

Kutztown University Kutztown, Pennsylvania
UNIVERSITY SENATE MINUTES
<http://www.kutztown.edu/about-ku/administration/university-senate.htm>
May 3, 2018
ACADEMIC FORUM 202

Present: H. Alviani, A. Arnold, D. Beougher, M. Cardozo, A. Christman, K. Clair, J. Conahan, A. Corder, C. Cotellese, R. Courtney, S. Dewey, S. Doll-Myers, R. Flatley, L. Frye (for Y. Zhang), M. Gallagher, J. Garcia, M. Gober, K. Hudak, D. Immel, M. John, D. Johnson, D. B. Johnson, J. Lizza (for J. Jedwab), S. Mangold, E. Nieves, R. Palov, V. Reidout, S. Riley, J. Ronan, R. Salafia, C. Sunsay, M. Vaughn, F. H. Wei, D. Wingrove, T. Wong, A. Zayaitz

Absent: D. Aruscavage, R. Gross, E. Johnson, E. Kraal, D. Lea, P. McLoughlin, L. Moss, F. Murshed, R. Perkins, R. Portada, W. Rogers, M. Scheuing, T. Stahler, C. Walck

Guests: L. Kowalski, J. Downing, D. Mace, C. Wells

I. Call to Order

University Senate President A. Arnold called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM.

II. Announcements – A. Arnold

APSCUF will be announcing a pilot project to put promotion materials online. This idea will go before Rep. Council for a vote. Volunteers will be used for the pilot. Two other PASSHE schools use this approach already for SRIs, application letters, the PET Committee letter, Chair letter, and Dean letter. Supplementary materials will still need to be provided in hard copy.

III. Minutes

R. Courtney moved to approve the minutes from the April 5, 2018 meeting; seconded by E. Nieves. Motion approved.

IV. Approval of Graduates

M. Gallagher moved to approve the slate of candidates, seconded by D. Wingrove. Motion approved unanimously. D. Johnson noted that the Department of Communication Studies had unanimously decided to give the award for outstanding senior who had given service to the university and department to Senator M. Gallagher.

V. President, Committee, Task Forces

1. Senate President's Report – A. Arnold

When elected, A. Arnold promised that the Senate would work harder than ever before. That promise has begun to come true and will begin to come even more true in the coming year. This year, we began to build trust, community and shared purpose. We are the only organization on campus in which everyone is represented, which is what gives us the potential to have an

impact. Our diversity and the choice to prepare and work hard gave us an impact. That potential was realized when our feedback on General Education was incorporated into the plan for revision.

This year we addressed the First Week's Problem. Our understanding of the problem has changed from an initial belief that students were not purchasing textbooks due to financial constraints to a broader understanding of the effects of student and faculty culture on student behavior in the first few weeks of class. It's a cultural problem for the administration, as well. This work resulted in a memo intended to help underline our focus on delivering high quality education in a meaningful way.

Next year, we will take on additional complicated issues. The Center for the Enhancement for Teaching has not had an actual physical location. A closer look at how it can be helped to enhance the culture of teaching/learning. The First Week's Problem will be mirrored by the Last Week's Problem—in that how we end the semester is as important as how we begin it. Different departments have different philosophies on assessment and how to end the semester strong and how to use that to build for the next year. Another issue that we will address is advisement, focusing on building lasting relationships rather than on simply choosing courses. M. Gallagher suggested that we listen to students' experiences regarding advisement. K. Hudak noted that it would be helpful to have standards for advising.

2. Senate Vice President's Report – J. Ronan

A. The Committee on Committee made its final set of recommendations.

- Institutional Climate Committee, COB, Shiyaamsundar Thiruvadi
- International Affairs Committee, Professional Staff/Managers, Susana Gaisey
- Professional Development Committee, COB alt., Michelle Vaughn
- Research Committee, Administrator, Andrea Kirshman
- Research Committee, COB alt., Elizabeth Rogol
- Research Committee, Professional Staff/Managers alt., Lori Lentz
- Research Committee, Administrator alt., Carissa Polkorny-Golden

