

Senate Council Meeting Minutes  
2700 Posvar Hall  
May 11, 2011

<b>Topic/Discussion</b>	<b>Action</b>
<u>Call to Order.</u> President Michael R. Pinsky called the meeting to order at 3:02pm.	The meeting commenced at 3:02pm.
<u>Approval of the Minutes of the April 5, 2011 Senate Council Meeting.</u> President Pinsky asked for approval of the minutes of the April 5, 2011 Senate Council meeting.	The minutes were approved as written.
<u>Introduction of Items of New Business.</u> No new business.	
<p><u>Report of the Chancellor of the University, Mark A. Nordenberg</u> Clearly, the biggest news for Pitt and its people is ongoing concern with respect to the budget for the next fiscal year in light of proposed cuts to our commonwealth appropriation. Those proposed cuts were announced publicly on March 8<sup>th</sup>, and ever since then, essentially every one of our constituent groups have been involved in advocacy efforts directed toward the goal of restoring some substantial portion of the state funding threatened by those proposed cuts. It seems particularly fitting in this setting then where faculty, staff, and students are all represented to publicly thank the members of these 3 groups as well as the alumni and other friends for standing up for Pitt and for the cause of higher education. We obviously do have a strong self interest in the goal of restoration, however; we are also standing up for what has been the long standing American tradition of building the future through investments in higher education. We did receive some good news today. The House of Representatives has taken steps toward advancing a bill that would restore ½ of the education and general appropriations that had been targeted for reduction. Taking that cut from 50% to 25% or in pure dollar terms, from about 80 million dollars to about 40 million dollars. That bill also provides substantial restoration for the Health Science lines which had been completely eliminated under the governor’s initial proposal. That is a clear step in the right direction and we are grateful for the help that has been provided by so many inside and outside of the legislature that has gotten us to this point. The budget shaping process continues with a lot of ground to be covered before a budget for the next fiscal year is approved by the state. Obviously, we intend to press for further relief in the weeks ahead and we likely will need further help from all of the groups that I mentioned a moment ago. Thanks for helping to get us to this point, but be ready to push even further as we move through this month and into the month of June.</p> <p>On a far happier note, commencement ceremonies were held on all five campuses earlier this month. Here in Pittsburgh, the speaker was</p>	

the honorable Benjamin Cardin who had served as President of the undergraduate student body while he was a student here at Pitt and who remarked to me on an earlier visit that important parts of the foundation for his life in public service had been built while he was a student leader here at Pitt. He now is a U.S. Senator for the state of Maryland. The Senator's speech which stressed the need for volunteerism, public service and social responsibility was inspiring. The Peterson Center quite literally was packed. President Pinsky looked particularly resplendent in his academic regalia in the role of Chief Marshall. I do believe that the opportunity both to celebrate the past academic achievements of the graduating students and to look ahead to the good that will come their way in the future was a time that was enjoyed by all.

The student speaker was David Gau who served as a member of this council and also served as one of the public faces in our battle against the city's proposed tuition tax. David earned a triple major in bioengineering, mathematics, and economics. He also had an amazing level of engagement in a wide range of activities that benefited the campus and the broader community; everything from being the king of the pathfinders to volunteering in the ER at UPMC. He also received many internal honors including being named as the ODK senior of the year which means that his name will be carved in the walk between the Cathedral of Learning and Heinz Chapel. David and a large number of other Pitt students closed out the year by receiving prestigious external awards. Since we do pride ourselves in being one of the country's leading producers of high performing students, I wanted to at least provide some sense of the wide ranging forms of recognition that were captured by our students as the current academic year came to a close.

David and his classmate, Nicholas Apollo, were two of just 21 recipients nationally of Whitaker international awards, designed to bring international experience to the field of biomedical engineering. Both are going to undertake projects in Australia. This is just the sixth year for this Whitaker program. It's only the second year in which Pitt students have been eligible to apply and we are now 2 for 2, having won Whitaker awards in each of the last two years. David and three classmates, Aaron Cantor, Nina Weaver, and Liz Van Loon were recipients of rotary ambassadorial scholarships to study abroad. Our four students will study in Australia, Tanzania, and Kenya. It is also worth noting that Pitt finished tied for second nationally in terms of the most rotary ambassadorial awards granted to the students in our school. Two Pitt juniors, Karina Goulordava, and Kevin Ramser received Humanity in Action fellowships to participate in summer programs in Amsterdam and Copenhagen. This is the sixth straight year that Pitt students have claimed Humanity in Action awards. Four members of our current graduating class received National Science Foundation research fellowships. This is the oldest graduate

