

**University of Pittsburgh
Faculty Assembly Meeting
2700 Posvar Hall
Minutes of April 4, 2007**

1. Call to Order: President John Baker called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.
2. Approval of Faculty Minutes of February 27, 2007: Approved without change.
3. Introduction of Items of New/Unfinished Business: None.
4. Report of the President, Professor John J. Baker.
 - a. Senate Elections

The *my.pitt.edu* web portal site for Senate elections was activated April 1, 2007. The instructions for logging onto the site and voting were mailed to every Senate member who is eligible to vote. The Executive Committee urges all to vote, and will include a reminder to vote in the electronic newsletter that will be transmitted to all faculty. The Elections Committee would like feedback from faculty on the electronic ballot, particularly with regard to ease of use and possible improvements to the web site for future elections. Comments may be sent to Irene Frieze, the chair the Elections Committee, or to Lori Molinaro, our Senate Director.
 - b. Plenary Session

The March 28, 2007 Senate Plenary Session, “Protecting Science from Bias by Private Interests” went well. Both keynote speakers, Sheldon Krimsky and Catharine DeAngelis, gave excellent presentations. President Baker noted: “attendance was not as good as we would have liked, but the program was superb.”
 - c. Notary Public Services: Cindy Brendel, a Senate Office staff member, is a licensed Notary Public. Faculty who require notary services can contact Cindy.
 - d. Senate Matters Column, *University Times*

The Senate Matters column was well utilized this year. Nathan Hershey, Michael Pinsky, Tom Smitherman and President John Baker contributed columns. Buck Favorini wrote a column which will be published in April 2007 and Tom Buchele is planning a column for early May 2007. The Senate Matters column is available to any Senate member who has an issue of importance to the University community that they would like to discuss in a print format.
 - e. Follow-up on Senate Community Relations Committee Report

As a follow-up to Vice-Provost Robert Pack’s letter regarding the report by the Senate Community Relations Committee on Community Service and Service-Learning, Senate President Baker asked Vice Provost Andrew Blair if the Provost’s office would consider making a small modification in the Faculty Handbook with regard to community service. Senate President Baker reported that the Provost has responded positively to that request, and will insert the following change (additions bolded):

“Public service (including community service as relevant) and professional service is included in the evaluation process for promotion and tenure. The weight given to these activities varies with academic discipline and it shall be

defined clearly by each school. It is generally agreed that public service is activity based on a faculty member's professional expertise; it is conducted outside the University; it makes a substantial public contribution; and remuneration is not a primary consideration or motivation for the activity. Ideally, this work could be incorporated into the faculty member's professional research and/or the teaching and training of students. The results may become disseminated through publication as a more permanent record."

Senate President Baker consulted with the other members of the Executive Committee; Linda Hartman and Wesley Rohrer, the co-chairs of the Community Relations Committee; and Tracy Soska, the primary author of the Community Service Report. They all agree that this is a positive step toward recognizing and including community service in the evaluation process for promotion and tenure, when it is appropriate to do so.

The Provost forwarded the Community Service Report to the Deans, so that individual schools can consider the recommendations in the Report as appropriate for the mission of each school..

Senate President Baker believes we should graciously accept the proposed modification to the Faculty Handbook. The change is a tribute to the efforts of the Community Relations subcommittee that wrote the report.

Vice Provost Andrew Blair explained that he recommended use of the term *community service* instead of *community engagement* as the former is more easily understood without lengthy interpretation.

Soska made a motion to accept proposed modification
Slimick seconded the motion. It passed unanimously, (20 in favor).

f. Attendance at Senate Meetings

The Senate officers have been discussing possible ways to improve attendance at Senate meetings, and would like to solicit ideas on this subject from Faculty Assembly members. President Baker believes that attendance is sometimes low at meetings because faculty are preoccupied with their own professional work, and will skip an occasional Senate meeting when there are no pressing issues to discuss. Faculty also sometimes miss a Senate meeting because of a conflicting class, another meeting, or a trip. He does not believe such occasional conflicts constitute a lack of interest in the Senate, but more likely reflects that Senate business is going well and the fact that Pitt's administration is willing to work with faculty to solve issues that arise.

