

1 William Paterson University – FACULTY SENATE MINUTES – October 27, 2020
2 FACULTY SENATE WEB PAGE <http://www.wpunj.edu/senate>

3
4 **PRESENT:** Abraham, Aktan, Alford, Andreopoulos, Brillante, Christensen Crick, Diamond,
5 Duffy, Ellis, Fuentes, Gazzillo Diaz, Hack, Helldobler, Hill, Jurado, Kaur, Kearney, Kecojevic,
6 Kollia, Liu, MacDonald, B. Marshall, Martus, Monroe, Mwaura, Natrajan, O'Donnell, Powers,
7 Powers, Rebe, Rosar, Sabogal, Ro. Schwartz, Shekari, Silva, Simon, Snyder, Steinhart, Swanson,
8 Tardi, Tosh, Vega, Verdicchio, Wallace, Watad, Weisberg, Williams

9
10 **ABSENT:** Owusu, Jubran

11
12 **GUESTS:** Andrew, Alaya, Bannister, Bartle, Bolyai, Boucher, Bowrin, Brenensen, Broome,
13 Cammarata, Cannon, Choi, Davis, DeLoatch, Diaz, Feola, Ferguson, Galetz, Ginsberg,
14 Goldstein, Griffin, Hertzog, Jackson, Kashyap, Lincoln, I. Marshall, Martus, Matthew,
15 McLaughlin-Vignier, Miles, Navyug, Newman, Ortiz, Owusu-Ansah, Potacco, Rabbitt,
16 Refsland, Ricupero, Ra. Schwartz, Sharma, Vasquez, Victor, Villar, Zeleke, Zeman

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18 **PRELIMINARIES:** Chairperson Natrajan called the online meeting to order at
19 12:30pm. MacDonald and Martus moved acceptance of the Agenda which was approved by
20 acclimation. Tosh and Martus moved acceptance of the Draft Minutes of the September 22nd
21 meeting. Andreopoulos noted that she was expressing the thoughts of her department at line 147
22 and the following, but her last remarks were her own. The corrected Minutes were then
23 approved unanimously.

24
25 **PROCEDURAL NOTE:** All senator's microphones should be muted. When one wishes to
26 speak s/he should type SPEAK in the Chat box. Duffy and Ricupero will keep track of those
27 desiring to speak and the Secretary will recognize each in order. When recognized, the
28 speaker will then unmute the microphone. Only the Chair's screen will be visible. The session
29 will be recorded, but only the Secretary will have access to the recording.

30
31 **VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT:** Wallace and B. Marshall's nomination of Andrey Kretinin to the
32 Research, Scholarship and Creative Expression Council as the representative of the College of
33 Business was approved unanimously. Wallace and Hill nominated Sumithra Raghavan to the
34 Writing Intensive Review Panel; the nomination was approved unanimously.

35
36 **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: BA IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Wallace and
37 Steinhart moved acceptance of the Council's resolution. Martus said the language was vague in
38 the discussion of the number of majors, asking: What is a stable number of majors in five years?
39 He would like to see proposals be explicit with a definite number given. He also noted a
40 discrepancy or mistake in the number of credits in several areas. He hoped that councils would
41 do a better job in vetting these proposals. Hill said they anticipate that enrollment will build via
42 overlapping cohorts. In the first year 10 to 15 students, with additional students admitted
43 throughout. She thanked him for catching the typos. Martus again asked what a stable enrollment
44 is. Hill said it varies, but it's 10-15 students per year. The program was then approved
45 unanimously.

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47 .

48 **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: BA LEADERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL STUDIES:**
49 Wallace and Fuentes moved acceptance of the Council's resolution. The program was approved
50 unanimously.

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52 **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: BA IN ETHICS:** Wallace and Ellis moved acceptance of
53 the Council's resolution. Diamond noted that all the programs discussed today will have to
54 communicate clearly to prospective students what are the career trajectories in each area. The
55 program was approved unanimously.

