

University of Pittsburgh
Senate Council Minutes
2700 Posvar Hall
September 13, 2006

1. Call to Order: President John Baker called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.
2. Approval of Minutes of June 12, 2006 Senate Council Meeting: approved as written.
3. Introduction of New and/or Unfinished Business:
 - a. In Memory of Professor Richard Tobias. President Baker informed the Senate the sad news of the death of past Senate President Richard Tobias. President Baker described Professor Tobias's many contributions to the Senate and to the University. Professor Tobias retired to 50% status a number of years ago. He continued to teach courses in the English Department and remained active on two senate committees, the Tenure and Academic Freedom committee (for 40 years) and the Anti-Discrimination Committee. He received the Senate Service Award in 2001. President Baker noted that Dr. Tobias "will be sorely missed by those of us who knew him well," and called for a moment of silence in his memory.
4. Report of the Chancellor, Mark A. Nordenberg
 - a. In Memory of Mayor Bob O'Connor. On another sad note, Chancellor Nordenberg reflected upon the recent loss of Mayor Bob O'Connor. In his capacity as mayor, Bob O'Connor had served as an ex-officio member of the University Board of Trustees. He was the proud father of a University of Pittsburgh graduate, and a strong supporter of the University. He will be greatly missed on our campus.
 - b. Welcome. Chancellor Nordenberg welcomed the new Senate officers, and looks forward to partnering with the Faculty Assembly, Senate Council, and the broader University of Pittsburgh community in the days and weeks ahead.
 - c. Fall Semester Beginnings. Chancellor Nordenberg reported on the successful efforts of "Arrival Survival" for our newest students, and described the events held to welcome them to the University.
 - d. Schenley Park Plaza.
 - i. The new plaza has been the site of much activity since the official opening in June 2006.
 - ii. The first floor entrance Hillman Library will reopen shortly, affording an impressive view of the new Schenley Park Plaza.
 - e. Panther Hall opened this fall, the second of two new hillside residence halls. A total of 1,000 Pitt students are now housed on or near the site of the old Pitt Stadium. These changes represent a significant improvement to campus life, and will enhance the University's appeal to prospective, high achieving undergraduates.
 - f. New Faculty.
 - i. New Pitt faculty members were recently profiled in the Pitt Chronicle.
 - ii. New faculty members were welcomed at a reception, and attended a new faculty orientation.
 - iii. The quality of the group is high, and includes both outstanding junior faculty, and professionally mature colleagues from some of the top universities in the country, (e.g., Columbia University, Harvard University, and Johns Hopkins University). Pitt's ability to attract such a distinguished group is a sign of institutional strength.
 - g. National Science Foundation Award. The University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University successfully competed for a five-year, \$15 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to establish a Quality of Life Technology Engineering Research Center (QoLT ERC) that will develop technologies to help older adults and people with disabilities live

independently and productively. This is one of only five ERCs in the country that is focused on bioengineering, and places the University in very elite company. The ERC is a laudable example of the results of combining the highly complementary strengths of Pitt and CMU.

h. Area Studies Designated All four of the University's area studies programs, in addition to the International Business Center, were designated as national resource centers by the US Department of Education. These designations bring both funding and recognition, and are garnered as a result of fierce competition. Only ten universities in the country, all elite institutions, host four or more area studies centers.

5. Report of the President of the Senate, John J. Baker

a. Welcome. President Baker welcomed all the first Senate Council meeting of the 2006- 2007 academic year. He introduced Lori Molinaro, our new Senate Director and office staff member Cindy Brendel.

b. Senate Communications

- i. All members of Senate Council should have received the 2006-2007 Senate Council membership roster and a list of Senate Council meeting dates through June 2007.
- ii. Senate correspondence will be sent by email unless a member specifically requests that the Senate Office use regular mail.
- iii. If new members have questions about the Senate or Senate Council, they are encouraged to consult the senate officers.
- iv. President Baker remarked upon the impressive attendance, program, and organization for the Freshman Convocation. He offered compliments to the program organizers and to the speakers, Chancellor Nordenberg, Provost Maher, Vice Provost and Dean of Students Kathy Humphrey, and Student Government Board president Joseph Pasqualichio for making the event memorable.

