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

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10 **ABSENT:** Jubran

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12 **GUESTS:** Alford, Bannister, Bartle, Bolyai, Boucher, Bowrin, Brenensen, Broome, Cai,
13 Cammarata, Cannon, Cauthen, Chauhan, Choi, Corso, Davis, De Veyga, Diaz, Fanning, Feola,
14 Ferguson, Galetz, Gelfer, Ginsberg, Goldstein, Griffin, Gritsch, S. Hill, Jackson, Jian, Joachim,
15 A, Jones, D. Jones, Liautaud, Lincoln, Lockhart, Louie, Lubeck, I. Marshall, Martinez, Matthew,
16 Mattison, McLaughlin-Vignier, Miles, Nassiripour, Ndjatou, Newman, Nyulassy, Ortiz, Owusu-
17 Ansah, Panayides, Peek, Phillips, Potacco, Rabbitt, Reardon, Refsland, Ricupero, Rosenberg,
18 Ross, Ryblewski, Salvesen, Schneider, Sharma, Sheffield, Sullivan, Tiernan, Tormino, Vasquez,
19 Weiland, Zeleke, Zeman

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

26
27 **PRELIMINARIES:** Chairperson Natrajan called the meeting to order at 12:30pm. Kaur and
28 Martus moved acceptance of the Agenda, which was adopted without objection. Martus and
29 Pozzi moved acceptance of the Minutes of the February 23rd meeting. Martus pointed out an
30 ambiguity at lines 252-253. He noted that the question need not be called (and voted upon) if
31 there is no one who wishes to speak. Natrajan thanked him for the clarification and called for the
32 vote. The Draft Minutes were then approved with one negative vote. The Minutes were corrected
33 before final posting.

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35 **GRADUATE PROGRAMS COUNCIL: MASTER OF ART IN TEACHING K-6**

36 **PROGRAM CHANGE:** Choi and D. Hill moved acceptance of the Council's resolution. The
37 program change was unanimously.

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39 **GRADUATE PROGRAMS COUNCIL: MIDDLE SCHOOL LANGUAGE ARTS**

40 **PROGRAM DELETION:** Choi and Pozzi moved acceptance of the Council's resolution,
41 which was approved unanimously.

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43 **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: COMPUTER SCIENCE MINOR: PROGRAM**

44 **CHANGE:** Phillips and Jurado moved acceptance of the Council's resolution, which was
45 approved unanimously.

47 **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: COMPUTER AND INFORMATION SCIENCE**

48 **MINOR: PROGRAM CHANGE:** Phillips and Jurado moved acceptance of the Council’s
49 resolution. Pozzi pointed out where a table needs to be updated. After the correction was noted,
50 the resolution was approved unanimously.

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52 **ALUMNI SPEAKER: ALEXIS MARTINEZ:** Verdicchio introduced the first of today’s
53 speakers, an honors student as well as leader of the Dance Team. Martinez spoke warmly about
54 her years as a Nursing student and mentioned a number of her professors by name. She described
55 her work in cancer and COVID units and offered to speak with Nursing students.

56
57 **ALUMNI SPEAKER: ASHANTI JONES:** Wallace introduced today’s second speaker, a
58 former President of SABLE, who is now a social worker and policy analyst for the New Jersey
59 Institute for Social Justice. Jones fondly recalled her experiences at WPU and especially “finding
60 her tribe” in AWS. She hopes to become an academician herself someday,

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62 **CHAIR’S REPORT:**

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64 **Chair Report Senate 03092021**

65 Thank you Alexis and Ashanti. Your stories are inspiring. You make us proud to be part of your
66 growth and journey. Thank you and all best. Last Friday afternoon the Senate sponsored a talk
67 by Prof. Michael Berube who is a leading voice from the American Association of University
68 Professors (AAUP). Prof Berube’s talk had three takeaways that apply directly to us today [SLIDE
69 – archived in packets]

