

University of Pittsburgh  
Senate Council Minutes  
November 7, 2005

1. Call to Order. President Frieze called the meeting to order at 3:00
2. Minutes of September 12, 2005 Senate Council Meeting approved as written.
3. Introduction of Items of New and/or Unfinished Business. None
4. Report of the Chancellor of the University, Mark A. Nordenberg
  - a. The Chancellor believes that it is important for the Senate Council to meet on a regular basis. He recognized, however, that the Senate President may, in consultation with him, exercise her power to cancel meetings. With regard to the cancellation of the October meeting, President Frieze had discussed this with the Chancellor and he agreed with her decision to cancel.
  - b. There is much to report from the 2 months since the last Senate Council Meeting
    - i. Progress has been made in the physical development of the campus
      1. Dedication of the 3<sup>rd</sup> biomedical Science Tower. The tower has 300,000 square feet of space, and cost \$205 million. It is the most advanced of its type in the world, housing 50 different research groups including the largest colony of zebra fish in 10,000 separate tanks. The building provides facilities that are the site for the most significant achievements of the University.
      2. The McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine Laboratory Building last week received the gold rating for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. This is the first university facility in PA to have achieved the gold level of recognition.
      3. Schenley Plaza Park. Transforms not only the university, but a big slice of Oakland. The work is on schedule with most of the work to be completed later this month. Finishing touches and the grand opening will take place in the spring.
    - ii. Continued advance of research agenda
      1. Annual celebration of science in the “Science 2005: The New Research Ecology.” Showcased distinguished scientists from Pitt and CMU.
      2. New RFID Center of Excellence. Will provide the technology that takes the place of barcodes.
      3. Nanotechnology. We became the only institution in the US and second in the world to have the new nano fabrication capability.
      4. The university received full accreditation by the Association of Accreditation of human research programs. Pitt is the first university in PA to successfully complete this voluntary accreditation.
      5. Pitt cosponsored with CMU a joint meeting of the Council for the Advancement of Science Writing and the National Association of Science Writers. The meeting showcased two writers of impact, Lawrence Krauss and Rick Weiss.
      6. Homecoming brought important events in addition to the football win and the crowning of the homecoming king and queen:
        - a. 13 extraordinarily accomplished graduates were nominated by their schools to be legacy laureates



- ii. Increasing use of email to communicate. Meeting with Jinx Walton
  - 1. Discussed effective use with faculty (staff may want to do something similar).
  - 2. Recommendation: monthly newsletter to all faculty. First line of first newsletter will provide opportunity to opt out of email communication. The newsletter would be one page and list events from senate or Provost Office with links to click for more information.
  - 3. In response to President Frieze's elicitation of reactions to the recommendation, Rich Colwell, President of Staff Association Council said that sharing information in this way is a good thing. President Frieze suggested that Staff Council might want to do something similar for staff.
- iii. Meeting with presidents of the regional campuses
  - 1. Regional campus faculty senate presidents will meet with our Senate Executive Committee in Pittsburgh Tuesday November 29. On the agenda will be the benchmarking list. The Chair of the Senate Budget Policies Committee, Steve Carr, has been invited to join in the discussion.
  - 2. The regional senate presidents will attend the Faculty Assembly meeting that afternoon and give a brief report about their campus issues.
- iv. Senate Website
  - 1. After several people told us they had trouble finding the Senate website, the Provost's office made significant changes to make it more accessible. It can be accessed from the "Faculty and Staff" link on the Pitt home page. Thanks to Vice Provost Patty Beeson and her assistant Carrie Sparks.
- v. Senate Matters column
  - 1. Vice president Michael Pinsky's first Senate matters Column, "Is it just me or are your health care costs increasing too?" was published in the October 27 *University Times*. President Frieze asked the Vice President if he has received any response to the article. Vice President Pinsky said that he has received a few positive emails remarking that the piece was balanced. He has received no negative responses. Future columns will incorporate interviews with the chairs of senate committees related to the topic of the column. He hopes that this will highlight the work of the committees and underscore their worth to the overall governance process.
  - 2. Vice President Pinsky welcomes ideas and writers for the column. Anyone interested should contact VP Pinsky.
- vi. Pitt. Edu accounts
  - 1. Michael Pinsky is continuing to work with the Medical School on resolving the pitt.edu computer accounts
- vii. Ten-year facilities plan
  - 1. Faculty representatives on the committee working on the University's next ten-year facilities plan are Steve Carr, Chair of the Senate Budget Policies committee, and Shirley Cassing, Chair of the Senate

Plant Utilization and Planning committee. The committee is chaired by Provost Maher and Executive Vice Chancellor Jerry Cochran.

viii. Faculty Assembly Meeting, November 10, 2005

1. Marilyn Ross, Co-director of the Intramurals and Recreation in the School of Education, reported to the Faculty Assembly the recreational facilities available to faculty, staff and students. Contact her for information. Information can also be found on the website: <http://www.education.pitt.edu/intramurals/index.html>

ix. PeopleSoft.

