

University of Puget Sound Faculty Senate
MINUTES
November 20, 2017 McCormick Room

Present: (Senators) Sunil Kukreja, Peter Wimberger, Kristin Johnson, Tiffany MacBain, Paul Wilson, Anna Coy, Alisa Kessel, Pierre Ly, Kena Fox-Dobbs, Sarah Walling-Bell, Rachel Laitila, Kris Bartanen, Gwynne Brown, Siddharth Ramakrishnan, Jung Kim, Lynda Livingston (Guests) Marta Cady, Greg Shipman, Martin Jackson, Landon Wade, George Erving

1. Meeting called to order at 12pm

2. M/S/A/ the minutes of November 6, 2017

3. Updates from the ASUPS and Staff Senate representatives: Members of ASUPS recently met with the university space planners, ASUPS lecturer Payton Head's visit went well, and ASUPS has endorsed the new Animal Control Policy. Reps have also met with other local university reps regarding potential cooperation. The Staff Senate representative recently met with Budget Task Force and the SPI consultants. The Bake Sale is Nov 30 and Dec 1 in support of a book scholarship, and baked goods and book donations are welcome.

4. Updates from liaisons to standing committees: Fox-Dobbs and Wimberger reported that LMIS is working on 1) the faculty/staff directory issue and 2) a document for faculty on how to deal with sensitive data information.

5. Presentation and discussion of new student orientation plan: Cady, Jackson, Landon, and Shipman presented. Bartanen provided an historical overview of Orientation and the context for the revisions. Cady emphasized how the main ideas of the new proposal are to build on what currently exists and to improve the integration of the various pieces. The program will be shorter (registration will occur in the summer), and the maroon and white split will be removed (all students will have a 3-day immersive experience at the same time, including an academic introduction), bookended by a ½ day academic component at the end. Advising sessions will remain during orientation week. Shipman explained that during the new immersive experience: "students will participate in a self-selected experience that could be based entirely off campus or a hybrid between campus and off campus venues." Athletes will be more able to participate in the program. Jackson spoke on the Prelude-like 'bookend' experiences that involve faculty members at the beginning and end of orientation: The idea is to have assignments during the immersive experience, and assessment of the assignment (both process and content) during the closing day. Potential themes include:

What is a Liberal Arts education in general and at PS (including who has access?) What is community and how does one enter into new communities?

The questions remaining concern: first, readings (starting with a common reading with PNW themes) and second, how much prescription versus flexibility should be provided for instructors. Wade explained the new plan for Advising and Registration: students will now rank preferred courses in June, and they will be registered *prior* to their advising appointments (the latter will occur, as before, during orientation). Kessel noted these changes have advantages but might sacrifice the ability of faculty to point students toward classes and programs of which they are otherwise unaware, and asked: can we be careful about how classes are removed from the roster due to low enrollments that might result? Bartanen noted adjustments in the face of disparate class sizes would be carried out in a more thoughtful manner than just removing classes and adding sections elsewhere. Brown suggested having an online Academic Fair with faculty from certain programs available for online chats, for example. Wade noted they have been working with Technology Services to thoughtfully educate students via Moodle regarding available courses.

Subsequent discussion included a question from Erving regarding what students will see when they are registering, and Cady noted departments and programs will be consulted on the planned “one-sheets”. Laitila noted that the Tacoma immersion experience could be more truly immersive. Walling-Bell noted concern with the use of an algorithm to determine classes but also that being able to adjust based on a meeting with an advisor upon arrival helped assuage this concern to some extent. Wimberger asked whether removing the academic component (Prelude) from orientation had been considered (or an assessment of Prelude’s influence been done), given its expense and potential lack of impact. Jackson and Shipman pointed out that Prelude is what makes Puget Sound’s orientation unique, and Kukreja pointed out that Prelude emphasizes the value of academics at Puget Sound. Erving expressed concern regarding students making poorly informed choices (say, given common attitudes toward the Humanities), guided by family and isolated from Puget Sound, versus the one-on-one, personal attention and advice that happens in advising. Bartanen noted that having local students advise in June is being considered (for example, in explaining the core, etc.). Laitila noted that while advising is important, just experiencing the first semester can do a lot of this work as well. Walling-Bell wondered if the June courses could be emphasized as tentative pending meeting with the advisor. MacBain noted concern regarding the loss of personal contact with faculty that helps alleviate the high level of anxiety students can experience amid registration.

