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4 **FACULTY AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEETING**  
5

6 **PRESENT:** Aktan, Andreopoulos, Brillante, Christensen Crick, Diamond, Duffy,  
7 Ellis, Fuentes, Gazzillo Diaz, Hack, Hill, Jackson (for Kaur), Jurado, Kearney, Kecojevic,  
8 Kollia, Liu, MacDonald, Marshall, Martus, McMahon, Monroe, Natrajan, Nyaboga, O'Donnell,  
9 Pozzi, Rebe, Rosar, Sabogal, Schwartz, Shekari, Silva, Simon, Snyder, Steinhart, Swanson,  
10 Tardi, Tosh, Vega, Verdicchio, Wallace, Watad, Weisberg, Williams

11  
12 **ABSENT:** Owusu

13  
14 **PROCEDURAL NOTE:** All senators' microphones should be muted. When one wishes to  
15 speak s/he should type SPEAK in the Chat box. Duffy and Ricupero will keep track of those  
16 desiring to speak and the Secretary will recognize each in order. When recognized, the  
17 speaker will then unmute the microphone. Only the Chair's screen will be visible. The session  
18 will be recorded, but only the Secretary will have access to the recording. Since this is a closed  
19 meeting, only elected senators are in attendance and the Minutes will be reported anonymously.  
20

21  
22 **ORDER:** Chairperson Natrajan called the meeting to order at 12:30. There are two things on the  
23 Agenda. One: to have a discussion on the Provost's invitation to the Senate to add criteria to the  
24 administration's list to be used for closing programs. Two: a general discussion of the role of the  
25 Senate.

26  
27 **DISCUSSION:**

28  
29 The Chair set the context for today's discussion:

30  
31 The Executive Committee is very concerned about faculty, the Senate, and the University as a  
32 whole. It has conveyed consistently conveyed two broad concerns to the President and Provost.

33  
34 First, concern over the dereliction of shared governance and the diminishment of the role of the  
35 Senate. It has told them about faculty concerns about the process and pace of changes. The  
36 administration keeps saying it believes in shared governance, but it's not happening. Latest case  
37 in point: the merger of the two colleges – about which the Senate was not consulted in any way.  
38 Other points: identification of programs for cutting, increase in course caps, decisions about  
39 advisement, and so on. We have told them that we are not compelled by the rationale given for  
40 changes in the curriculum, nor the extent of financial exigency. We have underscored that these  
41 actions and the lack of transparency have deeply alienated the faculty.

42  
43 Second, we have expressed in no uncertain terms our concern about the erosion of the culture  
44 and community and trust at WPU due to decisions being made in non-transparent ways. These  
45 will have long-term implications. Faculty will have no reason to trust the administration on  
46 anything in the future. The seeds of fear have been sown and that will be the name of the game

47 moving forward. That, in turn, will erode all positive energy for institution building and make  
48 organizational culture very corrosive.

49  
50 Members of the Executive Committee commented:

51  
52 The Executive Committee supports the Union's efforts. The Senate and the Union move in  
53 different lanes – curriculum and negotiation -- but we're both moving in the same direction.

54  
55 The administration sees the Senate in a clean-up crew, fixing what's left of the curriculum after  
56 the layoffs, program closures and mergers. They have thrown us a bone: establishing criteria  
57 regarding the vitality of programs after the fact. The at-risk list was already established, and we  
58 have no desire to take part in establishing any criteria that could lead to program closures or job  
59 losses.

60  
61 When we raised questions about the consequences of the merger on our instructional programs,  
62 we were told that it's a *fait accompli* and there's nothing we can do about it. We didn't get  
63 answers.

64  
65 The direction of the University is being decided without us, without faculty input in generating  
66 solutions. There was no discussion about the decision to move sophomore advisement to the  
67 Advisement Center. No consideration of what this means for our students, for mentoring or  
68 selecting majors.

69  
70 Shared governance has worked in the past (e.g., last year's resolutions regarding 1000 level  
71 courses). Decisions are being made that have implications for our mission. These decisions are  
72 being made quickly and we're being left out of this process.

