

1 William Paterson University – FACULTY SENATE MINUTES – February 23, 2021
2 FACULTY SENATE WEB PAGE <http://www.wpunj.edu/senate>

3
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, McMahon, Monroe, Natrajan, Nyaboga,
7 O'Donnell, Owusu, Powers, Pozzi, Rebe, Rosar, Sabogal, Schwartz, Shekari, Silva, Simon,
8 Snyder, Steinhart, Swanson, Tardi, Tosh, Vega, Verdicchio, Wallace, Watad, Weisberg,
9 Williams

10
11 **ABSENT:** Jubran

12
13 **GUESTS:** Alford, Andrew, Astarita, Bannister, Bartle, Betts, Bolyai, Boucher, Bowrin,
14 Brenensen, Broome, Brown, Basch, Cammarata, Cannon, Cauthen, Chauhan, Chavez, Chen,
15 Cherry, Choi, Corso, Coyne, DaSilva, Datchi, Davi, Davis, Decker, DeLoatch, De Veyga, Diaz,
16 Duff, Fanning, Felson, Feola, Ferguson, Galetz, Gelfer, Gill, C. Ginsberg, S. Goldstein, Godar,
17 Goldstein, Gramoccioli, Griffin, Gritsch, Guzman, Harris, S. Hill, Jackson, Jamie, Jian, Jones,
18 Kashyap, Kernan, Kuran, Liautaud, Lincoln, Livieratos, Lockhart, Lowe, Lubeck, Mandik,
19 Mankiw, I. Marshall, Mathern, Matthew, Mattison, McLaughlin-Vignier, McNeal, Miles,
20 Mongillo, Nassiripour, Ndjatou, Nesenjuk, Newman, Nyulassy, Ortiz, Owusu-Ansah, Panayides,
21 Peek, Plaskow, Rabbitt, Razzore, Reardon, Refsland, Richardson, Ricupero, Rosen, Rosenberg,
22 Ross, Salvesen, Scardena, Schneider, Sharma, Sheffield, Sherman, Silva, Skoloda, Smith, Spero,
23 Stanfield, Suess, Tesfaye, Tettrey, Tiernan, Tormino, Vasquez, Victor, Weiland, Zeleke, Zeman
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 **PRELIMINARIES:** Chairperson Natrajan called the meeting to order at 12:30pm. Crick and
32 Marshall moved acceptance of the Agenda, which was adopted without objection. Aktan
33 inquired about when other important items were going to be placed on the Agenda. Natrajan said
34 that she and anyone else who is concerned with such issues should send an e-mail to the
35 Executive Committee. Martus and D. Hill moved acceptance of the Minutes of the January 26th
36 meeting, which were approved unanimously.

37
38 Aktan and D. Hill moved acceptance of the Minutes of the February 9th meeting.

39
40 President Helldobler said that he would be sending a formal letter to the Senate regarding things
41 said at the February 3rd meeting. [It will be archived in the Packet of this meeting.] At this time
42 he wished to make several points.

43
44 In response to lines 37-41 he noted that he has spent more time with Senate Chair Natrajan and
45 AFT President Tardi more than with any other faculty members, and that he posed this question
46 to them: If there were any other way of doing this, would I be laying people off? They said no.

47 He said that no one knows the anguish he experienced when he had to lay staff off in Illinois.
48 Never during the interview process nor afterwards did the Board talk with him about layoffs. If it
49 were their intent to hire him for that reason, it was not articulated to him. If he could find another
50 financially viable option, he would choose it. If he were to present such an option to the Board
51 and they still insisted on layoffs, he would resign.

52 He remains open to all possibilities. We have until June 15th find such a way. He invited the
53 Senate to meet with any members of the Cabinet and he would make all budget information
54 available for review.

55 He spoke about the delineation between the Union and the Senate. At the Senate any issues
56 can be discussed: bargaining, the contract, etc., but neither he nor the Provost can engage in
57 issues of bargaining with the Senate. That would be an unfair labor practice. The Senate can
58 discuss such issues with the Union, and it can bring them to him or his negotiating team.

59 He found it ironic that a closed meeting produces Minutes without attribution yet complains
60 about a lack of transparency. He appreciates the palpable fear of the faculty, but he fears that
61 these Minutes represent what the faculty are choosing to be. Anonymous accusations are allowed
62 without evidence against people who are not in the room to respond or defend their reputations.

63 Most disappointing, our students may learn that this is how educated people act in a
64 professional setting. The Campus Climate Survey reports that some students feel disrespected
65 and made to feel that they don't belong due to their race or ethnicity. Everyone must be
66 respected, even the President and the Provost.

