

Faculty Assembly Meeting Minutes
2700 Posvar Hall
October 7, 2008

Topic/Discussion	Action
<u>Call to Order.</u> President Baker called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm.	The meeting commenced.
<u>Approval of the Minutes of the September 2 Faculty Assembly Meeting.</u> President Baker asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2008, Faculty Assembly meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was introduced and seconded. Linda Hartman offered the following correction to the minutes: At the September 2, 2008 meeting, she suggested that the upcoming October plenary be offered for OCC credits to the students, which would encourage the students to attend the event. The correction was noted. President Baker responded that the Senate Office will pass the suggestion on to Dean Kathy Humphrey, and added that it was a good suggestion.	The minutes were approved as amended.
<u>Introduction of Items of New Business.</u> President Baker asked for new items of business to be brought forward.	No new items were brought forward.
<p><u>Report of the President.</u> President Baker gave the following report:</p> <p>I am sure everyone is aware of the bad budget news facing the University. It was reported in the September 25 <i>University Times</i> and in the Chancellor's October 1 University Update. The state is facing a budget shortfall this year and may cut Pitt's current appropriation 4.25%. It is a potential loss of over \$7 million.</p> <p>The Senate Budget Policies Committee discussed this cut and how Pitt plans to meet it at its October 2 meeting. Pitt's administration is asking each responsibility center that receives state funds to cut its budget by its proportionate share of the anticipated state budget shortfall. It's up to each responsibility center to decide how to make the cuts. I believe the administration has acted responsibly because the state funding cut is very likely to occur.</p> <p>This supposedly would be a one time cut, but given the state's history and the bleak economic picture facing the nation, the bad budget news could carry over into future years. This is a situation that all of us need to be concerned about.</p> <p>I have confidence in our administration. The Senate will do its share in trying to meet this potential crisis and will certainly monitor it. I hope the University can avoid returning to a situation where over half of our faculty get annual pay raises that are below the rate of inflation.</p> <p>The major news from the Senate this month is the Fall Plenary Session. It will be held Thursday, October 23 from 1-4 PM in the</p>	President Baker's report was approved as submitted.

Assembly Room, William Pitt Student Union. The topic is Quality of Life in Oakland: Investing in University-Community Partnerships. A flyer on the back table lists the Plenary events, speakers and schedule.

The Fall Plenary was planned by the Senate Community Relations Committee, which is co-chaired by Wesley Rohrer and Edward Galloway. It will be preceded by a community marketplace from 12-1 p.m. in the Student Union, at which representatives of community organizations will be available to answer questions and network with plenary attendees.

The Plenary program will include comments by Chancellor Nordenberg, Provost Maher, City Council members Bill Peduto and Bruce Kraus, and a panel discussion with representatives from several Oakland community organizations. Following the presentations, attendees can join roundtable discussion groups of students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community partners to develop ideas for improving the Oakland community. Tracy Soska will moderate and summarize the roundtable discussions.

This is a wonderful opportunity for faculty, staff and students to learn more about Oakland and express ideas for improving it. If you have opinions about Semplefest, are concerned about traffic and parking problems, crime, noise, trash and litter, poor housing and other quality of life issues in Oakland, come share them with other concerned people who want to improve the Oakland community.

All faculty, staff and students are welcome to attend the Fall Plenary and community marketplace. It is acceptable to attend only part of the sessions if your time is limited. Light refreshments will be served, so please come and participate. Wes Rohrer added that they have been in contact with student organizations to attend the Plenary. Concerns were expressed that this would be an opportunity to rail at students for anti-social behavior, but this is viewed as a partnership to solve problems. Community partners represented on the panel will continue to be in communication with the Community Relations Committee. President Baker commented that it would be nice to see students participate; if they can receive OCC credit, it might enhance their participation.

On Wednesday, October 29, the other Senate officers and I are meeting here in Oakland with the Senate Presidents of the Regional Campuses. I will report on the meeting at the next Faculty Assembly meeting.

Lynn Fitzgerald, the chair of the Senate Anti-Discrimination Committee, asked me to announce that there will be an Allies training