6. Discussion of results of survey of service (administered to chairs and program directors). As an alternative to forming an additional subcommittee to explore the survey results, Johnson proposed the following motion: *To have a three-hour Senate retreat to develop a specific action plan in response to the faculty service survey results (M/S/A, with two abstentions)*. Discussion focused on potential research that should be done prior to the retreat (to be held in the Spring), in the interest of efficiency, including: looking at peer institutions’ practices (possibly available in the HERI survey data) and Albright college’s award-winning report (https://www.albright.edu/sloan/Sloan_Grant.html)

7. **Discussion of proposed revision of spring calendar.** Kessel noted that we need to figure out how to narrow the options down to two in the interest of having a productive discussion at the Faculty Meeting.
8. Other business
9. Adjournment

Minutes prepared by Kristin Johnson.
Respectfully submitted,
Pierre Ly
Secretary of the Faculty Senate

Appendix: Service survey results

The Question that inspired the Survey:

- What adjustments can be made in how we allocate and support service so that we are better place to take on new initiatives, creative thinking, fulfill the Mission of Puget Sound (including claims made by Admissions and the Website, i.e. the 'brand'), and truly put energy into fulfilling our Mission (including faculty-relevant components of the Strategic Plan)?
- To place this question in the broader context regarding Work/Life Balance, information from last year's work is included in the last few slides.
- **THE PROBLEMS:**
- Faculty have lots of great ideas for projects and innovative pedagogy, but no space to really bring those ideas to fruition.
- Faculty want to help each other with new projects, but don't have the time.
- We can not do our primary and secondary jobs (teaching and research) well if the tertiary job, while important, takes up too much time and energy

What the survey asked for: "As your department or program composes a list, the following (from the Faculty Evaluation Criteria & Procedures) might be helpful: "University service refers to faculty activities that are not part of the teaching, professional growth, and advising functions, but that advance the mission of the university. Activities under this rubric include (but are not limited to): contributing to university governance, serving the department or academic program, participation in cocurricular programs, promoting intellectual and cultural vitality on campus, and helping convey the nature and purpose of this institution." * *please rate time commitment 1-3, with 3 being most time-intensive*

- **13 Departments/Programs sent results (English, OT, Honors, SOAN, Classics, Music, Math & CompSci, Philosophy, PT, Education, Psych, Theatre, Physics, STS, P&G)**
- **Approximate number of Faculty included: c. 60-70**
- For the purpose of digestion (contestable) categories were created.
- We did not offer clear guidelines in terms of what counted or the time frame, so it was interesting to see what people chose to include and how.
- Graduate Schools:
 - Admissions work
 - Various
 - Undergraduate Departments and Programs:
 - Supervising independent research, summer research and senior thesis (rated 5 by some)
 - Faculty Searches (rated 5 by some)
 - Faculty Evaluations
 - Teaching Overloads*
 - Grant writing and administration (largely in the sciences)
 - Organizing Conferences (including but not limited to RPI)
 - Freshman Advising (orientation and registration, not prelude)
 - Conduct Hearing Boards
 - Some Scholarship Committees (Lillis)
 - Faculty Advancement Committee**

* Included because, while they are paid, many believe the rate is disproportionate to the work involved

** Included because the consensus seems to be the 1 course release is disproportionate to the work involved

251 items = 1 (included committees, admission work, miscellaneous departmental work
179 items = 2 (included all sorts of stuff, including some of the Advisory Boards, Writing Assessment, departmental programming)
76 items = 3