56
57

58 **CHAIR'S REPORT:**

59

- 60 - Last semester the Senate passed 3 resolutions for all instructors teaching 1000-level courses.
61 The resolutions were about taking attendance, having an early assessment, and directing
62 students to a student service. As per the administration these resolutions are making a
63 difference. However, not all faculty have been participating in each of these three resolutions.
64 It is the Faculty Senate's expectation that senators communicate with colleagues who teach
65 1000-level courses to note the Provost's email of last week and take action. Currently the
66 data is being used to nudge and advise students through professional advisors. We await
67 further data analysis on this.
- 68 - We are also looking into the auto-flags raised in Starfish and how faculty can be better part
69 of the process
- 70 - We also have trend data for various faculty-related matters such as Promotions & Tenure,
71 ART, Travel Funds, etc. We will share them with Senators.

72

73 Steinhart noted that students have been given redundant assignments (e.g., visit the Writing
74 Center or the Library), which is an unforeseen consequence of monitoring first year students'
75 behavior. Simon added that students need a place to help them with time management, note-
76 taking, etc., which has been very challenging for many of them this semester. Snyder noted that
77 there are automatic flags in Starfish. Powers appreciated this information and said the students'
78 professional advisors are there to help them with theses issues, and there are the various tutoring
79 centers as well. Refsland recommended that students use Tutor.com and some of the many
80 programs run by the Academic Success Center. Natrajan said that is much to be done, and that
81 the Executive Committee would follow-up with the administration to make sure that this gets
82 accomplished.

83

84 **CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION OF THE RETENTION, TENURE AND**
85 **PROMOTION DOCUMENT:**

86

87 Natrajan reopened discussion by pointing out the motion on the floor (also see Slides in packet):
88 *That the RTP Document be forwarded to the administration with the expectation that it will then*
89 *be sent to the colleges and departments for further development and guidelines.*

90

91 He continued: The RTP Document discussion has now continued for 3 Senate sessions (Sept 8,
92 Sept 22, Oct 13). In the process, Number of changes suggested – 58; 50 changes made by the

93 SEC and RTP Committee, with 10 comments. As I mentioned at the last Senate and what bears
94 repeating here today: This is an opportunity for the Senate to show that we care. The document
95 has been in the works for five years and is now in the hands of the Senate. As it stands, the
96 document clearly addresses long-standing issues raised by faculty at all ranks but especially pre-
97 tenure faculty: a) It clearly specifies a path to tenure and promotion, b) it is bold and innovative
98 in articulating a diversity of scholarships beyond conventional molds, and c) recognizes the
99 enormous kinds of service engagements of faculty, especially faculty of color and women that
100 were previously invisibilized or not valued. We can be proud of it as a collective product of our
101 vision of who we are. It would be a missed opportunity for the Senate were the document to get
102 mired in the Senate without reaching it in a timely manner to the departments.

103 Only two concrete changes as of now to be added to the document:

- 104 - LINE 256: Add ‘and/or grant activity’ right after “scholarship/creative” as something that
- 105 counts for Associate Professor
- 106 - LINE 259-60: Delete contents in parenthesis

107 At this point we can only take concrete changes to the document (i.e., line number and change)
108 and only those changes that cannot be done at departmental level. Then we need to vote.

109 Martus, hearing that some departments had already commented on the RTP Document,
110 wondered if it would be going back to the departments for further comment. Natrajan said yes,
111 and that the input from those departments that send feedback and suggestions to the Executive
112 Committee has already been reflected in the current document. Martus then moved to delete
113 “*with the expectation that it will then be sent to the colleges and departments for further*
114 *development and guidelines.*”: Crick seconded.

115
116 Natrajan stated that all departments will have to do the things outlined in the slide he projected
117 [archived in the Packet of this meeting].

118
119 Williams sought a guarantee that further discussion and amendments will, in fact, take place in
120 the departments. Powers said that the administration is eager to have the RTP Document get into
121 the hands of the colleges and departments.

122
123 Martus attempted to amend his amendment to add the list t of points displayed in Natarajan’s
124 slide [archived in the Packet of this meeting], to add a timeline and to specify appropriate forms
125 of evidence, etc. Crick, who seconded the original amendment, did not agree to the changes
126 Martus proposed.

