

1 William Paterson University – FACULTY SENATE MINUTES – April 27, 2021  
2 FACULTY SENATE WEB PAGE <http://www.wpunj.edu/senate>

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4 **PRESENT:** Abraham, Aktan, Andreopoulos, Brillante, Christensen Crick, Diamond, Duffy,  
5 Ellis, Fuentes, Gazzillo Diaz, Hack, Helldobler, D. Hill, Jubran, Jurado, Kaur, Kearney,  
6 Kecojevic, Kollia, Link (for MacDonald), Liu, Marks, B. Marshall, Martus, Monroe, Natrajan,  
7 Nyaboga, O'Donnell, Owusu, Powers, Pozzi, Rebe, Rosar, Sabogal, Schwartz, Shekari, Silva,  
8 Simon, Snyder, Steinhart, Swanson, Tardi, Tosh, Vega, Verdicchio, Wallace, Watad, Weisberg,  
9 M. Williams

10  
11 **ABSENT:**

12  
13 **GUESTS:** Alaya, Alford, Andrew, Bannister, Bartle, Basch, Bolyai, Boucher, Bowrin,  
14 Brenensen, Broome, Brown, Cammarata, Cannon, Cauthen, Chauhan, Chavez, Chen, Corso,  
15 DaSilva, Datchi, Davi, Davis, DeLoatch, De Veyga, Diaz, Fanning, Felson, Feola, Ferguson,  
16 Galetz, Gelfer, Gill, Ginsberg, Goldstein, Gramoccioli, Green, Griffin, Gritsch, Guzman, Harris,  
17 S. Hill, Hong, Jackson, Jian, Jones, Kalaramadam, Kashyap, Keane, Korgen, Lauby, Lever,  
18 Liautaud, Lincoln, Lockhart, Lowe, Lubeck, Mandik, Magaldi, Mankiw, I. Marshall, Martin,  
19 Matthew, Mattison, McLaughlin-Vignier, McMahan, McNeal, Miles, Mongillo, Moore,  
20 Munguia, Nassiripour, Ndjatou, Nesenjuk, Nocella, Noonan, Ortiz, Owusu-Ansah, Panayides,  
21 Peek, Phillips, Plaskow, Potacco, Rabbitt, Reardon, Refsland, Ricupero, Rosenberg, Ross,  
22 Ryblewski, Salvesen, Scardena, Schneider, Shalom, Sharma, Sheffield, Sherman, Silva,  
23 Skoloda, Spero, Stelma, Suess, Tesfaye, Tiernan, Tormino, Tsiamtsiouris, Vasquez, Weiland,  
24 Weiner, Zeleke, Zeman, Zito

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

31  
32 **PRELIMINARIES:** Chairperson Natrajan called the meeting to order at 12:30pm. Snyder and  
33 Pozzi moved acceptance of the Agenda, which was adopted without objection. Martus and D.  
34 Hill moved acceptance of the Minutes of the April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, which were approved  
35 unanimously.

36  
37 **UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: REVISION TO THE PHILOSOPHY MAJOR:** Broome  
38 and Duffy moved acceptance of the Council's resolution, which was approved unanimously.

39  
40 **GRADUATE PROGRAMS COUNCIL: ACCELERATED 3 + 2 BS IN SPORTS**  
41 **MEDICINE / MS IN ATHLETIC TRAINING PROGRAM CHANGE:** Choi and Duffy  
42 moved acceptance of the Council's resolution. After Verdicchio complimented the Department  
43 for its compelling vision, the program change was approved unanimously.

44  
45 **GRADUATE PROGRAMS COUNCIL: MSN IN SCHOOL NURSING PROGRAM**  
46 **CHANGE:** Choi and Duffy moved acceptance of the Council's resolution. After Phillips  
47 clarified a point for Pozzi, the resolution was approved unanimously.

48 **GRADUATE PROGRAMS COUNCIL: M.Ed. SPECIAL EDUCATION LEARNING**  
49 **DISABILITIES CONCENTRATION PROGRAM CHANGE:** Choi and Pozzi moved  
50 acceptance of the Council's resolution, which was approved unanimously.