POSSIBLE ADJUSTMENTS (SO THAT REALITY MAPS BETTER ONTO OUR MISSION) TO CONSIDER:

- 1) Figure out how to count supervising independent research projects, thesis projects and summer research students within course load calculation and compensation
- 2) Predict a) faculty evaluation and b) faculty search loads for upcoming Academic Years and adjust other committee and service work accordingly
- 3) Development, in consultation with the Associate Dean's office, of a more equitable plan for course releases
- 4) Streamline service (potentially including Senate standing committees) in order to ensure faculty involvement is both appropriate and efficiently draws on strengths and expertise.

A few additional thoughts that came to mind upon perusing the survey results:

- Why are faculty spending time creating and maintaining departmental and program websites?
- There seems (surprise!) to be confusion as to what counts as service – some included Chair duties, others did not on the grounds that work is compensated with a course release.
- Some things that were included once but others may have included if placed on their radar as counting: subbing for absent faculty, writing letters of recommendation, having a Freshman Advising Class, Guest Lectures, distinguishing between serving and chairing a senate subcommittee...

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS MADE:

- I would eliminate all Chair release units and redistribute these units as research units.
- I would eliminate "Service" as a category for tenure and advancement.
- I would require all Chair responsibilities to rotate regularly and ruthlessly (some people are good; some will be terrible--them's the breaks).
- We have far too many standing committees and far too many ad-hoc committees. Sometimes I feel that the bulk of our time is spent doing things that have absolutely nothing to do with what we were trained to do: at least in my field it was to teach courses and to engage in professional growth.
- Assuming we can't move to a 3:2, how about getting rid of course release applications, build the capacity to offer more course release slots, and move to a rolling schedule wherein everyone gets one at least every few years?
- Noted the uneven nature of committee work; for example, serving on 2-4 committee, and all meet in the same weeks, or flow of work that varies over the term (from little to very intense)
- One faculty member suggested that it might be productive to ask, "If all faculty served only their department, and served on one standing committee, and one other committee what would not get done?"
- Some committees have what seem to be long term (not 3-years) assignments that don't end. Should that be looked into?
- It was difficult to estimate time spent, given that some of the service is erratic in time commitment (i.e., an intense few weeks here and there, rather than sustained throughout the year).

- I found that when ranking the “time” of a service I was initially somewhat biased by the “fun vs. dismal” nature of the activity. I tried to stick with time, but there is a bias that may affect all of our responses.
- I didn’t list much related to being Department Chair and Director of DDE (**others did**). These take a lot of time, but I am paid (via course release) do to these things. I’m puzzled, because in the context of “Distinguished Service” these activities seem to be highly regarded. I’m glad they were considered as evidence of distinguished service on my 2nd attempt at full professor, yet it strikes me as odd, since the time commitment should logically be weighed against the time freed up via course releases. I guess my naïve view of “service” would be work one does beyond the requirements of the contract, but I don’t think that’s really how the term is used here. There is service we are paid for, service that’s part of the contract, and service that is simply voluntary work for the good of the cause. Maybe somewhere in the discussion we need to itemize and define these (and other?) categories of service. This would be especially valuable when trying to figure out the “Distinguished Service” clause.
- Working with summer research students is both fun and extremely time consuming (often eating up most of a summer). We don’t get paid for this work (in most cases), and for most of us it slows down our personal research productivity. It’s something to think about.
- I want to advance the notion that advising senior theses and summer research students constitutes a significant form of service to the university at the 3+ level. We (physics, at least) receive no course releases for this work nor monetary compensation (aside from the occasional McCormick funds). Why does this not fall under the teaching or research umbrella? It does, but this work is on top of our usual 6 unit load (so free labor = service) and it generally slows our research progress
- Clarification on what “counts” for full prof service would be welcome.
- Service on Hearing and Conduct boards also requires psychological space, in addition to the call on the time