The Senate has a Bylaws rule that a faculty member who misses 3 consecutive Senate meetings without notifying the Senate President or the Senate Office will forfeit their seat and can be replaced. One suggestion for improving attendance at Faculty Assembly and Senate Council is to enforce the 3 straight miss replacement rule. It is up to committee chairs to enforce the rule for Senate Committees.

Another suggestion to improve attendance is to list members who are absent from a meeting in the meeting minutes. Currently, we only list

members who attend a meeting.

A third suggestion is to have more guest speakers at Faculty Assembly and Senate Council meetings. (Joe Fink, the Facilities Management Director, will discuss Pitt's sustainability initiatives at the May, 2007, Faculty Assembly meeting. President Baker also invited Dean Alec Stewart to make a presentation about University Honors College at a future Faculty Assembly meeting.)

A fourth idea is to hold school-based town hall meetings to solicit ideas and discuss issues that arise.

Discussion ensued, with the following suggestions:

The Senate Office should send a letter if a member misses two consecutive meetings. (Note: committee chairs may attend, but their presence is not obligatory.)

Senate meetings might be broadcast via technology that permits interaction (ITV) with Senate members at the regional campuses.

Agendas could include meeting end-times.

If Senate members know they will miss a significant number of meetings, they can enlist an alternate attendee for the semester they cannot attend (e.g. another person on their school's ballot).

A motion was made to include the following information on Faculty Assembly and Senate minutes: members in attendance; absent members who contacted the Senate Office, and absent members who did not contact the Senate office. Additionally, a grid will be provided that documents each member's attendance throughout the year. The motion passed unanimously, with 21 in favor.

5. Reports by and Announcements of Special and Standing Committees of the Senate.

Special Report on Campus Catering, Irene Frieze, Immediate Past President of the Senate

In response to a complaint concerning the high cost of catering, Irene Frieze and President Baker met with Associate Vice Chancellor Eli Shorak, Jim Earle (the Director of Housing and Food Services) and Jodi Ludovici (Sodexo Campus Services); see the attached report.

Catering is interested in providing quality service and is willing to work with departments to stay within their budgets. University units should not use outside suppliers, without a waiver. It is important that food served under the auspices of the University be safely prepared and handled properly.

Faculty commented favorably about the quality of the food and about the helpfulness of the serving staff. There were concerns raised about reliability, with several people saying they had ordered food for an event that was either not delivered or was delivered late. There were also comments about the cost, especially for very small groups or for very low budget events.

Frieze will present this report at the next Senate Council meeting. There was some interest expressed in hosting a general discussion about food services in the fall, but only a few people said they would actually attend.

Frieze concluded that we should probably ask in the fall about interest and make sure enough people will come to make this meaningful. Staff may be more interested in attending than faculty.

6. Announcements.

Linda Hartman discussed FlexCar. An article about it will appear in the April 5 issue of the University Times.

7. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.

Members attending:

Baker, Brush, Carlin, Cassaro, Close, Cohn, Constatine, Costantino, Dewalt, Flynn, Frieze, Greeno, Hampton, Hartman, Molinaro, Olson, Pinsky, Puri, Slimick, Soska, Wion

Members not attending:

Aaron, Bergen, Buchele, J. Carr, S, Carr, Cassaro, Cham, Chattopadhyay, Coat, Deasy, Deitrick, Erlen, Hall, Hansen, Harbert, Hayden, Hoffmann, Husted, Kaufmann, Kirkwood, Linden, Lotze, Manfredi, McKinney, Muenzer, Munro, Nicoletti, Pike, Rechter, Ries, Rohrer, Ross, Saunders, Savoia, Sciote, Shear, Skledar, Smetanka, Smitherman, Smolinski, Stillely, Stuckart, Sussman, Tress, Tuite, Weber, Weiss, Withiam, Yarger, Zamboni

*Excused attendance:

Balaban, Belle, Boston, Coley, Donegan, Hughes, Platt, Stoy,

Others attending:

Blair, Brendel, Fedele, Hart

*Notified Senate office