fellowship program of its kind and provides annual support for a period of three 3 years. Carey Calginalp will pursue a PhD in mathematics at Brown, Edlyn Levine will pursue a PhD in Physics at Harvard, Alex Patterson will pursue a PhD in Electrical Engineering at MIT and Andrew Savinov will pursue a PhD in Biophysics at Stanford. Obviously, it is one real sign of undergraduate program strength when the students emerging from those programs are admitted into graduate programs of that caliber and are admitted with the kind of support that comes with these NSF grants. Taking the other side of the coin, the strength of our own graduate programs is reflected in the fact that five graduate students from our programs also received NSF awards. They are: Steven Balmert who did his undergraduate work at Pitt and who is doing graduate work in Bioengineering, William Barone who also did his undergraduate work at Pitt and who also is doing graduate work in Bioengineering, Catherine Fairbairn who studied as an undergraduate at Barnard and who is here as a graduate student in Psychology, Matthew Koski who did his undergraduate work at Michigan and is here as a graduate student in the Biological Sciences and Naima Sharaf who did her undergraduate work at the University of North Carolina and is here as a graduate student in Structural Biology. Again, these really are prestigious awards and when your undergraduates are winning them and taking them to prestigious graduate programs elsewhere and when students who clearly are among the best students anywhere as undergraduates are bringing them into the graduate programs of the University of Pittsburgh; it really is a measure of distinction. Five Pitt students received graduate fellowships from the German Academic Exchange Service to study or do research in that country. Grace Lindsay who majored in Neuroscience will study at the University Freiburg, Noah Willumsen who majored in German, Philosophy, and Art History will study at Humboldt University in Berlin...Sara Nichols who is a doctoral candidate in Psychology will study at the Max Planck Institute in Leipzig, Lidio Marx Carvalho Meireles who is a doctoral candidate in the School of Medicine will study at the University of Hamburg, and Ian Blecher, a doctoral candidate in Philosophy will study at the University of Leipzig.

Finally, on the student awards front, Corey Rodgers who just graduated with majors in Biological Sciences, the History and Philosophy of Science, and Africana Studies became the first Pitt student to win a Samuel Huntington Public Service Award which provides 10,000 dollars in support to a graduating senior to undertake a public service project in some other part of the world. His project is entitled, The Poultry Program for People Living with HIV and Aids in Rwambaizi. It is patterned after an existing program in Tanzania and is designed to build a HIV positive individual's capacity to raise free range chickens as a sustainable source of food and income. So, our

students are high achieving people who are getting into a broad range of interesting things all over the country and all over the globe and it is a credit to the programs and to the faculty who have nurtured them.

I'll just mention two other very recent university events. We did have the opportunity to participate in cohosting the Indian Ambassador to the United States a week or so ago. It was a nice event for the city of Pittsburgh with the World Affairs Council and the Indian business community participating. Pitt and Carnegie Mellon partnered in a lunch for the ambassador and the broader community and again it is reflective of the strength of the commitment to international outreach at the university and with the city of Pittsburgh.

Last night, the university through the Department of Athletics, the Alumni Association, the African American Alumni Council, Department of Public Affairs and probably a long list of other contributors sponsored a very special program that drew about 700 people to the Petersen Events Center. It was a celebration marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the graduation of the first African American athletes to compete for the University of Pittsburgh. It's hard to believe 1911 to 2011 and you think of what we take for granted today and what was not possible or what was achieved only with great difficulty, not too far distant in our history. We did have athletes returning from distant places from all over the country. People who we had been proud to have represent us while they were here as student athletes. People we are proud to have representing us in the real world today and people who made us feel a special sense of pride last night because of the explicit and heartfelt statements they made about the sense of connection that they continue to feel to the University of Pittsburgh being here as a student and student athlete really has changed their lives for the better. It is the kind of thing that draws a community closer together and certainly was as well deserved occasion for celebration within the community.

Report of the President of the Senate, Michael Pinsky.

President Pinsky gave the following report:

This month marks the end of the academic year, the continuation of the budget negotiation process and a hope that summer recess will soon be here.