c. Senate Committees

- i. The Senate Expanded Executive Committee, which includes all of the Committee Chairs, met on September 1, 2006. Senate Committee chairs presented a brief summary of their committees' activities last year and their plans for the coming year.
- ii. New committee chairs include Ronald Linden, Political Science, (he will co-chair Admissions and Student Aid with Carol Stilley); and Catherine Greeno, Social Work, who will co-chair Educational Policies (with Judith Erlen).
- iii. The Plant Utilization and Planning Committee and the University Press Committee will elect new chairs later in September, 2006.
- iv. Senate committee chairs are listed on the Senate web sites. Committee chairs will occasionally make reports to Senate Council at various times during the academic year.

d. Faculty Assembly met on September 5, 2006. Members heard reports from 3 committee chairs:

- i. Professor Stephen Carr, the chair of the Senate Budget Policies Committee, discussed some issues impacting Pitt's budget and faculty and staff salaries.
- ii. Professor Nicholas Bircher, the chair of the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Consumer Advocacy with UPMC, gave a brief update on his committee's recent activities.
- iii. Senate Vice President Michael Pinsky, the chair of the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Fitness for Life, provided an update on his committee's recent activities. The committee's two subcommittees are addressing risk reduction for faculty and staff. The Health Maintenance subcommittee is focusing on stress reduction, weight reduction, and smoking cessation. Associated programs will be rolled out in the future. The Risk Reduction and Management subcommittee is also working on programming. Discussions are progressing well between the committee and the UPMC Health Plan, with a white paper to be released in the future. Pinsky anticipates that these efforts have great potential to improve the quality and quantity of health for University of Pittsburgh faculty and staff.

e. The Senate now has two web sites:

- i. The original University Senate web site (<http://www.pitt.edu/univsenate>), a page within the pitt.edu site, has open access. It is easily found by clicking on the Faculty/Staff button on the pitt.edu home page.
- ii. The second University Senate web site is new. It went online June 30, 2006, and is located on the my.pitt.edu portal server which can be accessed only by users with a Pitt account. It is easily found by clicking on pitt.edu on the Pitt home page, logging in and clicking the Faculty Services button. The portal site contains more information about the University Senate than the open site. President Baker encourages all members to use this site.
- iii. President Baker will place information about the Senate web sites in the September Senate Newsletter. The newsletter will be distributed later this month after Senate Council meets.

6. Pandemic Working Group. The University has formed a committee to devise an emergency plan for the University of Pittsburgh in the event of an avian flu pandemic. The committee is chaired by Jay Frerotte, the director of Environmental Health and Safety. Ellen Cohn is representing the Senate on the committee which is still in the planning stages. The senate will consider the committee's plan later this fall when it becomes available for review. To learn more about avian flu, click on the Emergency Preparedness button on the pitt.edu home page. This web page provides background information and links to numerous articles on avian flu. The Pitt Chronicle and the University Times have both published reports on avian flu pandemic planning at the University.

7. Report of Student Members of Senate Council

a. Student Government Board (SGB), Joseph Pasqualichio, President

- i. The Freshman Affairs Committee has seen a great surge of interest. Typically, the committee attracts 50-100 students. This year, 400 freshmen students joined the committee.
- ii. Multiple SGB projects are progressing well. These include a "Get Out the Vote" campaign, (with the goal to sign-up 3,000 students) and monthly town-hall meetings that address major campus issues. A leadership retreat is planned for the leaders of 10+ major campus organizations, to facilitate increased communication and collaboration among student organizations.
- iii "The Pitt Compass," a SGB authored practical guide for students, was completed this summer. The manual was well received, with 3500 manuals distributed in the freshman orientation packets, 2000+ to upperclassmen.
- iv. As a result of SGB advocacy, a food source is now available in Lothrop Hall. There is a potential food source upgrade planned for Victoria Hall, pending the results of research by the University.
- v. A SGB sponsored Freshman Mentoring program pairs freshman with student leaders.
- vi. The status of South Oakland off-campus housing has and remains a significant concern of the SGB and the students it represents. President Pasqualichio spoke about the poor condition of many of the rental properties. Another SGB officer described his prior poor living conditions in Oakland, which included insect infestation, unkempt landscaping, and plumbing problems. President Pasqualichio noted that the University is actively working to improve this situation; SGB has appointed students to a committee. The condition of South Oakland housing will be an important SGB focus this year. SGB recently held a candlelight vigil in memory of the student who died in the fire.
 - a. Chancellor Nordenberg affirmed that improving the status of Oakland will continue as a key University priority. The University is working together with the City of Pittsburgh. The City of Pittsburgh was supportive of the University's construction of new, on-campus housing. It was hoped that this might serve as a catalyst for property owners in Oakland to improve the quality

