

1 William Paterson University – FACULTY SENATE MINUTES – September 13, 2022  
2 FACULTY SENATE WEB PAGE <http://www.wpunj.edu/senate>

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6 **PRESENT:** Alford, Bliss, Christensen, Crick, Duffy, Elleithy, Gazzillo-Diaz (for Tardi), Gill,  
7 Gladfelter, Gerst, Griffiths, Hack, Helldobler, D. Hill, Hong, Kaur, Kernan, Kollia, Marshall,  
8 Morrisette (for Gazzillo-Diaz), Nassiripour, Natrajan, Nemeth, Newman, Onaivi, Orr, Panayidis  
9 (for Andreopoulos), Powers, Rosar, Simon, Snyder, VanderGast, Vega, Verdicchio, Wallace,  
10 Watad, Williams, Wright, Yoo

11  
12 **ABSENT:** Diamond, Steinhart

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14 **GUESTS:** Abouk, Andrew, Astarita, Bartle, Berg, Birge, Brenensen, Broome, G. Brown, L.  
15 Brown, Cammarata, Cannon, Chauhan, Ciccomascolo, Corso, Davis, Decker, Diaz, Ferguson,  
16 Fuentes, Gerber, Ginsberg, Goldstein, Gramiccioni, Griffin, Griswold, Gritsch, Guzman, S. Hill,  
17 Jones, Kalaramadam, Kashyap, Lincoln, MacDonald, Makarec, McLaughlin-Vignier, McMahon,  
18 Owusu-Ansah, Rabbitt, Reardon-Henry, Refsland, Ricupero, Ross, Ryblewski, Saleem, Seuss,  
19 Sharma, Spero, Tiernan, Torres, Tsiamtsiouris, Vasquez, Verzani, Von Dohlen, Weiland,  
20 Weiner, Zeleke, Zeman

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22 **N.B.** If you were in attendance and your name does not appear above, please e-mail the  
23 Secretary directly ([duffy@wpunj.edu](mailto:duffy@wpunj.edu))

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26 **PROCEDURAL NOTES:** The meeting was held, live, in the Ballroom. Everyone else could  
27 join via Teams. When someone viewing remotely wishes to speak s/he should type SPEAK in  
28 the Chat box. Duffy will keep track of those desiring to speak and will recognize each in order.  
29 When recognized, the speaker will then unmute the microphone. Only the Chair's screen will be  
30 visible. The session will be recorded, but only the Secretary will have access to the recording. In  
31 order to avoid feedback, crosstalk and distortion, all virtual attendees must keep their  
32 microphones muted until they are recognized by the Chair and have the floor.

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35 **PRELIMINARIES:** Chairperson Christensen called the meeting to order at 12:38pm and  
36 presented the Land Acknowledgment. Wallace and Verdicchio moved acceptance of the  
37 Agenda, which was adopted by voice vote. Orr and Crick moved acceptance of the Minutes of  
38 the May 5th meeting, which were also approved unanimously.

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40 **VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT:** Hong presented (Wallace seconded) the rosters for the Senate  
41 Councils and the UCC Panels. They were approved unanimously. Hong and Kaur moved  
42 acceptance of the charges for the councils, which were also approved unanimously.

43  
44 Communication Disorders needs an external member for its RTP Committee. Hong and Yoo  
45 nominated Basch (Public Health). She was approved unanimously.

46

47 **CHAIR'S REPORT:**

48  
49 [The PowerPoint slides for the Chair's Report are archived in the Packet of this meeting.]

50  
51 A warm welcome to our Senators and guests.

52  
53 I started at WP 10 years ago. I was immediately excited to work with new colleagues and  
54 impressed with the students in my classes. I honestly felt that I had won a lottery, and indeed to  
55 land any tenure track job these days is like winning a lottery. I've spent much of the last 10 years  
56 bragging to my graduate school colleagues and mentors about WP, particularly about how  
57 tirelessly our faculty and staff work to develop innovative ways to help ensure our curriculum  
58 reflects our students' lives and encourages their success. Of course, that was not easy work and  
59 there was and is plenty of it to do. But with the idea we were building lifetime careers here, we  
60 dug in to build the future we wanted to see for William Paterson.

61  
62 Now that seems like it was ages ago. In the past few years, we have seen enrollments plummet  
63 and our workloads increase as much as 50%. We are still committed to the work, but with  
64 ongoing layoffs, the work has become more difficult. Ideally, the protections of tenure allow  
65 faculty to push the envelope – to make bold moves within university governance and in the  
66 classroom. But these protections are gone. And we've seen countless colleagues leave, whether  
67 they want to or not.