51  
52 **GRADUATE PROGRAMS COUNCIL: LDT-C CERTIFICATE PROGRAM CHANGE:**  
53 Choi and Pozzi moved acceptance of the Council's resolution, which was approved  
54 unanimously.

55  
56 **CHAIR'S REPORT: (Chair slides archived in packets)**

57  
58 We have some very important discussions slated for today.

59  
60 **On the Budget deficit issue:** The Senate Budget & Planning Council has worked hard to make a  
61 salient set of interventions. I wish to underscore only one point by way of introducing what this  
62 means to us today. [SLIDE 1] Here are two curves to consider. The stories they tell us are  
63 similar: that something happened last year (steep drops) and something else maybe happening  
64 over longer periods of time (trends). This raises a challenge for us to identify what part of the  
65 Budget deficit is structural and what part is conjunctural? If we do not specify this clearly, then  
66 we will be allowing a longterm structural solution (i.e., program cuts and layoffs) to be applied  
67 to what may very well be a mixed character problem.

68  
69 **On Senate Representation:** The Governance Council has diligently worked to get us this far.  
70 While we will hear today about the various models that they have put together for us, it is clear  
71 that this discussion needs to continue into the next academic year. I wish to underscore only one  
72 point not captured by the models. The SEC has already put forth a document which frames the  
73 ways that diversity shapes representational debates. To enhance this conversation, here are some  
74 historical points to consider when discussing models. [SLIDES 2-12]

75 - **Slide 2:** As you see there are some obvious disjunctures in racial compositions of Faculty  
76 and students in the University; **Slide 3** is an alternate view of the same; **Slide 4** shows us  
77 the compositions by gender, and **Slide 5** gives us an intersectional perspective (racial  
78 distribution within gender). Moving to the Senate we have historical data. **Slide 6** is the  
79 gender distribution of senators. I have placed the university distribution as a comparison.  
80 **Slide 7** gives the same for every year over the last decade. **Slide 8** is the racial  
81 distribution with the university data as comparison. **Slide 9** is the annual composition of  
82 the Senate by race. **Slide 10** is the percentages of senators of color by department. And  
83 **Slide 11** shows us how departments do in terms of senator rotations. Thus, if a  
84 department is 100% it means that one person has been the senator from that department  
85 for the entire eleven years. Any other % is the highest proportion of time one person in  
86 the department has been in the Senate. In short, it is about senate monopolization.

87 My hope is that the Senate will incorporate this historical information in its discussions on how  
88 to make the Senate both, influential and representative.

89  
90 **This is the last Senate meeting for the academic year.** Taking a leaf from one of the best  
91 students of history and politics who we will remember on May Day, it is good to ask: If "people  
92 make their own histories...and not as they please..." then did we, the Senate, make our own

93 history? And, under what circumstances? And what, if any, is the “tradition of dead generations”  
94 that weighs like nightmare on us?  
95

96 [SLIDE 13] As you see, the Senate has been deeply engaged in shaping the process by which  
97 decisions get made. The slide shows you how many points of engagement we have had over the  
98 last year – a year marked by our experience with the virus and its obduracy. It is also a year  
99 marked by our experience with structural changes in Programs and livelihoods. That is the  
100 context, the circumstances under which we attempted what we did – which is, chiefly to try and  
101 be an influential and effective Senate. And when we attempt this, we are weighed down by habits  
102 of power that numb our energies. Here I wish to leave you with some personal thoughts gained  
103 over the last two years as chair.  
104