As the President of the University Senate, I had the honor of being the Grand Marshall for the University of Pittsburgh Graduation Convocation on May 1<sup>st</sup>. As the Grand Marshall I open these convocations by walking in carrying the University of Pittsburgh seal on a rather impressive mace. I walk across the floor of the Petersen Events Center, full of empty chairs but devoid of people. The stands were full of proud and happy family and friends. Once at the podium I

ask that the academic procession begins. I then watched as a completely empty Petersen Events Center floor filled to capacity with our students in cap and gown waiting to receive their degrees. The sheer number and enthusiasm of our graduating students is inspiring to me as a professor because in a very tangible sense this is why we are here and why it is important.

Along the same line of thought, this spring's University Senate Plenary Session entitled "Teaching Excellence as a Criterion for Promotion and Tenure" took place at the William Pitt Union's Assembly Room on Thursday April 14. The program highlighted the importance of teaching and teaching mentorship on faculty development and promotion. I am pleased to report that for the third time in a row the session was well attended with late comers having to find seats on the side rows. I wish to congratulate Professors Linda Frank and Carey Balaban for co-chairing this excellent program.

As you may recall, the Community Relations Committee served as a pilot discussion group for the Oakland 2025 Project. Specifically, the Community Relations Committee supported the Oakland 2025 Kick-Off Event held on March 24<sup>th</sup>. Out of that Kick-Off Event, 11 dialogue circles were established. Each dialogue circle is comprised of 8 to 13 participants. These groups will meet five times over the next month to identify and discuss current issues and to develop a vision of what Oakland can become over the next ten years. The next step in the process will be the Action Forum on Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at St. Nicholas' Greek Orthodox Cathedral at 6 PM. During the Action Forum the outcomes of the dialogues circles will be presented and Community Action Teams will be formed around the topics and the real work of transforming Oakland will begin. As a University situated in the center of Oakland, our engagement in this process is essential.

The University Faculty, through our Senate and University-based committees, continue to work with the administration on the State appropriations issues and their potential impact. The state's proposed budget cuts would materially impair our ability to continue to offer high quality educational and research services essential to the economic and social health of the region and the state. We all have a personal stake in this issue.

Like some faculty and administrators in this room, I have a 30 year perspective of what the University and the city have done to get to where we are now. I came to Pittsburgh to take up a faculty position in the School of Medicine in 1981 coming from Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions in Baltimore. What attracted me to Pittsburgh was community, the positive attitude of the University and the promise that with effort we could accomplish almost anything. Recall that 1981 was not a good year for Pennsylvania in general and Pittsburgh in

particular. The steel mills were closed or closing. Unemployment was high, brown fields defined the economy and frustration was everywhere. Yet we persevered. The next 30 years witnessed not only a rebirth of the city but a transformation of it as well into the high tech and major medical center that it now represents. Our University was a central part of that growth. It has risen to be one of the leading academic institutes in the United States and the School of Medicine now rivals my alma maters of Johns Hopkins and Stanford Universities. This did not occur without sacrifice and dedication by the faculty, administration and staff. Yet, all of this is now at risk of a major blow if the proposed budget is enacted. Faculty should have received by e-mail a copy of my open letter to the faculty asking that they contact your local legislators and the governor arguing for why Pitt's state allocation should not be cut. A copy of my letter will be on the Senate Webpage if any wish to read it. I am pleased to report that I have received many notes of support and agreement from faculty on our writing campaign initiative. I will say again that we all should write our legislators and let them know our thoughts. Effective democracy requires citizen participation.

Finally, on a more positive note, I have an award to present. Past President Nate Hershey felt that public credit in the form of an annual award should be given to University faculty who work hard and long in the service of the University Senate. As you know, Senate activities can be time consuming though very important to the academic lives of the faculty and indeed the entire University. This year I am pleased to announce that the Senate Service Award will be given to Professor Nick Bircher. Nick is an Associate Professor of Anesthesiology in the School of Medicine. Nick's service to the Senate has been long, impressive and on-going. He was first elected to the Faculty Assembly in 1997 and has remind an active participant ever since. In 2002 he was elected Vice President of the Senate and the following year President, a position he held for two terms. Then from 2005 to 2009 he was the Faculty representative to the Budget Committee of the University of Pittsburgh Board of Trustees. From 2007 onward he has been the Chair of the Senate Bylaws & Procedures Committee and starting last year he took over the newly formed Faculty Outreach Program. To a large extent, the reason why we enjoy such a relevant, close and cooperative relationship with the University Administration stems from his two terms as president when cooperation, reasonableness and mutual respect defined his approach to all things. Furthermore, when I was a junior senator his guidance helped me to craft and complete two important initiatives that ended in major administrative improvements within the university. His equanimity, wisdom and judgment have been central features of his performance in all these areas. Nick, as President of the University Senate, it gives me great pleasure to present you this token of our appreciation for the work you have done and continue to do in service to the University