1. Sam Conte invited faculty to attend a focus group to discuss how to inform faculty about procedures for on-line grading. The focus group will be held on Wednesday, November 9, from 12-2pm and will include lunch. People interested should contact President Frieze after the meeting.

b. Committee Items

i. Admission and Student Aid (Pat Smolinski and Carol Stilley, Co-chairs)

1. This committee is looking into how many children of faculty and staff take advantage of the tuition benefits offered by Pitt. There is no guarantee for admissions for children of faculty and staff, though most are admitted to at least one of the campuses.

ii. Athletics Committee (Bill Zamboni, Chair)

1. The committee is reviewing membership in the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA). The discussion will continue at the December 9 meeting. Bill Zamboni said that the committee's position has been not to join. Interested Faculty Assembly members are welcome to attend the meeting which will take place at 2:00 in the Conference Room in the Petersen Events Center.

iii. Bylaws and Procedures Committee (Ted Rice, Chair)

1. The recommended bylaws changes went into effect October 17.
2. The committee is currently working on the issue of allocation of representatives from each unit. There is no resolution at this point. There is another meeting planned for later this month. The committee will review how the numbers developed and whether to change them.
3. Another issue raised is whether to change the number of Senate meetings (Faculty Assembly and Senate Council) per year from the current bylaws requirement of a minimum 8 to a minimum of 6 per year. A straw vote of the committee indicated that the minimum should remain at 8. A straw vote in Senate Council had the same result.

iv. Commonwealth Relations committee (Debbie Rougeux and Stella Smetanka, Co-chairs)

1. The next luncheon is scheduled for Friday, November 18. The guest speaker will be Representative Dan Frankel, 23<sup>rd</sup> district of Allegheny County.
2. The October 14 luncheon at the Titusville campus with Representative Scott Hutchinson had a good turnout with 22 faculty, staff and students attending.

- v. Community Relations Committee (Linda Hartman, Chair)
    - 1. Tracy Soska will lead a discussion of how community service activities should be rewarded in the University.
    - 2. A federal grant competition on Service-learning has been announced that the committee has been eagerly awaiting. We hope the Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) can help lead the university in bringing one of these grants to Pittsburgh.
  - vi. Educational Policies Committee (Susan Sereika and Judy Erlen, Co-chairs)
    - 1. The committee will be looking at the part-time faculty survey done several years ago and may initiate a new survey. They are interested in the implications of the report from the Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee on tenured and non-tenured faculty for 2004-05. Carey Balaban, Chair of the Tenure and Academic Freedom committee, said that the two committees have been in touch.
  - vii. Plant Utilization and Planning Committee (Shirley Cassing, Chair)
    - 1. A consultant has been hired to make suggestions about how we might utilize space in the old University Club for a faculty club and conference center, as well as other possible uses. Interviews are being conducted now with interested administrators and faculty. Contact Eli Shorak if you would like to provide input.
  - viii. Student Affairs Committee (Teresa Donegan and Patricia Tuite, Co-chairs)
    - 1. The committee is concerned about students who fall through the cracks regarding medical insurance access.
  - ix. University Press Committee (Evelyn Rawski)
    - 1. The new chair of the committee is Professor Evelyn Rawski of the History Department. She is replacing Maggie Kimmell, who remains on the committee as a pro-tem member.
  - c. Question/Comments
    - i. Chancellor Nordenberg made two comments
      - 1. In regard to Dan Frankel, the Chancellor reminded the Senate that he is a part of the university community as a University trustee and that his district covers part of the Oakland Campus. The Chancellor also noted that Frankel is a member of the house select committee on student academic freedom.
      - 2. In regard to the consultant working on the University Club, the Chancellor commented that the consultant's contact is mainly with those who can predict and/or influence events in the University Club.
6. Report of Student Members of Senate Council
- a. Graduate Professional Student Association, Justin Hsieh, President
    - i. A student from the Bioengineering Department represented Pitt's Graduate Professional Student Association at the NAGPS legislative action in September. The student lobbied for and received support from Congressman Solomon Ortiz (D-TX).
    - ii. Finance committee met with 4 student groups on Friday, November 4 to discuss allocation. They discussed a change in the application procedure to clarify what is to be expected when students apply for supplemental funds.
    - iii. The GPSA holiday toy drive begins Tuesday November 8, 2005 and ends December 13<sup>th</sup>.