127
128 Wallace opposed the Martus amendment, noting that the Senate has expected all along that the
129 Document would go to the departments. Kaur said the Senate should not shoot itself in the foot.
130 The Document should go to the departments for further discussion, especially since it has been
131 improved substantively. She opposes the amendment.

132
133 Helldobler wanted to know why the Senate is spinning its wheels on this. We’re already on the
134 record as saying we would do it.

135

136 After a brief discussion of parliamentary procedure (Natrajan, Simon, Crick, Martus), Martus
137 withdrew his original amendment, and Natrajan moved to vote on the Crick motion: *That the*
138 *RTP Document be forwarded to the administration with the expectation that it will then be sent*
139 *to the colleges and departments for further development and guidelines.*
140

141 Duffy (and Ricupero) verified the attendance of 44 voting members. Elections Council Miles
142 explained the procedure and sent out the Quatrics ballots to each voting senator present.
143

144 After fifteen minutes, all but two of the forty-four eligible voters responded. Miles reported the
145 results:

146 For the motion: 27

148 Against the motion: 13

151 Abstentions: 2

153 No response: 2

155 Total: 44

156
157 The motion was approved by the Senate and the RTP Document will be forwarded to the
158 administration to take to the colleges and departments.
159

160 **DISCUSSION ON SENATE REPRESENTATION:**

161
162 Natrajan introduced the issue with the following comments:

163 It is not often that the Senate has a chance to deeply reflect on its own workings – to consider
164 what we are doing, how we are doing, and what could be done to make us more effective, more
165 ‘fair and just’, and thereby more representative of who we claim to act on behalf of. The Senate
166 has such an opportunity now. The SEC prepared a guiding document for discussions in the
167 Senate. **In your packets** you would have also seen 2 short readings and a historical document
168 prepared by the Senate Governance Council back in March 2020 BC (before covid). **The**
169 **process is** that the Senate debates the issue of representation, the GC researches various
170 plausible models and presents it to the Senate, and the Senate then deliberatively takes a decision
171 by March 2021 for the future form of the Senate. To get the discussion underway, I offer an
172 initial set of thoughts.

- 173 - The Senate Constitution’s Preamble is our entry point [SLIDE].
- 174 - The Guiding Document derives questions from the Constitution for us to consider [SLIDE].
- 175 - The Key Concepts to elaborate in the Senate discussions are Effectiveness, Participativeness,
176 and Representativeness [SLIDE]

177 Crick asked where the concern about representation coming from? From consolidation? Doesn’t
178 each department have a representative regardless of size? Natrajan said that the answer to the

179 second question is yes. After reorganization a year ago, the question arose regarding
180 departments that were folded in.: Historical precedent is that one department has one vote. The
181 Governance Council proactively began researching how other college senate models. We still
182 have the question: What is fair and just?
183

184 Natrajan said that reorganization was certainly the proximate cause of the current discussion, but
185 we should also take the opportunity to think deeply about our structure. Are we an efficient
186 senate? [One of the articles archived in the Packet deals with this.] Is faculty participation
187 encouraged by the current structure? Are we as senators representing our constituencies, and
188 how do we know that?
189

190 Martus said that what we have many not be perfect or be fair and just representation – but it’s
191 close. We just spinning our wheels. Just because the representation balance has shifted, is that
192 enough to make some changes?
193

194 Duffy addressed the historical situation. In the past we have had restructuring in the colleges and
195 departments: new colleges and departments were created while others were eliminated. At one
196 time Chemistry, Physics and Environmental Science, for example, were one department (CPES)
197 with one representative in the Senate. When it split into three separate departments, each of the
198 new departments got one representative in the Senate. The concept of each department having
199 one vote is our tradition.
200