<p>Senate.</p> <p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p><i>Nick Bircher made the following remarks: I would like to thank the executive committee for this presentation for my accomplishments. I would also like to thank all of the faculty, staff, students and the administrative colleagues that I have had the privilege to work with who really made this a team effort.</i></p>	
<p><u>Report of Student Members of Senate Council.</u></p> <p><u>Student Government Board, Molly Steiber</u>  Since my last report, the Student Government Board has begun its final push to encourage students to advocate for restored state appropriations to the University of Pittsburgh. With the help of Vice Chancellor Paul Supowitz and the Division of Student Affairs, we have been working to send out letters to as many students as possible encouraging them to write letters and also to visit the district offices of their legislators if they are PA residents. Knowing that many students head home for the summer after the end of the academic year, it is our hope that these students will take the time to visit the district offices of their legislators and make their case as Pitt students and work to ensure full restoration of Pitt’s state appropriations.</p> <p>This year proved to be a very productive year for the Student Government Board. Though the budget cuts quickly became the prime focus of the Board early on, many of the Board Members and Committee Chairs still achieved great accomplishments. Board Member Lauren Jentleson and the Transportation and Safety committee chair, an ad-hoc committee added by the 2011 Board, created a Rider’s Guide pamphlet for students informing them on which routes and been cut as well as useful ways to deal with the Port Authority cuts. These Rider’s Guides are currently advertised at multiple locations on campus, including Panther Central and has recently been picked up by the Port Authority itself to be placed on buses for the general population of the city of Pittsburgh. Board Member Alex Zimmerman’s hard work with the Hillman Library has paid off in the form of a Graduate Exam Resource Center. This project will be implemented over the summer with the idea that students planning to take any graduate exams, MCATs, LSATS, GREs will have a section of the library with each of these preparatory books for them to use free of charge. Other Board Members have been working very hard and will plan to continue this hard work into the summer, as many of them will be living in Oakland</p> <p><u>College of General Studies, Patricia Szczepanski</u>  They ended the year with their Excellence Reception where they</p>	

honored 15 staff, faculty, and advisors for their special attention for the non-traditional CGS student.

### Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, Nyasha Hungwe

The past month has seen GPSA transition executive boards. During this period GPSA has continued its commitment to promoting student civic engagement, graduate student interaction. Throughout the transition process, GPSA has been evaluating mechanisms to continue and expand on the successful initiatives of past executive boards in order to enhance the graduate student experience here at Pitt.

#### I. Student Civic Engagement

Together with SGB, GPSA hosted the Pittsburgh Student Government Council meeting here at Pitt.

At the PSGC meeting:

- Sean Carter, chief of staff for City Councilman Burgess, spoke on student government initiatives aimed at getting students registered to vote.
- GPSA looks forward to its continued participation in PSGC, especially working closely alongside SGB.

GPSA is continuing its letter writing campaign aimed at bringing student voices and opposition to the Governors proposed budget cuts.

GPSA attended and presented on our successful Student Civic Engagement Campaigns regarding voter turnout and student advocacy, at the Northeast Regional Conference for NAGPS.

The conference presented GPSA with valuable insight regarding initiatives that GPSA would like to pursue for the betterment of graduate students and to increase graduate student involvement in activities that further the mission and purpose of the University.

Namely,

- The possibility of creating a graduate student focused space on campus
- Establishment of an endowment fund
- Initiatives useful for furthering graduate student alumni Relations

#### Awards

GPSA was nominated for an award by several different University Offices and members of the greater Pittsburgh community for the League of Women Voters Good Governance Award.

- At present, GPSA is awaiting the announcement of the winner with fingers crossed.

Events

GPSA closed out the semester by hosting its end of year picnic. In the spirit of furthering interschool relations and cooperation, GPSA invited graduate students from Carnegie Melon and Duquesne University.

- The event had a great turnout and student feedback about the event has been greatly positive.
- The success of the event underscores the substantial growth of student involvement in GPSA initiatives that has transpired over the course of the past few years.