68  
69 This quote might sound a bit familiar--

70  
71 "The other outcome "is a lack of trust and feeling demoralized and burnt out and just  
72 having that overarching feeling of dread," Bisconti said. "People were miserable. The  
73 culture had become super-negative. I think we felt just completely taken advantage of. I  
74 think we were demoralized. I think we all felt that we could have been on that list."  
75 (From a Chronicle of Higher Ed article on 1 year of layoffs at Akron University—  
76 Bisconti is the union president)

77  
78 When we're talking about student retention, we cannot ignore faculty morale. Research shows  
79 that transformative classroom experiences, as well as building relationships with faculty, help  
80 students stay in college.

81  
82 Recent research also shows a positive correlation between faculty morale and student learning  
83 outcome achievement. When faculty morale is high, students are more likely to feel positive  
84 about the university. When faculty are positively engaged in the university, students are also  
85 more likely to be positively engaged and to finish their degrees. And not surprisingly, when  
86 faculty and academic staff "perceive a sense of achievement and success in their work," they are  
87 more likely to "extend themselves to meet the needs of the organization's needs, take initiative...  
88 believing they can make a difference." Imagine what we can accomplish for our students with  
89 the needed security and support.

90  
91 So how do we restore the faculty and staff morale that is critical for our student's success?

92

93 First, as a Senate we must work with the AFT to oppose further layoffs. I have reached out to the  
94 AFT executive board to invite them to a meeting with the Senate Executive where we will  
95 discuss how to ensure the BOT knows that further layoffs will threaten the education our  
96 students deserve.

97  
98 Second, the Senate must be a space where faculty and staff are heard and our knowledge and  
99 ideas are utilized. All the members of the Senate Exec are always available for individual  
100 conversations or to share ideas. Our next Senate meeting will be a closed meeting to give us the  
101 chance to plan how to do this collectively.

102  
103 Third, we will spend the next year focused on what we can do to stabilize the university. I  
104 want our senate to be proactive, not reactive. We cannot be left out of critical plans. For  
105 example, I expressed to President Helldobler this summer that it was incomprehensible  
106 that the senate was not involved in the development of the Stabilization plan-- retention is  
107 within our expertise. Not only were we not a part of shaping it, but we have also been  
108 told we cannot see it until it is reviewed by the State. This was a missed opportunity to  
109 work together.

110  
111 We are often reminded that as a senate we do not have the power to create policy—but we do  
112 have the power and knowledge to create workable plans for the school’s success. We must think  
113 boldly about how to solve the problems we’re facing while supporting our educational mission.  
114 Our work is urgent and critical and I invite you to work with me this semester.

115  
116 Christensen then presented the Senate priorities as gathered from input sent to the Senate  
117 officers. She urged all senators to speak frequently with their constituencies about Senate  
118 business and to bring feedback to the Senate.

119  
120 Christensen and Duffy’s nomination of Simon to continue as Parliamentarian was approved  
121 unanimously.

122  
123 She then nominated (Duffy seconded) John Malindretos to continue to serve at the Senate’s  
124 liaison to the Board of Trustees Finance, Audit and Institutional Development Committee, and  
125 Danielle Wallace to the Board’s Educational Policy and Student Development Committee. The  
126 nominations were approved unanimously.

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129 **ENROLLMENT UPDATE:** VP Ross presented PowerPoint slides [archived in the Packet of  
130 this meeting] and fielded questions. He related all his statistics to the appropriate University  
131 KPIs.

132  
133 Marshall asked what percentage of WP Online classes are taught by adjuncts? Ross didn’t have  
134 that number, but said that he or the Provost would get it.

135  
136 Jones asked if we know the gender breakdown for retention among Black students? Ross said  
137 he’s awaiting receiving those achievement gap data from Institutional Effectiveness.

138

139 Marshall asked how many fewer classes are being offered on campus since 2019? Ross deferred  
140 to Lincoln or Powers, neither of whom picked it up.

141  
142 A senator suggested that these unanswered questions be sent to the administrators. Christensen  
143 agreed and asked that anyone with related questions that require information derived from data  
144 or reports to send their questions to her and she will forward them to Ross, Powers, Lincoln, etc.,  
145 as appropriate for responses at the next open Senate meeting.

146  
147 **ADVISEMENT AND REGISTRATION COUNCIL: FACULTY AS MENTORS:**

148 Christensen noted two items in the Packet of today's meeting: One is the administration's white  
149 paper describing its plan to shift from faculty as advisors to faculty as mentors, and the second is  
150 the Advisement Council's questions regarding the faculty as mentors model. She presented the  
151 Council's questions on her screen.

152  
153 Powers thanked the Council for its work and warned that there may not be exact to all these  
154 types of questions. We need to find what makes the most sense in different circumstances. He  
155 sees the professional advisor as having an instrumental relationship with the student (e.g.,  
156 registration, financial aid issues, etc.). Mentoring has advisor-like elements, but is more  
157 concerned with guiding the student regarding careers, internships, graduate school opportunities,  
158 etc. The professional advisor would be part of each student's success team.

159  
160 Helldobler added that the professional advisor would administratively support the student  
161 throughout the academic year, something that students have asked for. The professional advisor  
162 cannot replace the disciplinary expertise of faculty.

