

William Paterson University – FACULTY SENATE MINUTES – January 28, 2020
FACULTY SENATE WEB PAGE <http://www.wpunj.edu/senate>

PRESENT: Aktan, Andreopoulos, Brillante, Christensen (for Ranjan), Chung, Diamond, Duffy, Ellis, Finn, Gazzillo Diaz, Griswold, Hack, Helldobler, D. Hill, Jurado, Kaur, Kearney, Kecojevic, Liu (for Najarian), Marks, Natrajan, O'Donnell, Orr, Owusu, Potacco, Powers, Pozzi, Ramos, Rebe, Rosar, Ramos, Sabogal (for Kalaramadam), Shekari, Silva, Simon, Snyder, Spagna, Steinhart, Swanson, Tardi, Vega, Verdicchio, Vishio, Wallace, Watad, Weisberg,

ABSENT: Ashnai, Crick, Janos, Kollia, Mwaura

GUESTS: Bannister, Bolyai, Cannon, Davis, DeDeo, DeLoatch, Fancera, Godar, Green, Griffin, Gritsch, Harris, Hertzog, S. Hill, Hinkle, Liautaud, Lincoln, McLaughlin-Vignier, Mongillo, Moore, Noonan, Owusu-Ansah, Ricupero, Rosenberg, Scardena, Stanfield, Tiernan, Zito

PRELIMINARIES: Chairperson Natrajan called the meeting to order at 12:31pm. Aktan and Orr moved acceptance of the Agenda, which was approved unanimously. The Draft Minutes of the November 26th meeting, moved and seconded by Hack and Wallace, were approved unanimously. The Draft Minutes of the December 10th Faculty and Professional Staff meeting (closed meeting), moved and seconded by Snyder and Kecojevic, were also approved unanimously.

VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT: Andreopoulos stated that J. Cudjoe of Women's and Gender Studies, needs an outside member for her Retention Committee. She and Aktan nominated D. Hill, who was approved unanimously.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Welcome back and hope each of you had a rejuvenating break. For those of us who went off to another reality, welcome back to this reality.

1. We had a closed session of the faculty senate just before we left for the break. I want to highlight key issues raised at that session so that administration is aware of these concerns:
 - a. Many senators raised very specific concerns about class scheduling, pre-packaging of students, class-size increases (some of which were last-minute), scheduling of back-to-back classes on different campuses, classroom assignments, and the strain of the 3-day schedule particularly on adjunct faculty. It may be a good idea to facilitate a regular flow of communication between faculty and the Registrar.
 - b. Some senators expressed concern about the various stresses that impacted the physical and mental health of our students, and whether academic support services were able to provide timely services. It may be a good idea to have a campus-wide discussion on this issue.
 - c. Senators also expressed concern about the ART. As of now, it has been affirmed by the SEC that all meritorious applications would be recommended for funding.

2. Further, two discussions were had briefly with senators being requested to consult with their departments. I therefore request all senators to report back – via email to me - after their next faculty meeting scheduled for Tuesday Feb 4 on the following:

- a. What would be some best questions that could be incorporated into the student ‘opinionnaires’ (course-specific ones and faculty-specific ones)? As you know the administration is in the process of reviewing these and standardizing them as far as possible.
- b. What would be the optimal last date for grade submission – in terms of the number of days from the last date of the exams?

I would like for the SEC to be able to collate this information and relay it to the Provost.

3. We now need to approve the RTP Committee that was announced at the closed meeting. [SLIDE archived in the Packet of this meeting]
4. Faculty remain deeply concerned about falling enrolment and retention. We have, as a senate, committed ourselves to doing everything that can be expected of faculty to help with retention issues as they pertain to the classroom. To this effect, we need to make sure that as senators, we spread the word about getting all faculty to do the ‘EASy’ → Early assessment (within 3 weeks), Attendance recording, and Syllabus with office hours and all information.
 - a. In this context, we have requested the President to apprise the Senate about the latest state of affairs with student enrollment. We hope senators can weigh in with ideas and questions.
5. We need to now move on to the Provost’s recommendations on Reorganization. This is the time for Senators to provide any feedback including suggestions about particular things to consider when moving forward.