73  
74 The President is trying to create a false dichotomy by saying that the Union can only speak about  
75 bargaining. Union members are faculty, and the Union has the right to speak about academic  
76 issues when appropriate.

77  
78 Remember what President Reagan said when he and President Gorbachev made a deal: Trust –  
79 but verify. We can try to trust our President, but we must be sure we know what he's doing.

80  
81 In this unprecedented period, we've asked questions to power, encouraging debate and  
82 communication on issues of curriculum and stimulating everyone to be involved in shared  
83 governance. We've done it in a respectful, transparent environment where we've allowed  
84 everyone's voice to be heard.

85  
86 Our purpose as a senate is being questioned.

87  
88 Every teenager knows it's easier to say, "I'm sorry," than to ask for permission before doing  
89 something that you know isn't going to be accepted. What does the apology mean? Is it honest  
90 contrition or is it simply "OK this conversation is over – see, I apologized." Or, "I am in control  
91 and you don't understand what I'm doing, so you're the one who should actually be  
92 apologizing." The *Harvard Business Review* noted that if the apology is excessive, it becomes a

93 tactic. Instead of being an honest statement of remorse, it has the perverse effect of drawing  
94 attention to the feelings of the apologizer, thus justifying the transgression with impunity.  
95 Regardless of the intent of all the apologies, it is for us to decide: How do we respond?  
96

97 How do we move to a future that reflects our academic integrity and our mission? What do we as  
98 a Senate want when we demand shared governance?  
99

100 Our place is not to become involved in the legal business being discussed by the Union and the  
101 administration. Our place is to provide unanimous support for what the Union is doing to save  
102 jobs.  
103

104 The Senate has a role of equal importance. If we abdicate our responsibility for reasons of hasty  
105 decisions, we will be setting precedents for the future, undermining, and perhaps eliminating our  
106 purpose as a senate at all.  
107

108 Many voices take time to be heard. It's always faster for one person to make all the decisions and  
109 then just notify us about them. But that's not shared governance. We must speak with one voice  
110 as we clearly identify the rules and state the Senate's case for shared governance. And there must  
111 be a cost for bypassing them for any reason.  
112

113 The Executive Committee had so candid a conversation with the administration last week that  
114 they felt compelled to write a *mea culpa*. We spoke about a variety of academic issues – and how  
115 we were blindsided by the memorandum to department chairs regarding the merger of the two  
116 colleges. Read it carefully. They raise questions about class size. But we all know, from the  
117 literature and from experience, that the larger the class size, the less personal contact with  
118 students.  
119

120 They offered a small gesture toward shared governance. We were asked if faculty should order  
121 academic regalia for Commencement or not? What's our opinion? Please! Do we want to be  
122 that superintendent of schools who asks if the milk tickets should be green or blue? Is that what's  
123 meant by shared decision making?  
124

125  
126 The floor was then open to all senators:  
127

128 A senator supported what faculty are doing for the University, going above and beyond for our  
129 students, and for colleagues to protect the process of retention, tenure, and promotion. We are  
130 working to enhance the reputation of the University (which may be a factor causing some  
131 students not to come here). We must be unified in our efforts. The Senate and Union must work  
132 in tandem, even if in different roles.  
133

134 A senator stated that the President has been told that there have been significant violations of  
135 shared governance. He has the right to make decisions, but the Senate has the right to provide  
136 opinions. The Senate and the Union are on the same page and must work together. We must  
137 advocate for each other within our respective roles.  
138

139 A senator said the President was reminded that the Senate Advisement and Registration Council  
140 develops advisement policy. Discussion on these topics belongs in the Senate. Advisement  
141 compensation is a Union issue. Advisement policy and procedures are Senate issues. He  
142 disagrees, but he's wrong. There are some issues where there the Senate and the Union lanes  
143 overlap, and Union members were active in the Senate in developing Policy 28 and other related  
144 issues. Consolidation was delivered as a *fait accompli*, but the Senate has the right to express its  
145 opinions about it. He may not change his mind, but he can't take away the Senate's right to state  
146 its views. The Senate doesn't have to perform triage after he makes decisions.

