

University of Pittsburgh
Faculty Assembly Meeting
Minutes of April 5, 2005

1. President Bircher called the meeting to order at 3:03 PM.
2. The minutes of the Faculty Assembly meeting on March 1 were approved as written.

3. Introduction of Items of Unfinished Business and New Business

Professor Frieze said Professor Munro had an announcement. He explained that he had put a questionnaire and petition on the website to assess feelings about a faculty club. He put a memo on the back table. He said he has had trouble getting the word out. Professor Frieze suggested that Ms. Czak send out the information to Faculty Assembly members, who could then email it to faculty and staff in their area.

Professor Saunders said he would like to discuss the availability of parking.

4. Remarks of the President, Nicholas G. Bircher

Professor Bircher reported that the Spring Plenary Session was held on March 23 and was entitled "Consumer Satisfaction with UPMC." Nat Hershey chaired this plenary. He thanked Professor Hershey for putting together a forum that allowed a very solid and very collegial further step toward the University Community making the best use of their health care providers and programs. Margaret Washington, author of "Doctor, Can You Hear Me? Patient, Are You Listening?" gave an excellent keynote address on doctor-patients communication. One can hear the presentations by going to the Senate Web site (<http://www.pitt.edu/univsenate/>), opening the plenary home page, and selecting the audio file portion. Professor Bircher said he invited Michael Culyba, Vice President for Medical Affairs of the UPMC Health Plan, and Dr. Loren Roth, Senior Vice President for Medical Services, UPMC, to post their slides on the website, and he will provide Ms. Czak with a copy of his slides and references as well. Professor Bircher stressed that open communication between consumers and providers is an essential element in obtaining the best value for your health care dollar. Professor Bircher then interrupted his remarks to allow Professor Hershey to report on the plenary.

Professor Hershey said that Margaret Washington was a good keynote speaker and that there was a good write-up of the plenary in the *University Times*. He said that he and anyone who attended the session learned a good deal. One scenario was of a person who did not get recommended physical therapy because the person could not afford the co-pay. Professor Hershey came away with the impression that there may be an opportunity to negotiate with a provider in a situation like that. Professor Hershey said that the disappointments included the poor attendance and the lack of time for questions because opening statements were too long. He noted that Drs. Culyba and Roth were better at explaining how the system was supposed to work than at explaining how to solve problems brought to their attention. He mentioned that the last scenario discussed had to do with TVs in waiting rooms. The respondents joked that they could not have two waiting rooms, rather than discussing whether there should be TVs at all in waiting rooms. He said the faculty and staff need to decide whether they want to work for consumer advocacy. He suggested creating a group of faculty and staff to propose some kind of arrangement with UPMC to foster consumer satisfaction. One might be regular consumer meetings with

UPMC representatives. Or, perhaps Human Resources could regularly report to Senate Council or another forum on these matters. He wanted to know more about how UPMC is addressing the various problems that they learn about from their surveys and phone complaints.

Questions and Comments

Professor Weiss said it was a good program and it was a shame more people were not there. She spoke of a problem she had with COMCAST as an example of information gaps and failures. She said that as someone interested in information systems, she would find it interesting to have a plenary on information systems and how they work and where they typically fail. Professor Bircher noted that hospital information systems are usually behind the times.

Professor Baker said the best way to improve service would be to have competition among health care providers, instead of only offering us UPMC.

Professor Bircher then continued his remarks by welcoming back Professor Close. He noted that at the March 14 Senate Council Meeting, Vice Chancellor Renny Clark reported on the food trucks and pedestrian and traffic issues related to Schenley Park Plaza. He provided answers to the many concerns faculty had regarding parking, pedestrian traffic, and food kiosks with a detailed set of maps and traffic analysis. The Park should be functional by the spring of 2006.

