

University of Pittsburgh  
Senate Council Meeting  
Minutes of September 15, 2004

1. President Bircher called the meeting to order at 3:01 PM.
2. The minutes of the Senate Council meeting on June 7 were approved as written.
3. President Bircher asked for items of new business for the meeting. There were none.
4. Report of the Chancellor, Mark A. Nordenberg:  
The Chancellor welcomed everyone back from the summer break. He mentioned the lengthy *University Update* that he sent out recently and said he would keep his remarks brief. The past year was a good year for the University by almost any measure— student applications, research grants, gifts or other things. It was a memorable year in terms of impact, achievement and recognition. Students started the year by garnering special recognition for their successes in the Marshall Scholarship competition and in Goldwaters, Trumans and Udalls. Faculty members were elected to the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Society for Clinical Investigation, and won Andrew Mellon awards, Guggenheims, and other prizes. Our alumni captured the Nobel Prize in medicine, the Shaw prize in medicine, the Albany prize in medicine, and the Fritz medal in engineering. Although these were all celebrated at the time, it is useful to look at the collective recognition of Pitt. This year is off to a good start. “Arrival Survival” was an amazing logistical success and we welcomed new students through a celebration of the Banana Split on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the invention of the Banana Split by a Pitt grad. The Freshman Convocation was well attended. The Lantern Night tradition was continued. There was a useful new faculty orientation and a pleasant reception. We won our first football game. Big events such as Science 2004 and the dedication of the Ford Center for Human Security are about to take place. It is a year that will also present some challenges. There are three budgetary problems: the continuing crisis of the City of Pittsburgh; the leveling off of federal research funding; and declining state support. The last of these issues was the subject of an editorial in the August issues of *Science*, which said that the biggest problem in higher education in the United States today is the steady erosion in the economic health of the state-supported public universities. One of our key victories is that we have achieved higher levels of economic health even as we faced these negative trends. He is confident that we will continue moving forward together despite these challenges.

Questions and Comments

Professor Wion said he and others welcomed the announcement that Pitt will be offering domestic partner benefits beginning in January. [Applause.] He said it makes us even prouder of the university.

5. Report of the President of the Senate, Nicholas G. Bircher  
Professor Bircher welcomed everyone back and extended a special welcome to those of who were newly elected. He also believes this will be a successful year with respect to shared governance. He asked people to feel free to ask about any subject. The officers operate as a team and if he is not immediately available, please feel free to contact any of the other officers.

- The Expanded Executive Committee, which consists of the Executive Committee and the Chairs of the Standing Committees, met on September 3. A very good discussion ensued along with the reports of the chairs, and there was a lively discussion in Faculty Assembly regarding the various committee issues.
- At Faculty Assembly, Professor Lewis Jacobson, presented a resolution that was passed by a majority vote. It read: **Resolved:** Because our academic community cannot and should not function in isolation from American society, Faculty Assembly suggests that all faculty avoid scheduling exams or submission of major items of student work on Election Day, November 2, 2004 or on Wednesday, November 3, 2004 to facilitate student participation in the electoral process.
- Professor Bircher then reported on some of the issues facing standing committees:
  - At Faculty Assembly, the outgoing chair of the Anti-discriminatory Policies, Professor Tobias, reported on the new domestic partners' benefit. Professor Bircher thanked the Chancellor for making a good faith effort to give him advance notice of this important step forward, and he said this was an example of shared governance that worked. This year the committee will address questions of access. Professor Tobias brought forward a resolution that the Faculty Assembly request that the University support a Safe Zone program. This is a voluntary counseling program for those not comfortable with conventional counseling. The motion was tabled and will be the first item on the October Faculty Assembly agenda. The Anti-discriminatory Policies Committee will provide more background information and some examples of how the Save Zone program would work.
  - The Athletics Committee last year reviewed the proposal of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics on the shared governance of campus athletics. The committee recommended that Pitt not join at this time. He has received two e-mails from Professor Eno but has not yet had an opportunity to review them in detail. The basic content is another invitation to join. As part of this ongoing discussion the current front running topic for the Spring Plenary Session scheduled for Wednesday, March 23, 2005, is "Athletics: Do we have enough say?" Chair Zamboni has tentatively accepted this as a topic and we will try to get Professor Eno or a COIA representative to be the Keynote Speaker.
  - The Benefits and Welfare Committee reports that faculty access to recreational facilities continues to be an issue of concern. The committee will request that faculty access to recreational facilities be expanded by allowing payment for fitness facility membership similar to that available commercially. Renegotiation of the of the Health Plan rates with UPMC will also be a major issue, as will several other elements of the self-insurance plan. With respect to Automated External Defibrillators the campus community has received a memorandum about the three new defibrillators that have been installed in the Cathedral of Learning. He encouraged everyone to learn how to use one of these devices. He hopes to distribute a map of where these devices are located on campus with a brief set of instructions. A predisposition to use the device is determined by level of comfort, which in turn is a function of training. Last year the Staff Association Council offered some courses and the university has also. He hopes to have the training expanded.
  - The Commonwealth Relations Committee is preparing the usual excellent schedule of legislators and other government officials to come to speak to us. This is an excellent opportunity to speak up as constituents.