<p>session on November 14 from 9 to 1:00 p.m. in room 630 in the William Pitt Student Union. Lunch is included. Faculty who wish to attend should contact Linda Williams-Moore by email at lwmoore+@pitt.edu to register for the session. Lynn was asked to describe the Allies Training. She explained that Allies training is taking place on many campuses around the United States. The purpose of the training is to increase sensitivity and support GLBTQA student population. They are encouraging as many faculty and staff as possible to participate.</p> <p>The next Faculty Assembly meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 5. We also have a meeting scheduled for Tuesday, November 25. I am not sure we will need to have two meetings so close together. Unless some necessary business comes up in the next few weeks, I will likely cancel the November 5 meeting. I will let everyone know in advance of the meeting so you can plan your schedules accordingly.</p> <p>We have submitted an October Senate Newsletter for electronic distribution to all faculty. Everyone should be receiving it soon.</p> <p>The Senate Commonwealth Relations Committee is holding a luncheon at the Bradford Campus in the University Room on Friday, November 21, 2008, at noon with Representative Martin Causer and possibly Senator Joe Scarnati. Anyone interested in attending this luncheon should contact Cindy Brendel in the Senate office by November 17. Transportation will be provided.</p> <p>President Baker concluded his report and asked for questions and further discussion. None was raised.</p>	
<p><u>Reports by and Announcements of Special and Standing Committees of the Senate.</u></p> <p><u>Computer Usage Committee</u> Mr. George Pike, Co-Chair, gave the following report. The Computer Usage Committee has been responding to concerns raised by members of the University community about University email being blocked by 3rd party e-mail, such as Comcast, Yahoo, gmail and others. This blocking is known as blacklisting. Blacklisting occurs when the ISP identifies a particular email server as having large volumes of spam. Pitt occasionally finds itself on these blacklists, and the email that comes from the University is rejected by these ISPs. Mr. Pike circulated a handout on this situation.</p> <p>Blacklisting occurs under two sets of circumstances. One circumstance is when a University account is compromised, and a major reason for this is large scale scammers. These scammers hack</p>	<p>Information only; no action needed.</p>

into a computer, send the spam through that computer (or several computers) and hide their own server as they send this out. Large volumes of spam can be sent out from a pitt.edu domain in a very short amount of time. CSSD can detect when this occurs and can shut down the compromised computer quickly. Then, the University needs to take steps to get off of the blacklist.

The second circumstance under which blacklisting occurs is more challenging. There are a number of people in the University community who intentionally forward their pitt.edu email to a third party ISP (e.g., gmail, Yahoo, Comcast). If no adequate spam protection is on their pitt.edu account, all the spam that comes into the pitt.edu account is forwarded on to the ISP, which then shows that the spam is originating as a pitt.edu account. This in effect triggers the spam filter service or ISP to put Pitt on the blacklist. The challenge for CSSD to get off of this blacklist is difficult, particularly with gmail. Pitt users who forward their email contribute to the problem because spam coming into our pitt.edu accounts then gets forwarded.

CSSD has taken steps to avoid blacklisting, which they have asked the Computer Usage Committee to review. The Committee has endorsed a policy that all new pitt.edu accounts will automatically have spam filtering enacted to reduce the amount of spam reaching Pitt user mailboxes, then a third party ISP via forwarding. For example, in March 2008, 505 million emails came into the pitt.edu system; approximately 81% (over 400 million messages) was caught by the spam filter. Ninety percent of all email traffic is spam; 81% is being captured, and 9% is not being captured and is forwarded on.

The first step in this policy is mandatory spam filtering for all new Pitt accounts. The second step occurred earlier this summer when CSSD expanded its license for the spam filtering software (postini system) to include all student email accounts that are forwarded. When student email accounts are terminated, email to that account can be forwarded to another account for one year. These accounts are now automatically filtered. The third step which the Committee endorsed this fall, is imposing mandatory email spam filtering on all existing University accounts. About 8,000 accounts currently do not use spam filtering. This is being changed. The Committee endorsed the CSSD proposal to expand spam filtering to everyone. CSSD has begun this process, and they will notify the account holders accordingly; this notification will be completed by the end of October. These steps should reduce the frequency of blacklisting encountered by the University.

Mr. Pike offered several suggestions for practicing safe computing and minimizing blacklisting. He recommended that everybody avoid being compromised by keeping their password secure. Do not reply to

every email you receive, including those appearing to come from pitt.edu requesting your password. Change your password periodically; the standard recommendation for safe computing practices is every 3 months. The Committee had some discussion about mandating users to change their passwords on a regular basis. Security audits are underway, so there may be recommendations in the future to change passwords on a regular basis. Use a password that has both alphanumeric and non-alphanumeric characters. Change your password periodically, so if it is compromised, the problem can be resolved quickly. Be aware that forwarded email contributes to the spam problem. Use spam filters correctly and robustly.

Instructional documents on blacklisting are available on line from CSSD; Mr. Pike circulated samples to Assembly members. CSSD is taking proper steps to deal with it. The University community should be aware of these actions and should find them helpful.

President Baker asked for questions or comments. One Assembly member reported that he had set his spam filter aggressively; a few students sent him emails from hotmail or gmail and when checking the junk mail account, the students' emails were found. He now scans his junk email regularly. Mr. Pike responded that there is no other way to do this; this is not a perfect solution. He suggested that everyone use the filters as aggressively as they feel comfortable. They can check the filter more often to assure that they are not missing communications from students.