GPSA hosted its first Graduate Student Appreciation Breakfast.

- Dr. Sbragia was present and spoke to graduate students in attendance.

We would like to give special thanks to Dr. Sbragia for making the event a success.

GPSA hosted the inauguration of its new executive committee.

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- Members of PSGC and representatives from the graduate student governments of CMU and Duquesne University were in attendance.
- Also in attendance were members of organizations outside of the university.
- GPSA would like to thank those members of the senate council and administrators who were in attendance.

Future

GPSA would like to reach out to the respected members of Senate Council for assistance with

- Creating an endowment
- Increasing relations between graduate students and alumni

GPSA believes these initiatives will enable graduate students to better contribute to the overall success and prestige of the University.

College of Arts and Sciences, Katie Moriarty

Last week, there was the Inaugural Dissertation Boot Camp that provided workshops on how to write a dissertation and time management. The 18 available spots were filled within 24 hours, with 19 students on the wait list and of those who participated, 12 different disciplines were represented.

Report of the President of the Staff Association Council (SAC), Gwen

<p><u>Watkins.</u></p> <p>SAC will conduct its first electronic elections for the officers of President, Vice-President of Steering, Vice-President of Marketing and Communications and Treasurer. SAC Safety and Security Committee CPR classes will be conducted on Saturday, June 11, 2011 in room G 34 Benedum Hall. Reservations and inquiries can be made at the SAC office.</p> <p>Pitt Kennywood Day will be held on Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Tickets for Kennywood, Idlewild, and Sandcastle can be purchased at the William Pitt Student Union ticket office.</p> <p>This will be the last time that Gwen Watkins will address the Senate as President of SAC. Working towards the completion of her degree will not permit her to run for another term. During her administration, her goal for SAC was to carry out its purpose of “addressing philosophical and operational issues affecting the welfare of staff.” This is an ongoing process and for the past two years, SAC has been consistent in meeting with the Chancellor and other appropriate university officers and administrators to discuss those issues and concerns that affect the welfare of the staff and university community in a spirit of partnership and professionalism.</p> <p>During this administration, SAC celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary where they presented a historical timeline of SAC, went green and emailed their first e-newsletter, organized and accomplished our first retreat, conducted our second retreat in March 2011, collaborated with Pitt students to organize and participate in a letter writing campaign addressing the proposed state budget appropriations, established SAC Diversity and Inclusion and Mentoring committees, and instituted SAC’s first electronic elections process, began the process of updating SAC bylaws, and also succeeded in having 2,000 Pitt staff and their families enjoy Pitt Kennywood Day 2010. SAC also gave back to the community through its successful efforts to provide for families in need through the Salvation Army, food donations to the Oakland Food Pantry, Auberle, Inc., and Family House. Finally, the SAC Endowed Book Fund Scholarship continues to grow and award book scholarships to the children of the University of Pittsburgh staff.</p>	
<p><u>Announcements.</u></p> <p>Faculty Assembly will meet on Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> at 3:00pm in the University Club.</p> <p>Senate Council will be held on Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 3:00pm in 2700 Posvar Hall.</p> <p><u>Adjournment.</u> Meeting was adjourned at 4:02pm.</p>	

Members attending:

Becker, Beeson, Caldwell, Close, Cochran, Coldren, Costantino, Fonzi, Frank, Hasley, Henker, Hilf, Hungwe, Jentleson, Juhl, Molinaro, Moriarty, Nordenberg, Pinsky, Ramicone, Riehle, V. Singh, Smith (Sharon), Smitherman, Sparto, Spring, Stieber, Szczepanski, Watkins, Weiss, Wilson

Members not attending:

Boone, Burkoff, Deitrick, Ecker, Gaddy, Hall, Ho, Karapinka, Kendrick, Kory, Lunsford, Majumdar, Pan, Ray, Rickman, Rosborough, Slimick, Smolinski, Sukits, Towers, Trovato, Zutter

\*Excused attendance:

Baker, Chaiklin, Galloway, Greenberg, Harbert, Humphrey, Iwema, Johnson, Levine, Muenzer, Seybert, C. Singh, Smith (Sallie)

Others attending:

Barlow, Bircher, Blair, Bonner, Brendel, Clark, Devanath, Frisch, Golden, Hart, Hoogendoorn, Kelly, Mohamed, Supowitz, Wilds

\*Notified Senate office