No matter
201 what the structure, there will always be senior faculty, and junior faculty and there should always
202 be marginalized voices as part of the conversation. The question for the Senate is: How do you
203 get at that?

204
205 Ellis said that the comments of all the previous speakers are shaping the discussion. What is that
206 "table" that we keep talking about? We have restructured several departments and there will be
207 other major changes that will take place for us to keep our doors open. People should think about
208 their place in their departments, in the Senate, etc. He noted that there are often unfilled seats on
209 Senate councils and on major campus-wide committees. Those are other ways people can be
210 represented and not just in the Senate.

211
212 Natrajan urged senators to review the various documents that have been distributed [archived in
213 the Packets of the past Senate meetings]. He would like to resume discussion at the next Senate
214 meeting on some of the various models in the Governance Council document.

215
216 **CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY: DAVID JONES AND ANNETTE BARON: A**
217 PowerPoint [archived in the Packet of this meeting] was presented. Data are preliminary and
218 have been described in terms of role (faculty, staff, students) and race (black, white, Hispanic).

219
220 Among the major findings: Students are 20% more satisfied with the campus climate than are
221 faculty and staff. Black student satisfaction is slightly lower than Latinx or White students.
222 Black members of the community (faculty, staff and students) are harassed or hear more
223 disparaging remarks than the other groups. Diversity was strongly seen to improve interactions

224 on campus and in class, with Blacks feeling much more strongly about this. Regarding the
225 statement: The campus environment is free from tension related to individual or group
226 differences, two-thirds of the students agree, while only 43% of the faculty and 31% of staff
227 agree. Students, especially Hispanics, feel more of a sense of community than do faculty or staff.
228

229 Baron summarized the culturally responsive action steps the University is undertaking and some
230 recommendations for the future.
231

232 In the Chat, Tardi asked how many individuals responded to each question. Five senators asked
233 why Asians were not included in the racial breakdowns. Natrajan stated that those questions will
234 be addressed by the team working with these preliminary data. They will be invited back to share
235 their further findings. He also suggested that they share the raw data.
236

237 **STARFISH:** Refsland presented a PowerPoint [archived in the Packet of this meeting]
238 addressing questions faculty have raised. System flags are used for behaviors that we know are
239 very important for student success (attendance, completing important tasks like financial aid,
240 submitting work, etc.). When students' grades improve it automatically gives positive feedback.
241 Manual flags are used by faculty, staff or students to provide feedback, directions, etc. They give
242 faculty a wide range of ways to provide feedback. [Sample letters to students are also archived in
243 the Packet for this meeting.] Tardi noted that system messages have been sent in upper level
244 courses without the faculty member's authorization. Helldobler suggested that he and Tardi
245 discuss this offline.
246

247 **NEW BUSINESS:** Tardi stated that the recent elections for campus-wide committees violated
248 the agreement between the Union and the administration. The elections should have been
249 conducted through today until the seats were filled. They were not filled. The voting process
250 needs to be addressed for future elections. Natrajan agreed that the issue needs to be resolved.
251 Miles (Election Council) said there was a technical problem that was quickly resolved. Both
252 Tardi and Natrajan complimented the work of the Elections Council.
253

254 **ADJOURNMENT:** The Faculty Senate adjourned at 1:49pm.
255

256 The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, November 24th at 12:30pm.
257

258 **It will be an ONLINE meeting.**
259

260 **Please "check in" as early as possible (ideally, before 12:30 so the secretaries can confirm**
261 **attendance).**
262

263 Respectfully Submitted: Bill Duffy, Secretary