147  
148 The President has tried to play the Senate against the Union and has been somewhat successful in  
149 doing so. Let's not let the President take control of the Senate which, in essence he's trying to  
150 do. He's acted like no previous President, even to the point of threatening to set up his own body  
151 if the Senate Constitution isn't revised to his liking. He's acting dictatorially.

152  
153 The Union has a labor attorney who says we should not contribute the criteria the Provost  
154 requested. Let them do their own dirty work.

155  
156 A senator also rejects threats and dictators and recommends that we work together.

157  
158 A senator agreed that the Senate shouldn't contribute any criteria for closing or destroying  
159 programs. That's trying to use us politically. Looking at other institutions facing similar  
160 problems it's hard to get a sense of what our actual budget situation is or what the forecasts are.  
161 With vaccines and projections of improved economic conditions, it's hard to understand our  
162 situation. We need some actual numbers. The President is making claims about the future, but I  
163 haven't seen any real data. It is within our purview via the Budget Council, to obtain those data.  
164 The President has a vision of what he wants the University to be, academically, structurally, etc.  
165 You never let a crisis go to waste. This crisis is an opportunity for him to implement what is, in  
166 fact, an academic vision. There's too much coherence in their actions for this to be just a house  
167 on fire reaction. I'm skeptical. If there is an academic vision, it clearly falls under the Senate's  
168 purview.

169  
170 A senator is concerned that WPU is the only institution in New Jersey without enrollment  
171 growth. Besides cost cutting, what other strategies does the President have? This is the strategy  
172 he brought with him from previous jobs. He's known for cutting. The Senate should ask for a  
173 concise list of his other strategies. Observing him over the past couple of years, I question his  
174 integrity. He doesn't come forward as someone you trust, not as someone you would accept as a  
175 leader. Should the Senate consider a non-confidence vote? This could force him to speak clearly  
176 about the issues we've been talking about.

177  
178 Another senator has also been looking into what other colleges are doing. Administrators are  
179 putting up the financial smokescreen to make major structural changes in the curriculum. The  
180 consolidation of the colleges is part of that, a way to keep us in a constant state of panic, fear,  
181 and urgency to throw us off our feet. I, too, would support a vote of no confidence.

182  
183 A senator thanked the Union and the Executive Committee for all the work they're doing for us.  
184 How, in just over a year's time, have we gone from hiring people, offering release time and

185 sabbaticals, range adjustments, promotions, and the like – and now we’re laying off possibly a  
186 third of our faculty? We’ve gone from one extreme to the other. Where is the middle ground?  
187 The Senate can discuss class loads. The burden to recruit has been placed on the faculty. Some  
188 departments recruit aggressively (e.g., Music), but what about fund raising? Isn’t raising money  
189 part of an administrator’s job (especially since, with greatly reduced state funding, we’re now  
190 more or less a private institution at this point). Is there any accountability for that? Are they  
191 meeting their targets? We shouldn’t be solely responsible for every dollar brought into WPU.

192

193 A senator mentioned that fund raising is part of every dean’s job description.

194

195 Another senator noted that there is only one place on campus officially designated for  
196 Enrollment Management. If the administration tries to put it on our backs, the Union would  
197 negotiate or push back.

198

199 A senator agreed that it’s necessary for the Senate and the Union to work together. The Board of  
200 Trustees realized after a decade of mismanagement that we needed to cut. The Board permitted  
201 the previous president to mismanage for so many years. Now they complain that the main  
202 indicators of the University -- enrollment, retention and raising funds – are not going anywhere.  
203 This President came here to cut. This is an agreement he has with the Board. If the Executive  
204 Committee and the members of the Senate don’t want to provide criteria, let’s have a motion and  
205 vote no. It’s good that the Union is going to have an external entity audit the University’s budget,  
206 but we can also have the Senate’s representative to the Board of Trustees come and explain and  
207 have a discussion on the budget.