Professor Bircher next reported on standing committees of the Senate

- The Athletics Committee will report in May. In addition to the committee report, Senior Associate Athletic Director Mike Pratapas will report on the Athletic Department's "Quest for Excellence" and the plan for involuntary reseating at the Petersen Events Center.
- Herb Chesler of the Benefits and Welfare is on the agenda.
- On Friday, March 4, Paul Supowitz from the Governmental Relations Office gave the Commonwealth Relations Committee an excellent update on the State budget and the appropriation to the University. The guest for Friday, April 8, is Rep. Brian Ellis, from the 11th legislative District of Butler County. The April 15 luncheon will be held at the Greensburg Campus. The guest will be Senator Bob Regola, from the 39th district of Westmoreland County.
- Tracy Soska of the Community Relations Committee presented the report of the fall plenary session on the Scholarship of Community Service at the March 14 Senate Council meeting. A motion to accept the report was unanimously approved.
- With respect to the Computer Usage Committee, at last month's FA meeting, Glenn Nelson and others questioned how the new PeopleSoft system would impact faculty. Immediately following that meeting, Vice Provost Bob Pack e-mailed a detailed and collegial response to me providing information about the system, which was then forwarded to all Faculty Assembly members and published in the *University Times*. This was an excellent example of a timely and thorough response. Further, at the March meeting of the Computer Usage Committee, this issue was discussed along with a presentation by Bob Pack. Things seem to be going well and the new system should be much improved over the old ISIS system. The minutes of the meeting are posted on the Senate Web site. To close the loop, he asked whether people who had asked questions were provided with the information they requested.

Questions and Comments

Professor Nelson said that what is missing is an explanation of how it will affect faculty

members as they do their job. For example, the new system will not use Social Security numbers. He wondered how that affects assigning grades and doing change of grades. Professor Ansell gave an example. She was part of a pilot to register students from her office. After ten years, she no longer can register them from her office. Thus her role as a faculty member has been affected and no one communicated with her.

Professor Orbach said that he had six hours of training on the new software. He said it is up to the area administration to identify people for training. There will be more training in August. Faculty will have to enter grades through a web-based system. It can be done anywhere because it is web-based but only faculty can do it. He said the glitch was at the administrative end because anyone who registers students should have been identified for training. Professor Frieze said each unit is responsible for the training in their unit. She said if there are problems, the committee could pass on this information to Vice Provost Pack. Professor Bircher asked if it would be worth having a list of frequently asked questions. Professor Close said that another problem is that the system requires use of Windows. Professor Beatrous has problems because he is a Unix user. Professor Frieze said the system requires Windows and there is no alternative. Professor Nelson asked who was taking responsibility for this and how do faculty know it will be done. Professor Frieze said there is an elaborate system of training across all units. The training is based on when people need to use it. She asked if there were problems in other units. Professor Baker said he thinks it is a problem only in some schools. In the Dental School they received a memo that the only effect it has on faculty is that grades will be filed on line. Professor Frieze said that since grades will not be filed on line until December, the training is not needed yet. She also said the interface will be my.pitt.edu. It will be very simple and not require much training. If someone needs to use the PeopleSoft database, then one needs Windows access. Professor Ansell asked what she should do. It was suggested that she go to the administration of the School of Education. However, Professor Bircher said that if the problem goes beyond the School of Education, it should come back to the Computer Usage Committee. Professor Close said it is more efficient to bring up problems with the administration of one's local unit.

- Continuing his report, Professor Bircher said the Plant Utilization Committee will discuss potential ways to utilize the University Club at their April Meeting. Please direct ideas and information to the chair, Carolyn Carson.
- A report from Maggie Kimmel, chair of the University Press Committee is on the agenda.
- With respect to other Senate Committees, Professor Bircher reported that the Chancellor has agreed to host a luncheon for members of the Senate Expanded Executive Committee on Wednesday, April 20. This will be an informal meeting but with time for discussion of any issue people wish.
- The Committee for Elections reports that the ballots for Senate Officers and Faculty Assembly Representatives are in the mail, and the ballots for Standing Committee members will go out on Wednesday. Names of candidates for the elections were previously announced in the March 31 issue of the *University Times*. More than half of the faculty should have already received their ballots; others should receive them by the end of this week. The deadline to return ballots is April 26, and ballots for Standing Committees of the Senate are due in the Senate Office by April 28.
- Professor Bircher said that the Chancellor had requested names of individuals to represent the Senate on the Chancellor's Affirmative Action Award Selection Committee. Professors Kathy Blee (Sociology) and Tom Buchele (Law School) have agreed to serve. Both serve

on the Senate Anti-discriminatory Policies Committee. The Award will be presented at the June 13 Senate Council Meeting.