- The Community Relations Committee will be putting on the Fall Plenary Session, which is scheduled for Wednesday, November 3. The topic is “The Scholarship of Community Service” and there will be other workshops and seminars. More information will be supplied soon.
- The Computer Usage Committee had a productive and busy year. They dealt with dual accounts, e-mail accounts of deceased faculty, e-mail list for the whole University, and electronic publishing.
- The Educational Policies Committee, chaired by Professor Metzger, will describe the Campus Climate report to Faculty Assembly and perhaps here.
- The Library Committee has been in search of a mission, and this was discussed both at the Expanded Executive Committee and the Faculty Assembly. They will include electronic access in their mission statement.
- The Plant Utilization and Planning Committee is in the process of rewriting its mission statement. It has extended its purview to include a liaison with regional campuses for the purpose of getting better information on the evolution of their respective physical plants.
- The Student Affairs Committee, also was searching for a more precise mission. Among the topics they will examine this year are alcohol abuse and depression.
- The Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee has done outstanding work on the IRB issues. Great progress has been made but they continue to work toward a more user-friendly IRB.
- The University Press Committee continues to be very productive. The list of products in its pipeline is very good.
- The Expedited Review Process Policy is now posted on the University’s website. Professor Bircher thanked Vice Provost Blair for the posting.
- He will meet with the officers of the Staff Association Council later this month. Anyone who has concerns he or she wishes to convey to them should contact Professor Bircher.
- Professor Bircher read the names of new faculty appointments to Board of Trustee Committees: Academic Affairs/Library: Heidi Feldman, Medicine; Affirmative Action: Randi Koeske, Psychology, Univ. of Pittsburgh at Greensburg; Audit: Michael Spring, School of Library and Information Sciences; Health Sciences: Ellen Olshansky, Nursing; Investment: Sandra Williamson, GSPIA; and Property and Facilities Committee: Tracy Soska, Social Work.
- Professor Bircher announced that the Chancellor was hosting a reception for the members of Senate Council immediately after the meeting. The Fall Plenary is scheduled for Wednesday, November 3. The topic is “The Scholarship of Community Service”. More information will be available soon. The Spring Plenary Session is scheduled for Wednesday, March 23, 2005. The topic will be: Athletics: Do we have enough say?” The next Faculty Assembly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 5. The next Senate Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 11.

#### Questions and Comments

Professor Baker said that related to computer usage, he wanted to thank the university for some of the positive things that have been provided including the spam service, virus service, and class rosters off the web. He said the university should advertise these services more as they are very useful.