67 He does not accept the argument that people are afraid to openly speak truth to power. He said
68 he has never fired anyone who's challenged or spoken against him. The Senate and the Union
69 Executive Committees have spoken truth to power many times. They are all still here and we all
70 have good working relationships. He cannot deal with accusations put forth without evidence.
71 The Senate must speak to power, not to itself behind closed doors. We need civil discourse,
72 evidence-based decisions, and the courage to speak truth to power – but also to hear it. These
73 discussions should take place with the President and the Provost in the room.

74
75 Natrajan thanked the President for his thoughtful comments and quoted Oscar Wilde on the
76 issue of dividing things: "The world is divided into the righteous and the unrighteous – and it's
77 the righteous who do the dividing."

78
79 Provost Powers wished to add this comment regarding line 37 in the Minutes about the
80 combining of the two colleges: Chair Natrajan and I did talk in advance of the announcement. I
81 shared with him why the University decision to move in this direction was taken, the financial
82 benefits that would accrue, and the opportunities that would ensue through the creative and
83 innovative work of the faculty, staff, students, and external stakeholders to the two colleges who
84 would collaborate to create this new college entity and with the more than 80 who are now
85 engaged in this work. He responded with support for this action. We have subsequently
86 discussed that interaction, and the meaning that each of us drew from it that I believe will help us
87 as we continue our engagement around faculty governance matters.

88
89 Natrajan responded that it all has to do with the meaning of "consult." Just being informed is
90 not consultation, and he was not asked for any inputs. Nor did Powers bring the issue to the
91 Senate floor. The decision seems to have already been made.

92

93 Tardi agreed that private discussions with the heads of the Union and the Senate are not the
94 same as bringing them to the larger group. Both Tardi and Natrajan are responsible to their
95 memberships. She also noted that when Helldobler asked her opinion about the combination, she
96 told him it was a horrible idea. Perhaps no disrespect was intended, but shared governance has
97 been violated. We need to discuss the parameters of shared governance and the administration's
98 role.

99 Helldobler and Powers appreciated the opportunity for further discussion and Powers said he
100 has a better lens with which to view things.

101
102 The Minutes of the February 3rd meeting were then approved with two abstentions.

103
104 **GRADUATE PROGRAMS COUNCIL: MASTERS IN PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM**
105 **CHANGE:** Choi and Aktan moved acceptance of the Council's resolution. Pozzi was unable to
106 find any existing program in the Catalog. Basch explained that the program went to the Board
107 years ago but had never been implemented. All the courses are new and will be taught via
108 Academic Partnership (WP Online). Aktan spoke in support of the program, noting that now
109 more than ever we support our colleagues in Public Health. The program change was then
110 approved unanimously.

111
112 **GRADUATE PROGRAMS COUNCIL: MASTERS OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**
113 **SALES STRATEGY CONCENTRATION:** Choi and D. Hill moved acceptance of the
114 Council's resolution. Pozzi pointed out an important typo and Crick was told that this is also
115 going to be presented via Academic Partnerships. It was approved unanimously.

116
117 **AD HOC COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE STUDIES:** Wallace reiterated the call for
118 volunteers to serve on this advisory and development committee to create a vision for an
119 integrated set of undergraduate and graduate programs, certificates, and institutes, as well as
120 creating a structure for developing and maintaining a cohesive system. Anyone interested in
121 serving on this Ad Hoc Committee should contact Wallace.

122
123 **ALUMNI SPEAKER: EROS LIVIERATOS:** B. Marshall warmly introduced today's
124 speaker. He entered WPU with a GED and graduated with *magna cum laude*. He got his MFA in
125 creative writing at Ohio State, and he has published in a number of top journals.

126 Livieratos spoke of a GED recipient's wariness at entering a big university. He was welcomed
127 by the English and Philosophy departments and by his UCC professors in Art History,
128 Anthropology, French, etc. He believes that he had a richer and more fulfilling experience at
129 WPU than his MFA colleagues who attended big name schools like NYU and Stanford. The
130 passion and individual time with professors that stands out in his mind. WPU prepared him for
131 graduate school. Natrajan, Verdicchio and several comments in the Chat thanked and praised
132 Livieratos for his accomplishments and his kind words about what WPU means in his life.

133
134 **CHAIR'S REPORT [Slides archived]:**

135 **[SLIDE 1]** In the cold winter of 1988, a bulk carrier was caught in a hurricane, out at sea in the
136 Gulf of Mexico. Hurricane Keith never hit land but caused havoc at sea. The ship, Chennai
137 Muyarchi, later known as Peng Yang, was caught in this hurricane. A young sailor, the junior
138 engineer, who was only on his third voyage, approached the captain and asked: "Captain, are we

139 all going to die?” The captain, an old sea hand, with a smile said: “No one will die.” Not assured,
140 the junior engineer persisted, “But how sure are you?”

