

University of Pittsburgh
Senate Council Minutes
December 5, 2005

1. Call to Order. President Frieze called the meeting to order at 3:00
2. Minutes of November 7, 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 listed a number of awards that faculty and students have received in the last month.
 - i. Thomas Starzl was selected for the National Medal of Science. Among his accomplishments: being called the greatest surgeon of the 20th century; one of the teachers of great impact in the history of medicine; a pioneering researcher, a prolific scholar, a transformer of this region, and a saver of lives.
 - ii. Justin Chalker was named a 2006 Rhodes Scholar. This follows the honor he brought to the University last spring as the 2005 Goldwater Scholar.
 - iii. David Bartholomae, chair of the English department was awarded the Modern Language Association of America's Mina P. Shaughnessy Prize for his book, *Writing in the Margins: Essays on Composition and Teaching*.
 - iv. Bernard Goldstein, dean of the Graduate School of Public Health received the 2005 Distinguished Service Award from the American College of Toxicology.
 - v. Janice Zgibor, an assistant professor of epidemiology in Pitt's Graduate School of Public Health and director of the University of Pittsburgh Diabetes Institute, has been awarded the 2005 Golden Pen Award from the Journal for Healthcare Quality to recognize her outstanding contributions to the journal.
 - vi. Susan Albrecht, associate dean for student and alumni services, development, and public relations and associate professor in the Department of Health and Community Systems in Pitt's School of Nursing, has received the 2005 Distinguished Nurse Award from the Pennsylvania State Nurses Association.
 - vii. Ronald Roth was named the Pennsylvania EMS Physician of the Year by the Pennsylvania Emergency Health Services Council.
 - viii. David Lewis, professor of psychiatry and neuroscience and director of the Translational Neuroscience Program at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center received the Lieber Prize for Schizophrenia Research from the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression.
 - ix. Takanori Hashimoto, a research assistant professor of psychiatry in the School of Medicine, received the Sydney R. Baer Jr. Prize, awarded to a promising young investigator by the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression.
 - x. Kwame Botwe-Asamoah, an assistant professor in Pitt's Africana Studies department, has received the Cheikh Anta Diop award for his

- book Kwame Nkrumah's Politico-Cultural Thought and Policies: An African-Centered Paradigm for the Second Phase of the African Revolution. The award was presented by ANKH: A Scientific Institute, which is dedicated to Nile Valley explorations, excavations, and scientific investigations of sources, texts, and artifacts of ancient Africa.
- xi. Christian Schafmeister, assistant professor of chemistry at Pitt and a researcher in the University's Institute of NanoScience and Engineering, was awarded the 2005 Foresight Institute Feynmen Prize for Experimental Nanotechnology. The Foresight Nanotech Institute is the leading think tank and public interest organization focused on nanotechnology.
 - xii. Christopher Levins, a doctoral candidate in chemistry working with Dr. Schafmeister, received the Foresight Institute Distinguished Student Award.
 - xiii. Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs Robert Hill received a 2005 Racial Justice Award from the YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh for his sustained commitment to racial justice.
- b. Property and Facilities Committee
 - i. The Chancellor reviewed components of the 55 million dollar package including:
 - 1. the construction of a new public safety building on Forbes reflecting the University's priority of safety on campus and within the Oakland community;
 - 2. The introduction of 3 new energy efficient boilers for the steam plant, in the effort to decrease and eliminate dependency on the Bellefield boiler plant in Junction Hollow which is old, has raised environmental concerns, and is expensive.
 - 3. A boost to efforts to add new levels of vitality to the stretch of retail along Forbes Avenue.
 - c. The Association of University Technology Managers reported that the University of Pittsburgh was one of 7 universities to create at least 10 new start-up companies in 2004. The other universities were MIT, The University of Illinois system, CalTech, the University of Michigan, Georgia Tech, and Duke.
 - d. The Chancellor extended congratulations to students newly elected to student government boards.
 - e. In his closing remarks, Chancellor Nordenberg noted the holiday decorations of the Nationality rooms and extended his hope that this is a good time of year for all. He is looking forward to sharing great moments in 2006
5. Report of the President of the Senate, Irene H. Frieze
- a. General Remarks
 - i. Senate Committee for Elections (Herb Chesler, Chair)
 - 1. The first meeting to begin the nominating process for the April elections will take place in January
 - 2. Faculty members should self-nominate no later than the end of February.