208

209 A senator agreed that we need more information. The 2012 *Strategic Report* said that our  
210 financial position was good. It spoke of raising student support levels and had a healthy outlook  
211 for the next decade. The President does have a vision He wants a smaller faculty footprint, fewer  
212 courses, fewer majors, fewer colleges. They’re going to use whatever measures they can find to  
213 justify the layoffs. They just keep showing the same charts and graphs, which is a bit insulting  
214 since we know the trends in education. We need specific information for our university to see  
215 why they want to lay off 100 people. We need to know why.

216

217 A senator said they seem to be fixed on 2010. They have an agenda, but they don’t seem to be  
218 considering our smaller programs that serve our mission. These programs may fill a niche and  
219 attract students. These might be the programs they wind up cutting. They want us to do  
220 recruiting, which isn’t part of our job description and can lead to competition among  
221 departments, which is problematic for the culture of our campus. We need more lobbying for  
222 more State money, but that is not a faculty function.

223

224 A senator agreed with a previous speaker that he’s using the pandemic to realize his vision. We  
225 should not provide criteria for getting rid of programs. That’s just biting off pieces of ourselves.  
226 We want to be an influential senate, so we must focus on understanding what is happening and  
227 how we can impact this moving train.

228

229 A senator agreed with the speakers who pointed out that the President was hired to cut people's  
230 jobs. He did it at his previous institution using the excuse that it was a financial situation. He's  
231 doing exactly what he came here to do.

232  
233 A senator is happy to see the Senate and the Union working together. We should not contribute  
234 any criteria for layoffs. The administration is trying to create wedges between us.

235  
236

237 The Chair then presented a draft motion prepared by the Executive Committee:

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240

241 Whereas the William Paterson University (WPU) President and Provost have invited the WPU  
242 Faculty Senate to contribute "3 criteria for assessing program vitality and mission contribution;"

243 Whereas the WPU Faculty Senate is firmly committed to the principle of shared governance;

244 Whereas shared governance means having a substantial role in determining and shaping our  
245 own futures;

246 Whereas shared governance does not just consist in being able to help the university  
247 administration carry out policies that it has decided upon entirely on its own and without  
248 faculty input;

249 Whereas specifically regarding fiscal exigency the Faculty Senate believes that shared  
250 governance involves not just participation in any academic triaging plan but in the  
251 determination of whether academic triaging is required at all or whether there are alternative  
252 policies that might avoid the necessity for triaging in the first place;

253 Whereas it is not appropriate for the Senate to simply sit by and watch our Curriculum and  
254 Programs get eliminated, transfigured, or diminished; and

255 Whereas the Faculty Senate believes that there has been inadequate consideration by the  
256 university community as to whether massive program elimination is the only option available;

257 Now, therefore, be it Resolved, that the William Paterson University Faculty Senate:

258 1. Calls upon the WPU administration to engage in conversations with the faculty and its  
259 representative institutions to discuss the current financial situation and the various options for  
260 dealing with it;

261 2. Plans to host one or more sessions bringing in outside experts to help us explore how we  
262 might address the role of the Senate in the current financial situation;

263 3. Invites the WPU university administration, the Board of Trustees, and all other members of  
264 the William Paterson University community to attend these sessions; and

265 4. Declares that, unless and until the Faculty Senate has become convinced on the basis of  
266 conversations and evidence as provided in clauses 1 and 2 above, the Faculty Senate will, in  
267 agreement with the Faculty Union, which represents faculty at negotiations on layoffs, decline  
268 the administration's invitation to participate in developing criteria for program elimination,  
269 finding that it does not offer us a meaningful or morally acceptable role.