6. Report of Student Members of Senate Council

*Student Government Board*

Brian Kelly said that it was a busy summer and the school year started off with a bang. “Arrival Survival” went off well and he thanked Ms. Frey who was the student coordinator for that. They started a new event in line with starting new traditions on campus. This was the Panther Prowl. They took freshmen out at 10:00 PM on the Sunday night before classes started and gave them an informal tour of the campus and taught them what they needed to know such as nicknames of buildings. They had over 100 students. This was the idea of Liz Culliton, the last president of Student Government Board. He thanked the Board of Trustees for raising the activities fee, which they had recommended. He also thanked Vice Provost Jack Daniel. In addition to the increase the SGB has 100% control of the fees where they used to have 49%. It is almost \$2.5 million and they have a lot of new things going on on campus. They are streamlining the way they operate. Fall Fest is coming up on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and Pitt Program Council is running it. The Clarks will be there. In terms of the alcohol initiative, he is on the committee that gives “alcohol-free” mini-grants. There is about \$30,000 for student events on the weekend that are alcohol free. They also do programs such as 21<sup>st</sup> birthday cards with drinking information. He wants to work on better transportation to the South Side because of the new developments in that area. They have a new policy of passes for student parking at football games. Regional campuses also got passes. They are meeting with Athletics to figure out the policy for student tickets to basketball. They want a new program that will keep tickets affordable and accessible to students. They have events to get out the vote.

*College of General Studies*

Rebecca Labancz said their goal this year is to connect with as many CGS students as they can and try to get them involved. They are trying to cater especially to non-traditional students. Two events this semester include a “Meet and Greet” which will be held once a month and a “Panera Coffee break” and it is from 4:30 to 6:00 once a month.

*Graduate and Professional Students Association*

Mr. James said after a slow summer they have been busy. They had their welcome party on Friday and they had 600 students. Due to the increased activity fee for graduate students, they are thinking of doing another graduate party in the spring. He thanked the Trustees for raising the activity fee. A lot of good things are coming up because of it such as more travel grants. Their new website is up at [www.gpsa.org](http://www.gpsa.org). The website will communicate events and bios of members. Events coming up are the Pirates game on September 25<sup>th</sup> and the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students Conference which they are hosting from November 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>. They are planning social activities and tours and they are looking into transportation services. They want to do it well to give a good impression of the University to the 120 student leaders who are coming from around the country. They are also starting a lecture series featuring Pitt Graduate School graduates.

**SCHOOLS OF THE PROFESSIONS**

Mr. Anzoise reported that the School of Education has a new president of the Council of Graduate Students, Constance Dasch. The School of Education reinstated its Orientation Day at the request of the students. About 100 students attended and there were several speakers who provided information about the school.

## SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Mr. Fagley said they held their first meeting Monday to deal with budgetary and administrative issues. They are organizing their committees, grad guides, and social events. Thanks to the increase in the activity fees they are starting a new program to give awards for teaching excellence to TAs and TFs in honor of retired Vice Provost Elizabeth Baranger. They are pleased with the inclusion of domestic partners for health benefits. They are planning several social events this semester.

## SCHOOLS OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES

Mr. Soulakis said that he had nothing to report.

7. Report of the President of the Staff Association Council, Mr. Richard Colwell.  
There was no report by SAC.
8. Reports by and Announcements of Standing and Special Committee of the Senate  
There were no reports.
9. New Business.  
There was no new business.
10. Announcements.  
There were no announcements.
11. Adjournment.  
The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Josephine E. Olson, Secretary

### ***Members Attending:***

Anzoise, Baker, Balaban, Belle, Bircher, Blasi, Brush, Cain, Cassing, Cochran, Costantino, Czak, Daley, Deasy, Fagley, Frieze, Goodhart, Hampton, Jacobson, James, Juhl, Kelly, Labancz, MacQuarrie, Maher, McKinney, Nordenberg, Olson, Pasqualichio, Pike, Ramicone, Ross, Salvatore, Singh, Soska, Soulakis, Steinmetz, Stoy, Sukits, Wion, Worman

### ***Others Attending:***

A. Blair, S. Carr, C. Carson, R. Clark, S. Deitrick, J. Fedele, R. Frisch, P. Hart, L. Hartman, R. Hill, B. Homonai, P. Supowitz, R. Tobias