- Professor Bircher announced that the next meeting of the Faculty Assembly is scheduled for Tuesday, May 3, 2005 and the next Senate Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 11, 2005.

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

Benefits and Welfare Committee

Professor Chesler, Vice Chair of the Committee, said that he had three items to discuss. Last month he thought his committee had been given the charge to discuss the possible utilization of the University Club. They discussed it but they could not reach an agreement on whether faculty and staff would support a faculty or fitness club or what kind of amenities would be appropriate. He came with the intention of reporting that the committee thinks a survey would be useful. He applauded Professor Munro for doing this, but argued that a one-person effort is insufficient. His committee would have recommended that the Executive Committee undertake such an effort in the name of the Senate. If it is just on Professor Munro's computer, there may not be enough publicity and response. The Executive Committee needs to support Professor Munro's effort. The other idea is to pass the responsibility for creative thinking to the Plant Utilization and Planning Committee. The Senate also needs to engage in collaborative discussion with the Administration so that we avoid having decisions made before we provide our input. He reminded people that the model was the Peterson Center. The decision was made that faculty would not have access to the building before the Committee had any input.

The second topic is the role of the committee in recreational facilities. He said that improvements are being made in the Bellefield Building for the recreational facilities. There will be improvements in the weight room, more cardio equipment, and a remodeled dance studio. He reminded the Faculty Assembly that about a year ago a committee was established, chaired by Vice Provost Pack, and Professor Chesler was appointed to represent faculty. The committee dealt with facilities and a promise of upgrading was made. This is the first fulfillment of that promise and it should be acknowledged that the faculty voice was heard. He requested from Professor Ross that access times be published through the mail or through the *University Times*.

The third item is that people should receive from Human Resources next week a mailing on the new medical insurance for 2005-2006. The rates have gone up, but he thinks the increases are fairly "nominal." The Benefits and Welfare Committee had no role in setting rates. Over the years there has been an understanding that the formula is that University picks up 80% of the increase and faculty and staff pick up 20%. This applies for the new rates.

Questions and Comments

Professor Wion noted that the University is now self insured and he wondered if its experience was reported to the committee. Professor Chesler said that they were receiving a substantial amount of information from Human Resources. They receive details about the nature of claims. With respect to finances, the expected cost increase is \$5 million. The cost is projected to go from \$65 to \$70 million. It is projected to go to \$110 million in seven years. As a consequence of this projection and the claim data, Human Resources is trying to have a "culture change" with respect to wellness and fitness and utilization of the insurance program. There will be incentives to go to your physicians to have tests that are

gender and age specific and there will be health risk assessments. This may help them develop wellness programs and he hopes that everyone will be willing to participate.

Questions and comments

Professor Hershey said that it might encourage people to exercise if they had access to the Petersen Center. He also observed that the University is conflicted because the more money it saves, the less goes to UPMC.

Professor Ross noted that hours of facilities can be found at education.pitt.edu/intramurals. There is a printable sheet of hours. She said there is a climbing wall for faculty and staff as well as students. Professor Rice said there is also an education hot line.

Professor Munro said he put the questionnaire on the web as a result of his “Senate Matters” column. He asked for feedback on his faculty club questionnaire. He also put a link on to an association of university faculty clubs.