105 The responsibility of leaders (of nations, organizations, communities, parties, collectives, unions  
106 and even families) - **is to model power** – how it can and must be wielded, to wield power firmly  
107 yet gently, reflexively yet purposefully, boldly yet not brutishly, constructively not coercively,  
108 and most importantly, temporarily not permanently. If we, as leaders, are not careful about such  
109 things, if we are not aware of the location within history of our own leadership, if we are not able  
110 to get out of our echo chambers, if we do not have some self-deprecatory humor, if we do not  
111 have some self-doubt at least from time to time, then all our claimed victories will only be  
112 pyrrhic – that is, victory at too great a cost for the victor, and with unacknowledged costs for all  
113 others. That will be our collective nightmare – to have leaders whose hubris leads us all into  
114 merely modeling how to reproduce power, and with it, its system of unequal relations. In doing  
115 so we will be condemned to repeat history continually, both as tragedy and also as farce. We are  
116 still in the throes of many dilemmas at our University for which the Senate as a collective body  
117 needs to rise up, in order to be effective, influential, truly representative, and yes, as a moral  
118 force to reckon with. And that is the leadership model we need for our times. It is our collective  
119 challenge. And in this, it has been a pleasure for me to serve as chair. I thank all Senators for  
120 your cooperative work, and a special thanks to my fellow SEC members whose collective energy  
121 and commitment to building a strong and ethical Senate I deeply appreciate. It is to them that I  
122 now turn for any summarizing thoughts before we get to our discussions.  
123

124 Natrajan closed his Chair’s Report by inviting members of the Executive Committee to share any  
125 thoughts.  
126

127 Marshall noted the productive diversity of her Executive Committee colleagues whose  
128 invigorating and educational discussions strove to allow differing voices to be heard, yet worked  
129 as a unified body to focus attention on curriculum and to assure that the Senate has a voice in  
130 important decisions. And also, to defend the University’s most valuable – but often least  
131 respected – resource: the faculty. It is important that we can stand as in independent voice. Our  
132 students graduate and succeed because we change their lives.  
133

134 Wallace thanked the Senate councils for the silent, diligent, and often unrecognized work they do  
135 framing various issues vital to the campus.  
136

137 **GOVERNANCE COUNCIL: MODELS OF SENATE REPRESENTATION:** Galetz and  
138 Marks displayed the document outlining various proposed models for Senate representation that

139 the Council prepared last year after a year of proactive research and discussion [archived in the  
140 Packet of this meeting]. Galetz noted that discussion must continue in the next Senate.  
141 Consolidation has caused the loss of some departments.

142  
143 Marks briefly outlined the process by which the Council pursued its research into the structures  
144 of governance bodies at peer institutions. He noted that the models are hypothetical scenarios  
145 that would need to be operationalized for application at WPU. The Senate need not change its  
146 structure, but institutions should look at these things as they evolve.

147  
148 Martus reminded the Senate that he proposed and the Senate passed a motion for the Governance  
149 Council to hold open forums for the entire WPU community. Without broader input it will be  
150 only the senators deciding what will happen. He requested that next year's Executive Committee  
151 include holding such campus-wide meetings as a priority charge for next year's Governance  
152 Council. Natrajan said that this will be noted for next year's Executive Committee and  
153 Governance Council.

154  
155 Snyder asked how each of the models would affect the diversity of the Senate, especially since  
156 some of the departments and programs being merged have higher numbers of people of color  
157 representing them. He also noted that some are more professionally oriented while others are  
158 more traditional liberal arts programs. There are all sorts of diversity. Natrajan hopes the  
159 discussions will unpack the notion of diversity.

160  
161 D. Hill asked how can we consistently bring a diversity of voices to the table? There is no one  
162 right way. We are constantly changing and what works for us now may not work next year. She  
163 thanked Natrajan for the data/charts he presented in the Chair's Report and hopes they will help  
164 inform the discussion at the open forums to be held next year.

165  
166 Williams is concerned about constituencies: who is being represented by which senators and how  
167 the senators are gathering input from their constituencies. At-large senators make sense to get  
168 broader input than just departmental.

169  
170 Kaur thanked Natrajan for his data but cautioned about moving too quickly since everything is  
171 up in the air. She is wary of making decisions given the uncertainty at the moment. She thinks  
172 term limits or rotations within departments should be considered. Where do programs have a  
173 voice? They need a more independent voice than just being presented by a departmental  
174 representative.