141 To which the captain replied with a twinkle in his eye: [SLIDE2] “I know how to keep the ship
142 afloat. I know the difference between that which can be disposed of certainly because we know
143 its price, that which needs some careful thinking because its cost is complex, and that which can
144 never be discarded because it is priceless. Much later, after a torrid 40 hours at sea, the junior
145 engineer was able to grasp what the captain meant: that he knew the difference between **the**
146 **cargo** the ship carried, **the infrastructure** of the ship, and **the people** (crew & officers) who
147 made the ship come alive. That young sailor, the junior engineer officer was me 32 years ago.

148 Today, I am again on a ship that is in crisis. I wonder: Are we caught in a hurricane? If so, can
149 we work together and reach port safely where we can do the needed repairs including structural
150 ones? Or, is our ship on fire? In which case, do we lower the life-rafts in order to protect the
151 most vulnerable? Either way, could we take **Gandhi’s talisman to be our north star?** [SLIDE
152 **3]**. We will then need to ask the question about the kind of University we want us to be – **for**
153 **our** students, and the ones they depend upon the most - our faculty and professional staff. Our
154 students – mostly working-class, many first-gen college goers, and heavily minoritized – need a
155 particular kind of education that will do three things for them: a) NOT sink them deep into
156 DEBT from where it is difficult to get out, b) get the **SKILLS** needed to craft their livelihoods in
157 a volatile, fast changing and globalized market and c) (probably the most important and the one
158 that is the least appreciated) to get the perspectives and confidence to become **CHANGE**
159 **MAKERS**, to change a world that is structurally unequal and unjust and which impacts them
160 most negatively. Our students, in short, need to assume their role as subjects of history, not
161 passive reproducers of suffering in this world, but as the **PIONEERS** who rebuild a better world.

162 Gandhi’s talisman **holds us to a high bar**: It asks us to keep in mind a question: Will our
163 navigating the choppy waters today empower our students? Will it sustain the faculty and
164 professional staff to have a sense of purpose, belonging and commitment to build our
165 institutional culture? We need to dialog on these points before it is too late.

166 As we in the Senate Exec have conveyed to the President, faculty are anxious and are deeply
167 concerned, not because we do not understand the problem, but because we find ourselves at a
168 loss to understand our standing at this university. There is a deep sense of our diminished
169 salience when decisions that impact us the most are taken without organically involving us. That
170 is what sharing governance would mean. As of now, we are not convinced or compelled with the
171 characterization of the nature and size of the problem, and the nature and pace of the proffered
172 solutions. We considered these things at our closed meeting and have a motion that we will vote
173 on today regarding the invitation by the Provost to contribute further criteria to implement an
174 already determined problem and solution. Meanwhile at our SEPP meetings, we have continued
175 to establish some principled positions about shared governance vis-à-vis decisions being made
176 by the admin.

177 Ever since the Senate decided to have a closed session, there has been some chatter about what
178 we are up to. The President, at one of our SEPP meetings indicated that he is aware that there
179 could be a vote of no confidence. While I appreciate our honest conversations, I want the
180 President **to try to gain our confidence, not resign to losing it**. Trust is a process, not a state of
181 being fixed at one point in time. One potentially promising sign is that President Helldobler has
182 agreed to consider any alternatives to the kinds of structural changes that he is planning to put

183 into effect. In his words, “We have until June 15 – so if there is another way to do this, I will be
184 happy to do it. **I’m willing and if you can come up with it, do it. I will request my VP and**
185 **cabinet to release any data you want.”** This is our chance to make the Senate relevant again by
186 empowering our Councils who do have standing charges that are designed specifically to
187 operationalize shared governance. Each of them have a member of the administration as part of
188 their membership. We will now move into our Discussions.

189 **MOTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REGARDING THE PROVOST’S**
190 **INVITATION TO CONTRIBUTE CRITERIA:**

191
192 Whereas the William Paterson University (WPU) President and Provost have invited the WPU
193 Faculty Senate to contribute "3 criteria for assessing program vitality and mission contribution;"

194 Whereas the WPU Faculty Senate is firmly committed to the principle of shared governance;

195 Whereas shared governance means having a substantial role in determining and shaping our own
196 futures;

197 Whereas shared governance does not just consist in being able to help the university
198 administration carry out policies that it has decided upon entirely on its own and without faculty
199 input;

200 Whereas specifically regarding fiscal exigency the Faculty Senate believes that shared
201 governance involves not just participation in any academic triaging plan but in the determination
202 of whether academic triaging is required at all or whether there are alternative policies that might
203 avoid the necessity for triaging in the first place;