quality of their housing stock. The University also subsidized the salary of a City of Pittsburgh building inspector for a number of years. A recent inspection stroll of central Oakland included every City of Pittsburgh building inspector as well as top-ranking University administrators. There is interest on the part of the School of Law clinics to be helpful to students who require legal counsel to manage conflicts with property owners.

- b. Chancellor Nordenberg suggested that he and Joseph Pasqualichio, President coordinate their efforts. In addition to improving conditions, it will be important to educate students to make informed choices and help them to effectively assert their rights.
- b. College of General Studies (CGS), Joyce McDonald, President
 - i. The new council is discussing ways to serve the diverse CGS student population.
 - ii. CGS hosted social events this summer, including Pitt Kennywood Day, and an enjoyable evening watching the Pirates win at PNC Park.
 - iii. Social "meet and greets" were successful last year, with nearly doubled attendance from the previous year. This year these will include some "survival workshops" and will seek internal speakers in the areas of time and stress management; a healthy body and a healthy mind, and balancing the demands of family and studies.
 - iv. The CGS website was redesigned with student input.
 - v. The first council meeting will consider service projects. CGS President McDonald is interested in identifying ways that CGS can assist the University and SGB to improve the condition of housing in Oakland.
- c. Graduate and Professional Student Association (GSPA), Christin Glorioso, President
 - i. GSPA had a presence at the Fall student orientation, to increase awareness of the organization..
 - ii. GSPA is working hard to identify students to serve on committees, especially Senate Council committees. GSPA hopes to channel student concerns to Senate Committees..
 - iii. GSPA is in the process of establishing a blog on their website that will allow students to post concerns and problems.
 - iv. GSPA has been affiliated with the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students, for twelve years, and recently renewed their membership. GSPA will send representatives to the national conference, to be held in Seattle, November 2007.
 - v. Several upcoming events are planned for graduate students: a mixer on the Gateway Clipper in October (semi-formal with a jazz band and dinner); tickets to the Pittsburgh Opera's production of *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Spamalot*.
- d. Graduate Students, Schools of the Health Sciences, Erick Tatro
 - i. The Biomedical Graduate Student Association (BGSA) held a picnic this summer; 300+ students and faculty members and families attended.
 - ii. A recent trip to Sandcastle Park was also very successful.
 - iii. The MD-PhD program held a retreat, with displays of excellent research. A plan for students is now being developed to address concerns that the program completion time is excessive.
 - iv. Another new joint program between CMU and Pitt was launched in Bioinformatics. This program is located in the BST3 building. Tatro reports that the first year matriculating students are "bright, top-notch people" from elite programs.
 - v. Upcoming biomedical events include a pub crawl (to correspond with the first year students' first exam) and a scientific symposium in October with a speaker from NIH.
 - vi. A "best student authored paper award is offered. This year had the most submissions ever, with some high quality research papers published in high-impact scientific journals.
 - vii. A Graduate Student Forum will be instituted, in conjunction with the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the School of Medicine, to discuss career/professional

development. The first forum will occur September 16, 2006; the speaker will discuss how to launch a consulting career.

viii. Recruiting efforts are increasing. Tatro and other students will recruit applicants graduate and professional fairs. There was a print ad placement in *Science*.

ix. Concerns are the same as those described in the June 2006 Senate meeting.

x. A possible response to the undergraduate housing problems in Oakland would be to model the efforts of an Ohio based undergraduate legal clinic. Letters of complaint are mailed to property owners on letterhead, with an attorney's name designated. Apartments are videotaped by the clinic staff, to document their condition before students move in. Tatro recommended that students send certified letters to property owners that describe the conditions of the property, before moving in.