The motion from the committee passed, ensuring that all positions for the 2018-19 academic year have been filled at this point. The committee worked very hard this year. There were 88 positions, forty-one went to men and 59 to women, because of who applied or because of who the position called for. There were 128 respondents, counting the most recent conscripts, 48% male and 52% female. This is the way the constituency respondents broke down: 37% LAS, 16% VPA, 13% COE, 13% COB, 6% non-teaching faculty, and 50% Professional staff, Administrators and Managers. This is the success rate. In LAS, which has the most, we had 47 applications and 27 were successful. In VPA 27 applied, 17 were successful. In COE, 17 applied, 15 were successful. In COB 16 applied, 11 were successful. Eight people applied for the one non-teaching faculty spot. For the Professional staff, Managers, Administrators, 19 applied and 11 were successful.

B. Academic Standards and Policies Committee Bylaws: The primary revision is to remove the chair's ability to appoint at-large members and to re-appoint him/herself as chair. Motion passed.

- C. Grade Appeals Board: The old bylaws were a mix of policy and bylaws rather than straightforward bylaws, so the revision removed the policy from the wording. The changes provide better architectural structure. Motion passed.
- D. Institutional Climate Committee: The revision aligned the bylaws with the new template, removed wording pertaining to the history of the committee, and indicated who would be allowed to vote. Motion passed.

R. Courtney extended best wishes and gratitude to J. Ronan for his good work Vice President. D. Johnson and A. Vogel (second) moved that a letter expressing the appreciation of the Senate be sent to the chair of his department. Motion passed.

3. University President's Report -- K. Hawkinson

No report due to illness.

4. Student Government Board Report – M. Gallagher

- A. A completely executive board and a new board has been elected. Incoming freshmen will have an election in the fall. The new board has been training. There will be a learning curve for them, but they will be up to the task.
- B. M. Gallagher and the president-elect attended the PA Council of Trustees conference. They also have a new student leadership section, so they were able to meet with the student trustees as well as the other student presidents.
- C. They hosted the second student House of Representatives this semester, which allows students to bring issues and concerns to the table. Hopefully, that will happen again in the future.
- D. SGB has been working on the budget and special funding, which is now ready to move on to the next level.
- E. A survey was sent out on the campus support fee, which led to a resolution which was presented at the Council of Trustees meeting last week.

VI. Unfinished Business

1. **First Week(s) Problem Memo:** This is not a policy, but the sense of the Senate: "University Senate agrees that we can do more to challenge student and faculty cultural assumptions regarding course materials, and to make such course materials more easily and cheaply available. We can do so in the ways we teach, manage, and learn." The hope is that this will be something of a template for a way to communicate and to creatively reimagine the way we deal with this problem of the first few weeks on campus. A. Vogel noted that the first week is seen by many to be a "syllabus week" in which participation is voluntary. He proposed an amendment that would begin after the word summary, "The Senate believes that engaged learning ought to commence on the first day of the semester, and to that end, the Senate further agrees that we can do more..." There was no objection to adding such wording to the memo. H. Alviani noted that some students are allowed to add courses after the drop/add period and suggested that there would need to be some sort of exception for those students. C. Cotelleso suggested that the memo will need to be redesigned to make it more visually appealing so that people will pay attention to it. The memo will probably need to be sent out more than once. R. Palov suggested that we not

call it the First Weeks Problem, because it sounds negative. Use more positive language. J. Lizz moved to incorporate the changes we discussed and approve as an internal document. K. Clair seconded. Motion passed.