- 70 - **Shared Governance** 🗳️ At the last Senate, it was announced that the Senate Budget Council
71 would “work with the administration to resolve fiscal concerns”. Last week, the vice-chair
72 and I met with the co-chairs of the Council about expectations. We want the Council to ask
73 questions, get data promised by the President, and explore all alternatives to address the
74 fiscal concerns. I have also requested the President to make available the findings of the
75 Post-Pandemic Budget Committee which identified several ways to think about savings
76 including ideas that were put forth by the Senate over the years. Senate Councils are the
77 heart of shared governance. It would be a historical mistake to rush through any decision
78 without waiting for the Budget Council to do its work.
- 79 - **Academic Integrity** 🗳️ Our decisions at this crucial juncture need to balance financial
80 calculations with curricular considerations. We are designated as a regional comprehensive
81 institution for public higher education. Our Mission & Values reflects this. The Senate needs
82 to be vigilant about this as integral to our academic integrity.
- 83 - **Tenure and Academic Freedom** 🗳️ In looking ahead, the President has engaged an external
84 firm, EAB to consult on Program Evaluations. He has affirmed that he will place the EAB
85 report in the Senate so that faculty will have an opportunity to give feedback as it sees fit.
86 Both tenure and academic freedom are at stake if we are not vigilant about the criteria and
87 rationale involved in the administration’s response to the situation we are in.

88 Before I invite Chief Diversity Officer Dr. David Jones, I wish to encourage people to attend this
89 Thursday’s inaugural Diversity lecture by Prof. Shaun Harper who will present on racial equity.
90 At the last SEPP meeting we discussed three ideas championed by the President: representation
91 at University bodies, practices of diversity and equity, and decolonization of the curriculum. The
92 SEC wanted more clarity on these issues especially about how the Senate would engage with
93 them. To be clear, I welcome efforts to decolonize, represent, and walk the talk of diversity. How
94 could I not? Yet, I am aware that there are many among us who dither upon hearing these terms,
95 and who may be dismissive of them. Our challenge is to uncover the colonial and the
96 exclusionary in our midst, and to connect them to student success which is a core value. This
97 demands that we make material and symbolic connections between a concept that is ‘out there’
98 and our lives that are ‘right here’.

99
100 Take this building – Hobart Manor - for example [SLIDE]. Apart from the obvious feudal
101 provenance of the term manor, we know that the person it is named after made an important
102 decision at the US Senate. On February 6, 1899, the then Vice President of the USA, Garret
103 Augustus Hobart – after whom the building is named - made a decision that negatively impacted
104 millions of people on the other side of the world. He cast the tie-breaking vote that denied
105 Filipino people their right to independence (from the Spanish), thus making the Philippines into
106 America’s largest overseas colony. Ironically, the money that the US paid the Spanish to gain the
107 Philippines was \$20M (a figure that is on our minds today for a different reason). For the next
108 half a century, the Philippines was underdeveloped and made into a laboratory for geopolitical
109 and economic gain of elite classes, both, here and there. Hobart’s decision confirmed the status
110 of the USA as a colonizing power. It would be necessary then for us, to connect our decolonizing
111 project to face our own histories – material and symbolic, and become mindful of decisions that
112 impact us and others in different ways, and the unequal ties that bind us through our differences
113 which underwrite our inequalities. Given that Hobart Manor is also literally the seat of one arm
114 of our governance structure, decolonizing the curriculum would also mean decolonizing shared
115 governance, decolonizing our sense of the self, decolonizing our spaces including buildings by
116 democratizing their access. That would enable our new identity as a collective that is mindful of
117 hierarchies and power inequalities, renew our commitment to maintaining our academic integrity
118 as a producer of public knowledge and civically engaged human beings, and show the world that
119 we intend to practice diversity and equity in our own communities. Over to you David.

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121 **COUNCIL FOR EQUITY AND JUSTICE:** Jones, Chief Diversity Officer, presented a
122 PowerPoint [**archived in the Packet of this meeting**] explaining the nature, function and By-
123 Laws of the Council for Equity and Justice (CEJ) and took questions.

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125 Simon wondered why a council about diversity and inclusion excludes Adjunct Faculty. Jones
126 said the working group would consider that. Martus pointed out a way to include them: Since
127 two colleges have merged into one, an adjunct could fill the vacant college seat.

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129 Snyder asked how diverse disciplines would be represented since some of these diversity
130 initiatives will differ by discipline. Jones said that he’d be working with the deans to insure a
131 diversity of faculty. Martus asked if this body would be reviewing actual hiring practices. Jones
132 replied that the Council would be reviewing hiring practices to make them more inclusive and

133 equitable. Martus suggested adding “advisory committee” as part of the description of what the
134 Council is.