- ii. Spring Plenary speakers are being invited now. The plenary is scheduled for March 29.
- iii. The State House Select Committee on academic freedom in higher education had public hearings at Pitt on November 9 and 10.
 - 1. Provost James Maher said that we should pay attention to the process being pursued in the State Legislature. He said that most state legislators understand the issues and recognize the quality of the procedures we have in place. Members of the committee are interested in engaging in a fair process. The issue involves the assertion (in about 30 states) that the faculty and students and university are at a disadvantage if they are politically conservative. For example, are students being given lower grades when professors are more liberal than students? The Provost feels that with so much attention in states, it is good that we got a chance to answer in a detailed way in public. In his remarks before the committee, the Provost focused on policies that are in place to make discussions of issues reasonable (power-point available on provost's office website). At the core is a commitment that it is inappropriate for professors to take political viewpoint into account as a basis for grades (one of many categories). The Provost searched the schools looking for cases. While students have brought complaints on occasion, and there have been a number of cases, none have been on the basis of political viewpoint of students. The Provost stressed that we have a very good policy to provide protection when there is a difference of opinion. He found no evidence of intimidation and plenty of evidence that complaints have been resolved at lower levels. The committee was very receptive to the Provost's remarks. They were even endorsed by a conservative attorney impressed that the same policy has been in place for 40 years. A number of viewpoints were represented at the question and answer period. The Provost stressed that this is not a partisan issue. All democrats and republicans expressed views aligned with our policies and shared respect for our policies. There was an exception-- the introducer of the legislation. He was carefully respectful and asked lots of questions which the Provost was able to answer very directly and at length. The Provost finished feeling we got a very fair hearing. The committee is committed to several other hearings in other parts of the state. The Provost completed his comments with a caution: The most important thing to do is to watch the process with concern and patience. Any statements that condemn one party or the other would drive away people who are on our side.
 - 2. Questions:
 - a. Asked if there were any students interviewed, Provost Maher said that some students did testify. President

- Frieze identified a law student and an undergraduate student. Provost Maher said that he had interviewed students before his presentation.
- b. Phil Wion said that representatives of the AAUP at the national, state, and local levels testified on Wednesday afternoon. He said their presentations were eloquent, as was provost Maher's. He believes that good can come from the hearings. It provides an opportunity for people to see what academic freedom involves. It showed that there are procedures that protect faculty and students.
 - c. Michael Goodhart asked if there were questions about the context of courses. Provost Maher said yes. For example, the representative asking most of the questions (45 minutes) focused on things found on the website that they thought were inappropriate. The committee was receptive to Provost Maher's answers.
- iv. PeopleSoft Update. Eleven faculty members attended a focus group coordinated by Registrar Sam Conte to discuss how best to inform faculty about procedures for online grading. A synopsis is available. A note is being sent out to the registrar's contacts in each academic unit to be shared with faculty. More information will be available next week on *my.pitt.edu*. There will be hotline sessions during the grading period. The registrar has been very responsive to our concerns. President Frieze asked if there were any further issues in regard to PeopleSoft. None were voiced.
 - v. Regional Faculty Senate Presidents met on November 29. Those attending were Professor Sayre Greenfield (University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg), Professor Donald Ulin (University of Pittsburgh at Bradford) and Professor Richard Ulsh (University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown). Professor Richard Mulcahy from Titusville was not able to attend. The presidents had a productive meeting over lunch, which was also attended by Steve Carr, Chair of the Senate Budget Policies committee. He was very helpful in providing background information about budgeting decisions. The regional faculty senate presidents then attended the Faculty Assembly meeting where they each gave a brief report about their campuses.
- b. Committee Reports
 - i. Commonwealth Relations
 - 1. The guest speaker Friday December 2 was State Senator John Pippy representing Allegheny and Washington Counties.
 - ii. Community Relations (Tracy Soska). The community outreach partnership center and the honors college announced funding opportunities for faculty for Research Service Learning courses and applied research projects. The small grants have limits of \$3,000-5,000 per course. (Printed information was distributed at the meeting.)

- iii. Library Committee. President Frieze has invited Rush Miller, director of the University Library System to report on the “21st Century Academic Library” at the February 6 Senate Council Meeting.
- iv. Plant Utilization and Planning Committee.
 - 1. The committee is continuing to be updated on future use of the former University Club building.
 - 2. Sam Conte provided the committee with a general overview of the work of the Classroom Management Team which oversees renovations of classrooms. About half the University’s classrooms and auditoria have been renovated since the team was established in 1997. The CIDDE website has a link to the classroom information at <http://www.pitt.edu/~ciddeweb/CLASSROOMS/>. The site provides pictures of classrooms, floor plan diagrams, the number of seats available, and descriptions of equipment and media in the room. There is also a mechanism for faculty to report problems and provide feedback online.
- v. Ad Hoc Committee on Consumer Satisfaction with UPMC. Nathan Hershey will report at the January 31 Faculty Assembly meeting on the work of the committee.
 - c. President Frieze closed her remarks by wishing all a good holiday.
- 6. Student Reports (None)
- 7. Staff Report (Rich Colwell)
 - a. The program and planning committee reported on the trip to New York City that raised money for the endowed book fund; 31 people attended and had a great time. The committee has been approached by many to make the next trip include an overnight stay. This may involve taking in a play and dinner for the next trip.
 - b. The SAC Endowed Book fund is officially in place.
- 8. No Announcements
- 9. Meeting adjourned at 3:47.

Respectfully submitted by
Ellen Ansell, Secretary

Members Attending

Alexander, Ansell, Belle, Bergen, Bircher, Close, Cochran, Colwell, Czak, Flynn, Frieze, Goodhart, Hampton, Jacobson, Juhl, Levine, Maher, Nelson, Nordenberg, Peskie, Ramicone, Ross, Saunders, Singh, Soska, Sussman, Watkins, Weber, Wion

Others Attending

Blair, Frisch, Hart, Homonai, White