163  
164 L. Brown asked what training and support will faculty mentors receive and how will they relate  
165 to the professional advisors?

166  
167 Helldobler said that professional advisors would be organized around career communities, so  
168 faculty will know which professional advisors will be working with students in that college and  
169 majors, and will be working with the mentors designated by the departments. The professional  
170 advisors will intimately know the degree programs they'll be working with.

171  
172 Crick noted that faculty have different ideas what a mentor is, so we need to know the  
173 administration expects a mentor to do. Powers thought that a position description should be  
174 formulated, perhaps in consultation with a Senate council.

175  
176 Snyder noted that faculty often hear from students that they are not getting the correct advice  
177 from advisors. How can faculty assure that advisors give the discipline-specific advice about  
178 what courses to register for? Powers said that Ortiz has a mechanism by which advisors have a  
179 liaison with each department to assure that the professional advisors are kept up to date and, if  
180 mistakes have been made, to find ways to rectify them. He also reiterated that what's in Degree  
181 Works and the pathway plans for each program are, in fact, accurate. Currently this is uneven  
182 across the institution (e.g., what substitutions are allowed). Helldobler added that course  
183 substitutions should rest with the faculty and the department chair.

184

185 Wright noted that some of the things that come up within a student-faculty relationship are very  
186 heavy (e.g., sexual assault) especially with women and women of color. This model must take  
187 these things into account. Helldobler said the success teams will help do that and refer students  
188 in such unfortunate situations to the right resources that are available. Faculty do not have to deal  
189 with such matters alone. The success teams will help share resources and support systems that  
190 will get students the help they need Women, women of color and LGBTQIA+ individuals  
191 shoulder a larger burden in many of those ways.  
192

193 Gazzillo-Diaz (for Tardi) reminded the administration that there is a faculty advisement  
194 agreement, so it will need to deal with the Union and not just the Senate. Helldobler noted that.  
195 She asked if all programs going this way are will some be excluded and continue to have their  
196 own faculty advisors? She thinks this should be an all or none situation. Helldobler said it hasn't  
197 been sorted out yet, but he doesn't think it must be an all or nothing proposition.  
198

199 Gazzillo-Diaz (speaking for herself) said that every program has nuances and many students  
200 have had mess ups in advisement that have resulted in their having to extend their time here due  
201 to misadvisement. Powers said that this is a journey not an end point and we need to address  
202 those issues as we go along. Some programs will require a nuanced model. Helldobler said that  
203 we are all human and mess ups happen across the board, not only by professional advisors but  
204 also by faculty. We get it right most of the time. As more nuanced relationships develop between  
205 the professional advisors who are housed in the career communities and the departments that  
206 they support, that communication will make those mistakes fewer over time.  
207

208 Wallace would like to know which majors could opt-out of this plan. Powers said that a  
209 department wouldn't opt-out, but that in some cases there would be departments where the  
210 professional advising footprint has a stronger engagement in that department. Wallace also asked  
211 if the career communities concepts could be shared with the faculty in more detail. Also, how  
212 closely do the career communities correlate with majors since careers and majors are not exactly  
213 the same thing? Helldobler said they will be shared again and will be nuanced based on input  
214 from faculty.  
215

216 Simon pointed out that some adjunct faculty have been advisors in the past and she hopes they  
217 can serve as faculty mentors in the future, especially when it comes to careers since the adjuncts  
218 might well be the ones with the hands-on experiences needed. She also sees a mentor as one who  
219 can help students navigate the soft skills of school and life. Faculty with disabilities have been  
220 ignored again, even when a disabled student was placed in my class because I have a disability. I  
221 was the mentor who could understand her experiences. Helldobler bluntly stated that students  
222 want a continuity of care and adjuncts are contingent employees who may be here one semester  
223 and not the next. He also noted that many soft skills are covered in the Academic Support  
224 Center, WP 101, etc. We all can help students with these issues. What we need to do is provide  
225 them with a go-to person, but we need to honor and integrate the faculty expertise into the  
226 process.  
227

228 Christensen said the discussion would be continued at a later Senate meeting, probably in  
229 November.  
230

231 **PROVOST POWER: PASS NO-CREDIT POLICY:** Powers asked if there were any  
232 questions about the proposal [archived in the Packet of this meeting]. This is about grace for  
233 students in their first moments – their first two semesters – of their college experience.

234  
235 Snyder asked if the professional advisor would be aware of things like requirements for medical  
236 school or should they speak with pre-professional faculty in their departments? Power said yes  
237 to both. We want students to make the right decisions and appreciate the implications for them in  
238 the years ahead.

239  
240 **ADJOURNMENT:** Wallace and Crick moved for adjournment at 1:47pm.

241  
242 The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be on Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 pm in  
243 Ballroom BC. **It will be an in-person meeting limited to only elected senators.**

244  
245 Respectfully submitted, Bill Duffy.