Budget Policies Committee

Professor Wion said that he was reporting for the chair, Professor Steve Carr, who has a class. For over 20 years there has been an annual report comparing our salaries with those of our appropriate peer groups, which for the main campus is the 60 or so institutions in the American Association of Universities and for the regional campuses, the regional campuses of AAU universities (only about six). There has been discontent with the regional campus peer groups. The Budget Policies Committee discussed this in December and focused on process. They believed that the development of a comparison group should be done through a collegial process with shared governance. They learned a few weeks ago that the Presidents of the regional campuses (except Titusville) had been discussing this issue and they had agreed on a new comparison group. Last Friday, Dan Milberg from Greensburg discussed this at the committee meeting. The new list is very broad—all IIB institutions in three large geographical areas—270 schools. The average salaries at the regionals are close to the averages for these schools. The committee sent a letter to Professor Greenfield, President of the UPG Senate, expressing its concern with the process because the list was not developed in consultation of the faculty. The Budget Policies Committee also believes the list is too large and the kinds of schools that are lumped together range from Swarthmore and Oberlin to religious schools to the Naval Academy. The committee believes a more detailed analysis is needed and the faculty at the regional campuses should be involved.

Questions and Comments

Professor Pinsky asked about the metric for the comparison group. Should schools be listed by tuition or size and might not results differ depending on which schools? The Oakland campus uses the AAU public universities because they are similar in mission, aspiration, programming and competitiveness. Those are some criteria. Enrollment and faculty recruitment environment are other criteria. Some of the concerns at Greensburg are hiring and retention of faculty.

Anecdotally, there seem to be problems. Professor Balaban asked whether other IIB schools faced similar problems and noted that it is a complicated problem.

Professor Bircher said the presidents of the five campuses will probably get together and look at the data. He thinks they will probably take out all religious schools and the Naval Academy, and do some more quantitative analysis. Professor Chesler said the real issue for the Faculty Assembly is not the group of schools but the fact that this list was determined without consultation with the faculty. He argued that the Faculty Assembly should support its colleagues, expressing distress that faculty are being ignored in the process. Professor Hershey

suggested this should be on the agenda of Senate Council. Professor Bircher said he would consult with Professor Carr. Professor Balaban said the evidence in the letter is weak. He asked whether there is any corroboration that there was no consultation with faculty? He suggested that someone talk to the administration to confirm that there was no consultation. Professor Wion said that unfortunately Vice Provost Pack was not at the last meeting of Budget Policies. They thought it was important to express their concern. Professor Rice said the two reports bring up an important issue in the School of Pharmacy when they try to recruit faculty. They compete with other institutions, industry and community pharmacy. His graduating students make more money than he does as entry level pharmacists, even though he has been a pharmacist for more than 30 years and faculty member for almost 20 years. One of the ways they recruit new faculty is with other forms of enrichment, such as access to a state-of-the-art exercise facilities such as are available at the Pete.

Bylaws and Procedures Committee

Professor Rice, chair, thanked the committee and Ms. Czak for its efforts on the latest proposed bylaw changes. He said that the executive summary and draft sent via email was not the latest draft because some errors were discovered. He then reviewed the changes. For convenience, the pages of the bylaws are numbered and each page has line numbers. He went through the executive summary and referred to the changes. (Copies of the executive summary and a numbered set of Senate Bylaws were e-mailed to all Faculty Assembly members prior to the meeting. Anyone wishing another copy should contact the Senate Office.) He first noted that there were some editorial changes that did not need approval. Then he discussed substantive changes that need to be approved. He noted that many of the changes were to reflect current practice. On page 4, line 4 dealt with committee ex-officio representation on Faculty Assembly. A proposal was to change “an eligible faculty member who has been elected...” to read “an eligible faculty member delegated...” On line 16, they added wording about alternate members of Faculty Assembly to match language in the Senate Council portion of the bylaws.

Questions and Comments

Professor Munro suggested the addition of the word “elected” for Faculty Assembly members in line 16 (section 3b). **This suggested change was accepted.**

Professor Belle asked about “delegated” on line 4 of page 4. Professor Puri suggested taking out “delegated.” **This suggested change was accepted.**

Professor Rice said that on page 5, line 27 wording was changed to allow for Executive Session of Faculty Assembly, similar to wording in another section of the bylaws.

Questions and Comments

Professor Ansell asked if there was some way of notifying people about Executive Sessions. Professor Bircher said that when the agenda is published, one can identify potential executive sessions for that agenda item. He said that a motion to move to an executive session is not debatable.