175  
176 Fuentes spoke of network improvement science, which says that the outcome of any complex  
177 system is the product of its design. What are the changes we would like and then we should build  
178 a design to achieve those changes? Perhaps we want more diversity or more parity with our  
179 student population. We created the current outcomes, and we can create new ones, but it needs to  
180 be intentional.

181  
182 Andreopoulos said that we need to say what is wrong with the current composition of the Senate  
183 before we decide to change it. She believes the role of the department is overwhelming. As Kaur  
184 noted, the role of programs needs to be clarified. Her department is concerned about the process

185 and result of the consolidation of two colleges into a super-college. We need to talk about  
186 monopoly power. Natrajan added that not only must we discuss whether the current structure is  
187 wrong, but who is calling for change in the structure and why.

188  
189 Marks pointed out that any restructuring of the Senate will require constitutional amendments,  
190 which would have to be passed by the Senate by super majorities, be approved by the President  
191 and by the Board of Trustees. He recommended that the Senate have discussions with the  
192 President and the Board before it makes changes so that if they have concerns, they could be  
193 addressed before hand. He further noted that the role of representation is to align with the  
194 functions and purpose of the Senate. This tells us why we should have representation and whose  
195 voices need to be heard. These are conclusions the Council came to based on its review of  
196 senates at other institutions. Diversity is important, but the functional ideas must be kept in mind.  
197 He assured Martus that open forums will be held next year.

198  
199 **BUDGET AND PLANNING COUNCIL REPORT:** Alford and Nocella reviewed the  
200 Council's standing charges and its findings and displayed a document [archived in the Packet of  
201 this meeting]. Four areas were highlighted: the construction of the deficit problem, using the  
202 University's Reserves as a solution, generating savings as alternatives to layoffs, and looking  
203 ahead. We looked at structural deficit vs. long-term architectural issues and where we will be  
204 this time next year concerning these issues. Alford invited discussion on the report and the  
205 recommendation included in the report. He invited Bolyai to join in discussing the \$3,000,000.00  
206 to be placed back into the Reserves rather than being used for expenses in this pandemic and  
207 more specifically for preventing layoffs.

208  
209 Bolyai said that it is a reflection of the current fiscal year. WPU received \$30M from the federal  
210 government and \$32M from the state of New Jersey. Despite taking a hit due to COVID, we did  
211 generate about \$100M in tuition and fees. Due to the pandemic, expenses were down: furloughs,  
212 closed buildings, reduced utilities, lower general operating costs. Thus, we generated more  
213 revenue than we spent.

214  
215 Alford reiterated his question: Why put the money into Reserves rather than use it for those other  
216 purposes he noted earlier? Bolyai said that it is a matter of the structural deficit. What happens  
217 this year is no guarantee for future years. In fact, we're projecting a deficit next year of \$20-  
218 26M. The one-time money we got this year we're not going to get next year. We are not going to  
219 get more CARES or stimulus money from the federal government and the State has told us not to  
220 expect an increase in appropriations (which is less than we should be getting). We cannot count  
221 on one-time revenue to balance the budget in the future.

222  
223 Alford asked about residence life and enrollment. Did these issues cause us to be where we are  
224 now or were these issues already manifesting themselves over time? When the campus opens up  
225 again next year, will we be in a different place concerning enrollment and housing and, if so, will  
226 we be able to say we've weathered the storm and layoffs can be averted?

227  
228 Bolyai agreed the pandemic created some problems, but the enrollment trends over many years  
229 have been lower, particularly among full-time undergraduate students. Housing occupancy has  
230 been below 90% for over a decade and is trending in the 70% range. The pandemic has created

231 uncertainty. He can't predict where we're going to land. Even if we got to where we were pre-  
232 pandemic, we'd still be running a deficit.