- b. School of Arts and Sciences, Lofty Durham
  - i. Met with Associate Dean Nicole Constable and look forward to working with her.
  - ii. Expanding and making access to travel funds more equitable.
  - iii. Play readings have been instituted to raise funds to support a variety of charitable causes.
- 7. Report of the President of the Staff Association Council, Richard Colwell
  - a. Benefits Committee
    - i. New chair, Steve Zupcic.
    - ii. The committee is discussing proposals for University Office delivery of prescriptions from Falk Pharmacy; they are discussing specific support of and modification to the Fitness for Life Program; and a proposal for a salary-based sliding fee scale for health care insurance premiums.
  - b. Governance Committee
    - i. Revision of the Staff Association Bylaws has been approved by the SAC officers. Members of the Staff Association Council will vote on the changes on Wednesday, November 9, 2005.
  - c. Marketing & communications committee
    - i. New Chair, Kara Richardson
    - ii. The committee is working on their pre-holiday shopping trip to New York and a “look what’s new around campus” program focused on new buildings at Pitt.
  - d. Program and Planning Committee
    - i. Continues to raise funds to be placed in the endowment account for the SAC Endowed Book Fund Scholarship for undergraduate students who are children of University of Pittsburgh staff members. Their goal is \$10,000.
      - 1. Sarris Candy sales are going well. As of November 3, 2005, all of the candy bars had been sold. Chocolate covered pretzel rods are still available. Order forms are available through the SAC office.
      - 2. A one-day shopping trip to NY is planned. There are still seats available. The bus leaves at midnight on Friday/Saturday. All of Saturday is spent in NY shopping and/or sight seeing. The bus arrives back in Pittsburgh at 4:00 AM on Sunday.
    - ii. Plans are being made for the 2006 Spring Assembly, a fashion show luncheon and bus trip fundraiser, and the University of Pittsburgh Kennywood Day.
  - e. Salary and Job Classification Committee
    - i. New Chair, Bobbi Jo Rosol
    - ii. Focusing on improving the staff appraisal system so that it better fits with the different job families within the University system.
    - iii. Ongoing goal to justify for better raises in comparison with the actual cost of living rates.
- 8. New and/or Unfinished Business
  - a. Report on the Fall 2006 Plenary Session, Professor Consuella Lewis, Administration and Policy Studies, School of Education
    - i. The subcommittee of the ad hoc committee on women recognizes the talent at Pitt and wanted to focus on how to sustain, support and enhance that talent. They saw mentoring as a way to do that. Their interest is in thinking about

how to develop mentoring programs at Pitt. The Proposal for the Plenary was approved by the Faculty Assembly November 1, 2005.

- ii. The proposed plenary will have a panel as well as stories. It will include information from a benchmark study written by Jean Ferketish, Darlene Zellers, and 3 students. The committee is now moving forward with the planning of the Plenary.
- b. Update on Career and Life Skills Programs for Student Athletes, Ms. Donna Sanft, Senior Associate Athletic Director for Administration, Compliance and Student Life.
  - i. The Athletics Department's Panther Game Plan Life Skills Program has been in place since 1995. It is an umbrella program that tries to look at the total development of student athletes. It includes career development, community service, and essential life skills such as health and wellness, and leadership development.
  - ii. Jeff Long, Athletic Director wanted to do more. By looking at what is required to be a "Program of Excellence," he identified what more could be done to improve the program. Such improvement required more staff. They decided to add a person to be shared (50-50) with Career Services.
  - iii. Thanked Jim Maher for his support in authorizing the new position. They did a national search with the career services office and found the perfect person in our own back yard. Penny Semaia, a former student-athlete at Pitt was hired. His first event with football freshman on making smart decision in social situations was a great success.
  - iv. Vice President Pinsky said he was pleased to see the program and that it would be a good recruiting tool that showed the commitment to the community. Pinsky asked to what extent we do the same kind of programs for other students, in particular survival skills. Provost Maher responded that student athletes are different due to scheduling and the predictable situations that they will encounter. He said that he had been working hard for 10 years through Pitt Pathways to coordinate efforts to get students to seize opportunities for education by reflecting on why they are in college, what they want to do when they leave, and what they are doing to get to where they want to go. That is, encouraging students to be active participants in their own education.

9. Announcements: None

10. Adjournment: 4:00

Respectfully submitted  
*Ellen Ansell*, Secretary

#### Members Attending

Alexander, Ansell, Balaban, Bergen, Bircher, Close, Cochran, Colwell, Czak, Daley, Dunbar-Jacob, Durham, Frieze, Hsieh, Maher, Nelson, Nordenberg, Peskie, Pinsky, Ramicone, Ross, Singh, Sussman, Watkins, Wion

#### Others Attending

Albrecht, Blair, Clark, Fedele, Frisch, Hart, Lewis, Rice, Sanft, Wilds, Zamboni