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136 Watad noted that many initiatives die due to lack of support. What sort of financial resources
137 will this Council have? Jones replied that once the Council gets together it will determine its
138 budget priorities and make recommendations to the President (who has been supportive,
139 including funding the upcoming Diversity Lecture by Shaun Harper).

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141 Kaur applauded things like cultural centers and lectures but pointed out that programs that teach
142 these values are being threatened (e.g., Asian Studies – which is presenting Asian Cultures
143 Celebration Week, March 16-26). Jones said that the Council will decide how to approach such
144 challenges and provide the President with its advice.

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146 Diamond asked what would be the relationship between this Council and the Faculty Senate?
147 Jones said that type of partnership is critical, and he will take into consideration. Natrajan added
148 that perhaps there should be a Senate representative on the Council. Following up on Kaur’s
149 point, he wished that the Council had been formed a year earlier be to be a watchdog before
150 consolidations and eliminations were proposed.

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152 **MIDDLE STATES UPDATE:** Lincoln and S. Hill briefly described what the Visiting Team
153 will be doing for two days (3/15-3/16), including meeting with over 100 members of the WPU
154 community. Some people were chosen due to their roles on campus (e.g., Executive Committee
155 and Senate council chairs, etc.), but there will also be an open meeting on Monday at 3PM. Tardi
156 stated that this is the first time that Union leadership has not been invited for a session with the
157 Visiting Team. Lincoln noted that the Team had not asked to speak with the Union, but that he
158 has reached out to them to include the Union. Powers confirmed that Lincoln is working to get
159 the Union a meeting. Williams added that this type of oversight highlights the lack of shared
160 governance we’re experiencing.

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162 Schedules may be changed based on what the Visiting Team wants to do. There will be a public
163 reading out of the Team’s preliminary findings on Wednesday morning (time TBA). Their report
164 goes to the Middle States Commission, which will release its recommendations in June.

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166 Prepare for the visit by reviewing the Self Study, especially the standards that are most relevant
167 to what you are involved in on campus.

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169 Natrajan asked if the Team is aware of the structural changes that are occurring on campus?
170 Lincoln said the Team asked for a Supplement to the Self Study detailing challenges occurring
171 this past year, including how the delivery of instruction has changed, campus safety, etc. Since
172 much of this has been public some Team members have requested additional information. S. Hill
173 said we added an Addendum providing budget information and how we handled COVID. How
174 we responded to challenges in the past shows them how we can respond to challenges in the
175 future.

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177 Natrajan wondered how the Team could weigh in on important issue like the merger of colleges
178 without receiving information about them. Since that is a done deal, is that a part of Middle

179 States? Powers reiterated that Middle States' role is to evaluate how well we meet the standards.
180 He suggested that the Executive Committee could bring up issue when the Team speaks with it
181 about the standards.

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183 Tardi compared Middle States to Moodys. They'll read the documents, but they need all the
184 information to see where we stand now. They might not comment on decisions that have already
185 been made, but they might comment on how such decisions could affect future accreditations.
186 *The Chronicle of Higher Education* had articles about the possibility of us losing 25% of our
187 faculty. That number has been reduced, but the issue is crucial for the academic integrity of the
188 institution.

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190 **MERGER OF THE COLLEGES:** Natrajan noted that the next item on the Agenda was a
191 discussion of the merger of the colleges: criteria, processes, the evaluation of programs for which
192 the President has hired an outside consulting firm, etc. He said the topic will be high on the
193 Agenda for the March 23rd Senate meeting.

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195 Tardi added clarification. The outside firm will be looking at future program cutbacks, not those
196 already slated for closure. Natrajan agreed, stating that the firm will be looking at labor market
197 trends and the quality of programs. He wants to assure that academic integrity and our particular
198 characteristics are considered.

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200 Andreopoulos wanted to know what are the future synergies claimed to be created by this fusion.
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202 Broome asked when the consulting firm's report would be available. Helldobler said that ideally
203 it would be at the end of the Spring semester. He would then share it with the Cabinet and the
204 Executive Committee. The firm will use nationally normed variables regarding labor market
205 trends and academic programs, and crunch our data using their metrics and produce their report.
206 The full report would be released to the Senate in the Fall semester.

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208 **ADJOURNMENT:** Wallace's motion, the Senate adjourned at 1:45PM.

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210 The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, March 23rd at 12:30pm.

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212 **It will be an ONLINE meeting.**

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

216

217 Respectfully Submitted: Bill Duffy, Secretary

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