233  
234 Helldobler pointed out that as Bolyai has presented at Town Halls, we have lost \$40M in  
235 enrollment and other revenue over time. Until that is rectified, we cannot continue our structural  
236 imbalance. If things magically turned around next year (e.g., residence life goes up to 86-90%)  
237 he'll gladly withdraw the layoff letters which he'll have to issue due to negotiated noticing  
238 periods. But, as of today we're down 686 students. Housing contracts are behind last year. There  
239 is no silver lining. If things turn around by January 1, 2022, I'll retract the layoffs, as I've  
240 promised before. However, there are no data that point that way. We have three buckets of  
241 income: tuition/fees, state appropriations and auxiliary income (e.g., housing, bookstore, etc.)  
242 and none is pointing upward at present. Layoffs are always the last option and I can withdraw  
243 layoff letters up to January 1<sup>st</sup>, but I'm not going to continue to balance the budget on the  
244 Reserves without fixing the structural imbalance. The Board has been very clear about that.

245  
246 Williams said the document doesn't provide clear answers but does indicate that some things are  
247 going to be prioritized. The document says that savings will go towards the non-salary target.

248  
249 Snyder is concerned about raising the student-faculty ratio since one of our selling points has  
250 been our small classes, which promote close student-faculty engagement.

251  
252 Powers said our ratio is 13-1, which is the lowest in the state. Some classes (e.g., laboratory  
253 classes) require small ratios. We have few very large classes, but many of our classrooms can  
254 accommodate 50 students. To achieve a higher student-faculty ration we need to move some of  
255 the mid-range classes closer to 50. As Bolyai indicated our ability to address our budgetary  
256 challenges are most powerfully impacted by how we deploy our people. Small classes are  
257 important, but excellent teaching happens in all sorts of classes.

258  
259 Alford reiterated his earlier question: How did we get here? Looking at the numbers from three  
260 years ago, did the pandemic cause us to be outliers now? Is this just a weird unique situation  
261 from which we will recover? What if we can get back to 10,000 students, an 89% residency rate,  
262 auxiliary services going up, etc.?

263  
264 Christensen stated that there was a new stimulus bill passed in Congress in February with double  
265 allotted for higher education. It is directing more money to minority-serving institutions. One of  
266 the bills goals is to avoid layoffs. Like Alford she would like to see a clear breakdown of the  
267 short-term COVID crisis and the long-term crisis. We are continuing to build our Reserves while  
268 laying off our faculty, instead of protecting the academic core of our institution. It shows what 's  
269 being valued, and it's not the faculty and what's best for our students.

270  
271 Helldobler said that WPU has been facing the budget and enrollment issues over a significant  
272 number of years, but COVID accelerated the problems. If I thought things were going to come  
273 back to normal tomorrow, we wouldn't be having this discussion. But there are no data  
274 indicating that we'll be back to normal anytime soon. If the college age population in the  
275 northeast were growing, this might be a different story. It it's not; it's shrinking. We've done

276 well with WP Online. We are not laying off people in order to make a one-time deposit into the  
277 Reserves. We are trying to create a structural balance so we can live within our means.  
278

279 Alford noted that the Budget and Planning Council recommends that a member of the Council  
280 have a seat at the table from the very beginning of the budget process to provide the necessary  
281 input and transparency needed for this body to function. In the past the Council has gotten the  
282 budget in retrospect. It was information we could talk about, but it was after the fact.  
283

284 Natrajan said that recommendation will be forwarded to the President who will probably agree. It  
285 would provide some of the checks and balances we need.  
286

287 **ADJOURNMENT:** Natrajan apologized to the UCC for not getting to make its report today,  
288 and he will recommend that the next Senate take it up as its first item of business.  
289

290 Upon Verdicchio and Wallace's motion, the 2020-2021 Senate adjourned *sine die* at 1:44pm.  
291

292 The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be the first meeting of the 2021-2022 Senate. It will  
293 be held on **Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup>** at 12:30pm.  
294

295 **It will be an ONLINE meeting.**  
296

297 **Please "check in" as early as possible (ideally, before 12:30 so the secretaries can confirm**  
298 **attendance).**  
299

300 Respectfully Submitted: Bill Duffy, Secretary  
301