204 Whereas it is not appropriate for the Senate to simply sit by and watch our Curriculum and
205 Programs get eliminated, transfigured, or diminished; and

206 Whereas the Faculty Senate believes that there has been inadequate consideration by the
207 university community as to whether massive program elimination is the only option available;

208 Now, therefore, be it Resolved, that

209 **The Faculty Senate, in agreement with the Faculty Union which represents the faculty at**
210 **negotiations on layoffs, declines the administration’s invitation to participate in developing**
211 **criteria for program elimination, finding that it does not offer us a meaningful or morally**
212 **acceptable role in shared governance.**

213
214 Since the motion had been discussed at the February 3rd meeting, Natrajan immediately moved
215 (Verdicchio seconded) to have a vote on it by closed ballot. Miles posted the ballot and after five
216 minutes he announced the results:

217
218 42 yes, one no, one abstention and one eligible senator did not vote. The motion was
219 approved.

220
221 Powers appreciated the seriousness of the discussion and understands the context in which his
222 invitation was received. We are in a different space these days. He said that there are ten

223 programs that are being considered for closure. There is still time for reframing, and he is still
224 open to hearing reasons why they shouldn't be closed. He wants to receive such input no later
225 than mid-March. He hopes that the Senate will engage with him going forward on important
226 issues. Natrajan said that the Executive Committee would contact the affected departments
227 asking for their responses.

228
229 **ACADEMIC STANDARDS COUNCIL: REVISION OF THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
230 **POLICY:** Kearney moved (Jurado seconded) the Council's resolution, which had first been
231 discussed last semester. He briefly reviewed the history of the Policy, noting it was sent to
232 Trenton for legal review. After some editorial tweaking, the current resolution was completed.
233 He presented both the current policy and the new one [Both will be archived in the Packet of this
234 meeting.] The main changes deal with the adjudication and appeals processes for students
235 (deadlines, documentation, procedures, etc.).

236
237 Simon said that there should be a clear statement that students should not be using devices (e.g.,
238 cell phones) to Google answers during tests, etc. There are lots of device-oriented ways of
239 cheating that are not covered in the examples in the revised policy. She also questioned the use
240 of the word "footnote" since that is a less common form of citation these days. Duffy asked if
241 she were asking for editorial clean-up. She replied yes, with the addition of more examples of
242 improper behavior. Snyder followed up by noting that different disciplines use different style
243 manuals and practices. Kearney assured him that faculty had discretion and latitude on how to
244 apply the standards outlined in the Policy.

245
246 Vega said that it is important for students to be taught about plagiarism in their freshman year, in
247 Will Power 101, for example. Kearney and Ellis noted that plagiarism has been taught in every
248 iteration from Freshman Seminar to Will Power 101. Vasquez added that the Library teaches it
249 all the time. Ellis pointed out that it must be covered in every class, not just the introductory
250 ones.

251
252 Martus noted that calling the question requires a vote. He suggested that if there is no one who
253 still wishes to speak, the Chair can then move to voting on the resolution. Hearing none, he
254 called for the vote. Kearney will make the corrections called for today and will send the
255 corrected version forward. The Senate voted and the revised Academic Standards Policy was
256 approved unanimously.

257
258 Powers said that the revised Academic Standards Policy will be widely disseminated and posted
259 on all appropriate campus websites.

260
261 **FINAL ITEMS:** Natrajan stated that the presentation by David Jones and diversity and equity
262 will be high on the Agenda for the next meeting.

263
264 He also wants a discussion of the modality of teaching delivery options for the Fall semester.
265 Powers stated that we are proceeding that things will be back to normal by then. There have been
266 requests to continue synchronous online instruction. He noted, however, that many students find
267 this approach very challenging and difficult for a variety of reasons. In general, he does not see
268 this as a wise course for us, though some narrow exceptions might be possible, perhaps on the

269 graduate level. For classes with multiple sections, asynchronous online or hybrid could be
270 considered. It is very important to have a physical campus delivery program.

271
272 B. Marshall asked that there be another evaluation. Things were extremely difficult last semester,
273 and everyone was learning how to deal with online learning. She would like to see if students are
274 more satisfied by online instruction during this Spring semester. Powers gave the idea two
275 thumbs up.

276
277 **ADJOURNMENT:** Upon B. Marshall and Wallace's motion, the Senate adjourned at 1:47M.

278
279 The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, March 9th at 12:30pm.

280
281 **It will be an ONLINE meeting.**

282
283 **Please "check in" as early as possible (ideally, before 12:30 so the secretaries can confirm**
284 **attendance).**

285
286 Respectfully Submitted: Bill Duffy, Secretary