2. **Academic Policy Committee – D. Mace**

- i. ACA-088 (Graduate Pass/Fail Policy): This was sent back to the committee last time in order to ensure that a B- grade did not conflict with a C as a passing grade in some graduate courses. After consultation with the committee and Dr. Wells, ACA-038 would change as a function of this policy to ensure that there would be no conflict, thereby resolving the issue. Motion passed.
- ii. ACA-070 (Declaring a Major): This revision moves the number of credits from 39 to 60, which means that the student would declare the major during the fourth semester rather than the third. It gives the student an extra semester to decide, making it easier for those coming from community college to integrate. Students can file extensions if they are still uncertain at that point. Undeclared students are notified that they have reached the point where a decision needs to be made during advising. T. Wong suggested that the earlier deadline is more beneficial for students, particularly if they can file an extension, so that they are forced to begin thinking about the decision. D. Mace noted that the committee did not believe that the change would prevent students who know what they want from declaring their majors in a timely fashion, but that it would give additional “runway” to those who might need it. D. Johnson noted that this was a policy that was intended to save students money by encouraging early declaration of the major, but that it was never easy to enforce given the number of exceptions. M. Gallagher reported that the policy might help reduce some of the stress related to an already stressful process. R. Courtney asked about the intent of the first underlined sentence. L. Frye reported that the purpose is for students who are doing well, but who need to make sure that they are on track, taking the proper classes in the major they plan to declare once they have a GPA. At 39 credits, some students are declaring majors that they don’t really want. Moving it to 60 credits avoids premature declaration of a major. Also, it is in line with the majority of the other PASSHE schools. The discussion moved from a discussion of the policy into a discussion of best practices, highlighting the need to explore best practices regarding advising in this area. Motion passed with 1 no vote.
- iii. ACA-086 (Commencement Ceremony Regalia): The focus is to allow flexibility by the administration, emphasizing the nature of the ceremony as celebratory and dignified. The problem was the extension of regalia into domains that were not necessarily academic and that there was no good lever for saying yes or no. Another part of this from the committee’s perspective is the term “other university recognized organizations and co-curricular programs” takes a wide swath. The organization has to be recognized by the university and then must submit criteria to the university for consideration. The wording implied a process that wasn’t there, so it was removed. S. Mangold explained that it seemed that everyone wants to wear cords simply for belonging to an organization, rather than as recognition for achievement of some sort. The administration needs to know where to draw the

line. This policy would mean that the President's designee would determine what would be accepted as criteria. M. Gallagher noted that graduation itself is the academic achievement. As a student, it doesn't seem absolutely necessary to limit regalia. D. Mace reported that the committee did not feel comfortable limiting regalia to academic achievement. There is a lot to celebrate at graduation and the wording of the policy is meant to reflect the celebratory nature of graduation. J. Lizza expressed concern that one individual would be making the decision about who could wear what. A. Vogel noted that the specific criteria to be used by the President or his designee should be published. A. Zayaitz reported that the reason the revision was brought forward was so that organizations could bring their criteria forward and someone could work with them to determine whether they were sufficient to warrant regalia. That is, the policy is meant to help guide student organizations in this regard rather than to prohibit students from wearing regalia. L. Frye noted that since graduation is a student event, SGB should run the process to determine who should be allowed to wear regalia. Deb Johnson talked about the effect of diversity and regalia. She noted that African American students may want to wear kente cloth, which is not affiliated with a student organization, but that symbolizes the challenges they faced as they earned their degrees. It has deep meaning for them and for their families. D. Mace noted that rainbow tassels and military decorations serve similar functions. The committee wanted to make sure that such things remained possible. T. Wong noted that the policy doesn't forbid anything, it simply requires criteria. Plus, commencement is about academics. Some people suffer, but don't belong to recognized groups, so they don't get to be recognized. D. Johnson recommended approval of the motion, but recommended that an advisory group be used for consultation. The Commission for Human Diversity already exists and can be used in this capacity. S. Mangold said that there does need to be a systematic process by which we determine who can wear regalia at graduation, something that groups can see ahead of time so that it is out in the open and that people can understand it. Motion failed. 14 Ayes, 19 Nays. D. Mace requested that specific suggestions be sent to him. Conceptual suggestions are also accepted. There is variation in the other PASSHE schools.

- iv. ACA-027 (Academic Honesty): The emphasis is on realignment to match the graduate policy, moving it a little more firmly back into the academic side and out of Student Affairs. It was moved to Bob Watrous's aegis in 2014 because the Senate has charge of academic policies and this is not really academic. In fact, assigning grades, including deciding whether to assign a grade of F, is definitively academic and the domain of faculty. The other policies would stay with the Student Review Board, but this one would be moved under academics. The administration has been consulted on this. The committee will be meeting over the summer and will accept input on the issue.

VII. Adjournment 5:47 pm