1) Vice President Pinsky inquired whether there was such a clinic available at the University of Pittsburgh.

2) Chancellor Nordenberg stated that there was/is no such clinic at the University. The SOL's Economic Development Clinic, however, includes in its mission, dealing with housing blight, and expressed interest in lending assistance to students who experience off-campus housing problems.

3) The Senate Community Relations Committee is also interested in addressing this problem. The Oakland Planning and Development group recently drafted a white paper that discussed benchmarking other schools. The University's Housing Resources Center is also focusing on off-campus housing issues.

e. School of Arts and Sciences GSO, President, Lofton Durham

i. The Elizabeth Baranger Teaching Award recognizes graduate student teaching efforts at the University. Six recipients were honored at an April 2006 reception: Tanine Allison, English; Benjamin Cavallari, Geology; Luis Jiminez, Political Science; Jennifer McDowell, Anthropology; Brandi Neal, Music; Sarah Russick, Chemistry. The diversity of the disciplines represented indicates a wide variety of excellent teaching at SAS. 2007 award nominations will open this term, and can be made by any member of the University community. Increased participation at the reception will be sought.

ii. The Grad Expo features graduate student research was held March 1, 2006, with 200 attendees, an increase of 40 attendees from the prior year. The committee wants to increase both the numbers of submissions to the expo, and attendees.

iv. A "happy hour" was a successful graduate student networking event, and will be continued.

v. SAS GSP will assist with efforts to improve the online "Grad Tool."

vi. In the past, graduate students were able to use the carrel and locker program at Hillman Library. This will be discontinued. Students are concerned, because there is no intermediate storage available other than students' home. This issue will be explored further.

8. Report of the President of the Staff Association Council (SAC), President Richard Colwell

a. Many SAC committees are reactivating, now that summer is over.

b. The SAC Program and Planning Committee is active all year. Pitt Kennywood Day, July 30, 2006 was attended by 1000+ persons. Ticket sales for Idlewild (654) and Sandcastle (659) were also excellent.

c. The SAC book fund has collected over \$7000, with a goal of \$10,000.

d. Upcoming events include: the SAC Fall Assembly; Marketplace, 11:00 AM- 3:00 PM. October 18, 2006; and a Holiday Bazaar, November 3, 2006. SAC is considering a Holiday Cruise, Saturday, November 4, 2006 for staff, faculty and students, to tour the Oglebay Holiday Lights, (approximate cost \$85 includes lunch, dinner and a bus tour of Oglebay Lights).

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

President Baker announced the Fall Plenary Session will be held Thursday, Oct. 19, 2006, from 2:00 pm to

to 5:00 pm in the Assembly Room, William Pitt Union. The topic is Fostering Mentoring for Sustaining Organizational Vitality. President Baker encourages all members of the Senate to attend and to invite their colleagues.

10. New and/or Unfinished Business- no items

11. Announcements

The Chancellor will host a reception for Senate members immediately following the meeting in 107 Cathedral of Learning.

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by President Baker.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Cohn,

Secretary

Members Attending

Alexander, Baker, Balaban, Brickley, Carr, Cassaro, Chattopadhyay, Close, Cochran, Cohn, Coley, Colwell, Durham, Frieze, Glorioso, Greeno, Hall, Hayden, Hughes, Isong, Juhl, Levine, Maher, Manfredi, McDonald, Molinaro, Nicolette, Nordenberg, Olson, Pasqualichio, Peskie, Pike, Pinsky, Powers, Ramicone, Savoia, Slimick, Tatro, Watkins, Weber

Others Attending

Blair, Clark, Fedele, Hart, Miller, Soska, Supowitz, Wilds, Wion