Professor Rice then continued with other proposed changes. On page 10, line 46, he said that the draft had an error and the phrase “unless deemed unwise or impractical by the committee” was duplicated and should be deleted. This section dealt with allowing for the possibility of only one candidate for Senate office. He explained the rationale was to allow for some flexibility for the election committee. He also noted that in the past there has

occasionally been only one candidate for an office. He reviewed the other proposed changes, including the addition of “Robert’s Rules of Order” as a new Article VII.

Questions and Comments

Professor Bircher said there are about six versions of “Robert’s Rules of Order” and he wondered which one would be used. Professor Rice said he thought the latest edition was 2000. Professor Bircher said there were several publishers who claim to have the latest version. Professor Rice suggested it be at the president’s discretion.

Professor Wion referred to the proposed change on page 11, line 1 regarding the possibility of a single candidate. He said he did not see the purpose of “unwise.” Professor Rice said that the experience of members said that it was sometimes difficult to get another candidate if one was perceived to be insurmountable. Professor Wion said he thought the word “impractical” was enough and he suggested eliminating “unwise or.” Professor Rice accepted the proposed change.

The proposed Senate Bylaw changes (with the friendly amendments) were approved unanimously by a voice vote.

University Press Committee

The chair of the committee, Professor Kimmel, gave a report. She began by reading the mission statement of the University of Pittsburgh Press. She reported that the quality of books remains high as evidenced by positive reviews and the number of awards that the books have received in the past five years. The Press has received more than 25 major awards and has had two poet laureates among their authors. Efforts are being made to have more consistent quality across all areas and series. By the end of FY 2006 the Press hopes to have accomplished all 20 of its operational goals outlined in its five-year plan. One important goal relates to book manufacturing costs. Based on statistics from the American Association of University Presses, Pitt’s manufacturing costs as a percent of net sales are 10% lower than those of other presses. By the end of 2006 it will have accomplished all of its department function goals except for one. The exception relates to titles that sell fewer than 800 copies in three years. Five years ago, this represented close to 35% of all sales. In the next year, they hope to reduce that number to less than 20% and the ultimate goal is to less than 15%. They still have an absolute goal of maintaining high-level scholarship. This means bringing better books, award-winning books, and more books by established scholars while maintaining a commitment to publish the best “first books” in areas of its specialization. Successes this year include the fact that a reprint of Clark Thomas’s *Front Page Pittsburgh* has already been ordered. Twelve hundred copies were initially released in January and by the end of February only 46 copies remained. Poet Laureate Ted Kooser’s new collection, *Flying at Night*, has also been reprinted. Thirty six hundred paperbacks were released for sale on February 21 and by March 15 less than 200 were in stock. Two of his older books have been reprinted three times since he was appointed Poet Laureate. Other sales of new titles published in the first three quarters of this fiscal year have had mixed results. Sixteen have sold more or equal to what was projected and 18 have sold less than projected. The sales of back-listed titles have remained flat or declined slightly in the last three years. This has been true of other peer presses. Returns continue to be about 20 to 24% of net sales, meaning that the return percentages of the years 2000 to 2003, which were very low, were not aberrations but reflect a new norm. They have moved to a biblio-vault digital archive with the University of Chicago distribution center and up to

now it has been used to bring back or keep in print nearly 100 titles. The Senate Committee met three times in the current fiscal year and they have one more meeting scheduled for this month. The committee has endorsed 16 titles for publication and deferred a decision on one title. Fifteen titles have been signed to date in series with publication endorsed by the series editors. The committee has reviewed three of the series this year, considering print reviews, awards, outside comments where appropriate and sales figures, and has endorsed continuing the work of each of these series. They will review two more series this month. She said that she was attaching to her report a list of titles arranged by area or series published in the last two years. She read a short excerpt from Billy Collins' *Question of Angels* entitled "Cliché."