Assembly member Lyon commented that he had problems over the summer with gmail forwarding due to the two Postini rounds of filtering. Mr. Pike said that he would check with Jinx Walton on this. He knew that there was both virus filtering and spam filtering, and email traffic is caught in these filters. He was not aware of levels of spam filtering that can be controlled in the message center. Ms. Walton did mention to the Computer Usage committee that gmail's blacklist is the most difficult to get off. Immediate Past President Frieze added that virus filtering is automatic, and Mr. Pike agreed.

Assembly Member Shear asked if CSSD or the Computer Usage Committee is going to student groups about this situation. He has found resistance from students that faculty send emails only to the students' pitt.edu accounts. Mr. Pike added that all students must use filtering through pitt.edu, and CSSD has been sending out flyers and working with groups to educate them about this issue. Assembly Member Munro wondered if there is a possibility of the University sending official email to the address of the user's choice rather than to pitt.edu. Mr. Pike stated that he couldn't address this specifically, but the University uses pitt.edu accounts for all official communications.

<p>Assembly Member Rohrer noted that he never checks his spam email accounts and asked if there are negative consequences to that. Mr. Pike replied that the only risk is that you may be missing an opportunity to see an email that may be of importance to you. This does not affect the system, nor does it count against your quota. Another Assembly member mentioned that he was not able to use Survey Monkey for a survey he conducted, as the spam filtering was catching his invitations. He ended up using his own email account. He wondered if CSSD can open up certain servers so that Survey Monkey can bypass the filter. Mr. Pike replied that he did not know the answer, and he would add this to his list of questions for Jinx Walton.</p> <p>Assembly Member Boone asked why users were discontent with the University’s email system and using other email systems instead. Mr. Pike answered the issues addressed here, as well as quotas, are some of the reasons. President Baker asked how many days an email stays in quarantine. Immediate Past President Frieze responded that emails are kept for 30 days in the spam filter. Assembly member Slimick commented that the arrival of virtual private networks in Bradford has caused grievance in the student lab, where the students cannot log in from the outside even though they are using an advertised service. Mr. Pike replied that they can call the Help Desk for assistance.</p> <p>Assembly member Flynn relayed an experience he had where his password stopped working after grades were due, and the Help Desk gave him advice that was incorrect. The problem was rectified eventually by the Help Desk. Mr. Pike responded that he had occasion to visit the U-Parc facility where the Help Desk is housed. He found that everyone worked hard to prevent inaccurate answers from being given. There are changes being made to the password creation process that allow one to more easily change or adjust one’s password. One can ask to speak with someone else or a supervisor for assistance. Sallie Smith asked if the help desk telephone number could be added to Mr. Pike’s handout; Mr. Pike agreed, and reminded everyone that the phone number for the Help Desk is 412-624-HELP.</p> <p>President Baker thanked Mr. Pike for his report. President Baker noted that he has used the Help Desk and experienced good results; he has also had good luck sending emails to students.</p>	
<p><u>Unfinished Business and/or New Business.</u> No unfinished or new business was brought forward.</p>	<p>No action needed.</p>
<p><u>Announcements.</u> President Baker announced that our next scheduled Faculty Assembly meeting is Wednesday, November 5. The Senate Office will let Assembly members know whether we will have that meeting or wait until November 25. He hoped that everyone can attend the plenary on October 23.</p>	<p>Information only; no action needed.</p>

<u>Adjournment.</u> The meeting was adjourned at 3:44 pm.	Meeting adjourned.
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Members attending:

Baker, Barnard, Bauer, Bernardo, Boone, Cham, Chasens, Close, Deasy, Fitzgerald, Flynn, Frank, Frieze, Gallagher, Hansen, Hartman, Henker, Hoffmann, Kelly, Latimer, Lotze, Lunsford, Lyon, Molinaro, Munro, Pike, Pratt, Ray, Rohrer, Rubin, Seitz, Seybert, Shear, Siskin, Skledar, Slaughter, Slimick, Smith, Twiss, Wendell, Wion, Withiam, Zutter

Members not attending:

Beatty, Coat, Coontz, Daley, Deitrick, Erlen, Fabian, Hampton, Husted, Jones, Karapinka, Nicoletti, Rechter, Saunders, Smethurst, Smitherman, Soska, Sparto, Stuckart, Towers, Tress, Trovato, Weiss

*Excused attendance:

Balaban, Becker, Belle, Bircher, Brush, Butt, Carlin, Galloway, Hall, Harbert, Juffs, Majumdar, Mark, Novosel, Otto, Petracchi, Rougeux, Siegel, Tonsor, Tuite

Others attending:

Blair, Brendel, Fedele, Hart

*Notified Senate office