GRADUATE COUNCIL: EdD IN LEADERSHIP: Hinkle and Brillante moved acceptance of the Council’s resolution. Potacco, Verdicchio, Natrajan and Diamond spoke in support of the program, after which the EdD in Leadership was approved unanimously.

ENROLLMENT DISCUSSION: Helldobler presented the dynamic Dashboard -- the department chairs have access to the link to it -- and described the somber enrollment situation. There is a \$1.3M budget deficit. He and the Cabinet are looking for ways to close that gap without imperiling jobs.

He discussed some of the articulation strategies currently being employed. Tardi suggested that WPU offer associate degrees.

Kaur said WPU should lower out-of-state tuition, to which Helldobler replied that waivers are already available.

Natrajan noted that most of our attrition is occurring at the 60-90 credits completed level. Helldobler said at after census day (2/5/20) he, the Provost and the Deans will be analyzing why

students at that advanced level are not returning. Obvious factors are academic problems, financial difficulties and personal issues, but that other factors must be discovered and addressed.

Andreopoulos inquired about the Reserves. Bolyai stated that they are approximately \$70M, of which only \$10M are unrestricted. Helldobler noted that it is never a good idea to use reserves to cover operating expenses. Some cuts will have to be made in travel, ART, and the like.

Simon noted that adjunct faculty are often not aware of what's going on regarding these matters. She asked about WillPower 101. Helldobler stated that he will discuss some of the victories of WP101 during his State of the University Address next Thursday.

Tardi and Helldobler discussed the 3 plus 1 situation, and lamented that Ramapo had gotten an articulation agreement with Passaic County Community College, even though we consider them our logical partner. Both agreed that things must be turned around fast, especially in regard to retention. He stated that discussing in-class pedagogy and notions such as the need for a grade early in the semester are faculty issues.

Griswold asked which of the WPU colleges have enjoyed rising enrollments and high retention so that the other colleges can adopt their strategies. Helldobler said that WP101-type programs work to increase retention. Powers added that he presented two documents to the campus in a recent memo [archived in the Packet of this meeting].

Helldobler and Harris noted that open educational resources definitely lower the cost of a degree, but that OER work better in some disciplines than others.

Christensen noted that sometimes warning flags on students get lost in the system. Helldobler said the some advisors are very good and some are merely transactional.

Ellis recommended that a return to something like the former University Day early address to the campus would be beneficial.

REORGANIZATION: Powers stated that this meeting was the faculty's opportunity to give him feedback on his draft recommendations [archived in the Packet of this meeting].

He also stated that all changes will be done in accord with University and contractual procedures.

D. Hill asked how the merged departments would be represented on the Senate and on other committees. Tardi noted that it will be up to the new departments to determine how their members will be represented and departmental By-Laws will need to be amended. She pointed out that historically one department has had one representative. D. Hill responded that we should be open to new structures and not be constrained by historical practice.

Powers said that while the fiscal situation was a driver in this process, he wants to see creativity in the restructuring of curriculum.

Snyder, Hack, Natrajan, Ellis, Potacco, Simon and Andreopoulos made various comments.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER: Helldobler stated that he had consulted with the SGA regarding new approaches to selecting the student who speaks at commencement. Valedictorian and Salutatorian would be recognized, but the speaker would no longer automatically be the student with the highest GPA.

Andreopoulos recommended that the speaker must be a very good student, with perhaps at least a 3.3 GPA, and must also be a great communicator.

Tardi moved (Steinhart seconded) that the Senate support the President's recommendations:

- To eliminate having the valedictorian speak at Commencement;
- To recognize and announce the names of the students with the highest GPAs;
- To have the student speaker be chosen by each of the five colleges in rotation, and
- To select a student with a compelling and motivating story and fine communication skills

The motion passed with three abstentions.

ADJOURNMENT: Upon Weisberg and Aktan's motion, the Senate adjourned at 1:51pm.

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate, will be held on Tuesday, February 11th at 12:30pm in Ballroom C.

Respectfully Submitted: Bill Duffy, Secretary

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www.wpunj.edu/senate