201 B. Marshall said we’re living in a time of increased understanding of privilege and the unequal
202 rights that often come from unconscious implicit bias that we’re not aware of until we have a
203 conversation where everyone can have a voice. This is a necessary conversation for the Senate to
204 maintain relevancy as a university that reflects our student population and also reflects changing
205 demographics in the world. Hill seconded Marshall’s comments and added that when we
206 consolidated, we lost critical and intersectional experiences and perspectives that should be
207 brought to the table, among them: Africana World Studies, Women and Gender Studies,
208 Geography and Secondary Education. We must be aware of the perspectives that are at the table
209 or are absent from the table.
210

211 Wallace pointed out that the Senate agreed last year to take up the issue of representation this
212 year. We agreed to maintain the current representation while we have the discussion.
213

214 Ellis noted that conversations are occurring all over campus on a variety of issue, including
215 decolonizing the curriculum, and he believes it is important that those voices from constituent
216 groups be heard in the Senate in a formal sense, not just in other meetings. Regarding the
217 effectiveness of the Senate, he stated that while the Senate is somewhat responsive to the various
218 councils, he wonders if the Senate can have benchmarks and be proactive and have its own goals
219 for the year. Is it to merely respond to curricular issues or is it to lead curricular changes? Is it to
220 address the future Strategic Plan? Is it to address the climate on campus? It must not be just the
221 agenda of the Executive Committee, but of the entire Senate.
222

223 Simon asked what about majors within departments? There is a Disabilities Major, but this is
224 within a department, and those concerns are only voiced by the representative from that

225 department and by her, who has that personal experience. She also pointed out that if we're
226 speaking of fair representation, she represents more people than anyone else in the Senate. She
227 agreed with Ellis that the Senate needs goals and benchmarks.

228
229 Natrajan said that he is averse to assuming that we are fair and just, or representative, or effective
230 – and that list can go on. Neither he nor the Executive Committee is wedded to any particular
231 model. He wishes to have an in-depth discussion of these issues, even if they will make some
232 people uncomfortable. The most difficult thing for a ruling body to do is to sow the seeds of
233 change in its own form of governance. These discussions will create a sense of discomfort. There
234 are different kinds of representativeness. [See this slide, archived in the Packet of this meeting]
235 What kind of a representative body are we? Academic departments are clearly in the Preamble
236 of the Senate Constitution, but do we need to think in some other ways with academic
237 departments at the table but with others as well? What is the basic unit of representation? He
238 also pointed out that we are a heterogenous faculty with all sorts of difference that can be
239 celebrated. We all have different experiences of life at the University. How are we capturing that
240 heterogeneity of the groups that we claim to represent? As faculty we share a common set of
241 interests that bring us together as a Senate. In March we might vote to maintain the status quo.
242 But we must have a robust discussion that we will continue the next time.

243
244 Kaur stated that this discussion and the documents are as important at the RTP. She will circulate
245 the documents [archived in the Packet of this meeting] among her department members for
246 further discussion there. Also, as one who also represents one of those other constituencies, she
247 wants to speak to those issues as well.

248
249 Natrajan urged all senators to share the documents widely since we will benefit from input from
250 all parts of campus.

251
252 Helldobler reiterated that the rumor that he wishes to turn the Faculty Senate into a University
253 Senate is untrue. The Faculty Senate should be faculty. When you have staff weighing in on
254 issues like curriculum or students it isn't necessarily productive. He will not accept a
255 recommendation to make this a university senate. It should be about faculty governance. If the
256 result were the status quo, that would be sad in terms of our ability to recognize the minority
257 voice, which hasn't necessarily been at the table, in the conversation of this university. If we're
258 going to be a minority-majority serving institution and an HSI, we have to grapple with this in
259 terms of how we govern the institution. The status quo without a strong minority voice is
260 problematic.

261
262 **ADJOURNMENT:** Upon Wallace and Hill's motion, the Senate adjourned at 1:47PM.

263
264 The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, November 24th at 12:30pm.

265
266 **It will be an ONLINE meeting.**

267
268 **Please "check in" as early as possible (ideally, before 12:30 so the secretaries can confirm**
269 **attendance).**

270
271 Respectfully Submitted: Bill Duffy, Secretary