Questions and Comments

Professor Munro asked about the 10% cost difference. Professor Kimmel said that the cost figure was good. Professor Munro asked if they were just charging higher prices. Professor Kimmel said that they could charge higher prices but they do not. Professor Kimmel said she had chaired the committee for four years, edited a series and written a book on "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood." She observed that pricing is very dicey. It is "by guess and by golly." Pitt has an incredibly good staff led by Cynthia Miller, Director of the Press, with a real knowledge of the marketplace and they come up with reasonable prices. That figure of 10% cost difference means they pay attention to economies of scale. The publishing business is in turmoil because of electronic publishing and university presses are in particular difficulty because their market is the university library. University libraries are turning more and more to electronic publication. That lessens the sale of monographs. It makes it difficult for university presses to keep their commitment to publishing scholarship and to making scholarship widely available. Professor Kimmel said her term is up. She is sad to move off the committee. She said that chairing that committee is the best job. They get to meet to talk about wonderfully exciting intellectual ideas and the creative scholarship of faculty. The poetry series matches anything published in New York. The University can take great pride in its University Press.

6. Unfinished Business and New Business

Professor Saunders brought up the issue of parking. He said the closing of the Schenley parking lot has not only reduced availability of parking in that lot but also increased competition for spaces on the street. It is primarily a problem for students and part-time faculty and staff. He had a staff member quit because of parking problems. The availability and cost are both a problem. The monthly price of \$85 or more can be prohibitive for a new staff member with a salary of \$18,000. He has two requests to the Faculty Assembly. One is to increase the availability of space and the other is giving a reduced fee for staff.

Professor Weiss said that one of the benefits at Pitt is that the Pitt ID gives us free bus rides. She suggested his staff look into it and she said she hoped the university would continue to offer this benefit. Professor Saunders said it was impractical for people who live outside of the bus range. Professor Hershey said that some of his employees park in Squirrel Hill and then take the bus the rest of the way. Professor Munro observed that Squirrel Hill has become a satellite parking lot for many people and he wondered if real satellite parking lots could be set up. It was observed that there were some satellite lots, but they are only for UPMC. Professor Pinsky said we should fix the parking situation. One option is satellite lots with shuttles. The second is to

consider a large parking garage somewhere in Oakland. This is a life-style issue that should not be ignored. He suggested a committee to address these issues.

Professor Bircher asked which committee deals with this. Ms. Hartman said that she is the Senate's representative to the Parking and Transportation Committee and she invited people to send her an email at lhartman@pitt.edu with specific problems so that she can take them to the next meeting. She said they are also working with the OMTA. When the lot was closing, OMTA distributed information on other parking places. Professor Kimmel said that parking in her building was \$95. Ms. Hartman said that it would cost more downtown or on the street.

Professor Frieze said that building another garage would only worsen the traffic problem.

Professor Hershey said that perhaps Professor Bircher would bring the issue up with the Chancellor at the lunch on Monday.

Ms. Weiss asked about carpooling. Ms. Hartman said there is an Oakland-wide carpooling program. One can go to OMTA's website and apply for carpooling. Ms. Weiss said she had heard that other cities have carpool etiquette.

Professor Wion asked if the UPMC lots were filled and Professor Bircher said they are usually full. UPMC employees pay to park there.

Professor Salama asked about the cost of carpools. Ms. Hartman said they pay but she did not think it was very expensive.

Professor Rice said the situation in Oakland will get worse when the new biomedical center is opened. Professor Bircher said that it will be improved somewhat when Children's moves to Bloomfield.

Professor Ansell said that the issue is somewhat similar to health care; it is a cultural issue. We need to work on changing the culture of everyone driving a car. If there were incentives for walking, taking the bus, or biking, there might be some people willing to do that. Professor Close said the incentive of \$5 off a month for carpooling is attractive.

7. Announcements

There were no announcements.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5.00 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Josephine E. Olson, Secretary

Members Attending:

Ansell, Baker, Balaban, Belle, Bergen, Bircher, Brush, Cain, Cassaro, Chesler, Close, Czak, Flynn, Frieze, Hartman, Hershey, Kimmel, Kuller, MacQuarrie, McKinney, Munro, Nelson, Olson, Orbach, Pinsky, Puri, Rice, Ross, Salama, Saunders, Savoia, Skledar, Sukits, Sussman, Vanyukov, Weiss, Wion, Withiam

Others Attending:

Blair, Hart, Ravnikar, White