270 \*\*\*\*\*

271  
272 There is broad agreement that the Senate should not accept the Provost's invitation. It's a  
273 Faustian bargain. We must take this opportunity to explain why we're not participating.  
274

275 A senator expressed amazement at the profound differences between the faculty and the  
276 administration: transparency, completeness of information, accuracy of information. There does  
277 seem to be a coherent, cohesive pattern and we would be used by cooperating with the  
278 administration in a plan that has not been completely divulged. As Carrel wrote in *Man the*  
279 *Unknown*, we view the world through our own disciplines. If you're a surgeon, you cut. If you're  
280 a healer, you heal. If you're a cutter of academic programs, maybe that's all you see. Maybe  
281 there are other ways to approach these challenges. This is no longer just a local story. We're  
282 getting inquiries from candidates interviewing for jobs. They weren't searching for our financial  
283 issues, but they found them. It's difficult to answer their questions with virtually no information  
284 or insight into what's going to happen. Are we going to wind up saving the body of the  
285 institution but losing the soul and spirit of William Paterson? We're well on our way to doing  
286 that. We have faculty who are very much committed to the institution who are angry, resentful,  
287 disappointed, disillusioned and, frankly, they'll never look at it in the same way again. I support  
288 the Union and the Senate in their different lanes on the same highway.  
289

290 A senator views the Provost's invitation essentially as a trap. It sounds like we say if you do #1 -  
291 #3, we'll participate. It would be easy for them to say we did those things, so give us the  
292 recommendation we want. We're just being used as pawns in their game. We shouldn't give  
293 them levers to move us around. We should just say: "The William Paterson University Faculty  
294 Senate declines the invitation." We're being manipulated. Don't give them opportunities to take  
295 advantage of us. We can't agree to their demand because then we're being held hostage.  
296

297 Another senator asked if the suggestion is to delete #1 - #3? The response was, delete all four.  
298 Just decline.  
299

300 A senator warned against coming off as saying: No matter what you do, we're not going to have  
301 anything to do with the administration because we still want to be at the table, and we want them  
302 to be at the table. We don't want to be complicit.  
303

304 A senator suggested a separate resolution expressing what the Senate wants. We shouldn't make  
305 our demands contingent on their actions. Another senator agreed.  
306

307 A senator applauded the fact that the Senate and the Union are now working together. We cannot  
308 be mandated by the administration as to what we can and cannot do.  
309

310 A senator cautioned about bringing in financial experts. Some groups (like AAUP) are good on  
311 policy but not as good on implementation.

312  
313 A proposed speaker, Michael Berube from Penn State, was chief author of an AAUP report, *The*  
314 *Role of Faculty in Conditions of Financial Exigency*, dealing with our sort of situation. If we can  
315 get him, we can discuss these important issues of faculty participation in shared governance in  
316 times of financial exigency.

317  
318 A senator suggested letting the Union investigate auditing the University rather than the Senate.  
319 We need to know the facts about the reserve and other issues.

320  
321 A senator agreed that the resolution should only focus on #4: We don't want to provide criteria.  
322 Period. Other issues can be discussed later.

323  
324 A senator warned that we must be extremely careful when working with someone who is a  
325 master manipulator. If we say no, he'll come back and say that he gave us a voice and we chose  
326 not to have it. Our voices must be consulted before decisions are made, not afterwards. The  
327 Union and the Senate are all the same people. We are not two different faculties we are  
328 interwoven. The Senate does not work in opposition to the Union. We must work together.

329  
330 A senator stated that we don't want empty, bone-throwing gestures. The Board of Trustees has a  
331 fiduciary responsibility for the well-being of the University and it's good that the Union is  
332 pursuing that. As the Senate we need to ask the hard questions about the consequences of the  
333 curriculum changes for our students. Is it just to save money or are there other good reasons? We  
334 need more than just to be told to look on the website.

335  
336 A senator confirmed that their department does not support providing any criteria. The motion  
337 must be more parsimonious and easily understood.

338  
339 A senator said that there seems to be agreement that we want to keep the whereases (which are  
340 not part of the formal motion but set the background) and to reduce the motion to the second part  
341 of point #4. Something along these lines:

342  
343 **The Faculty Senate, in agreement with the Faculty Union which represents the faculty at negotiations**  
344 **on layoffs, declines the administration's invitation to participate in developing criteria for program**  
345 **elimination, finding that it does not offer us a meaningful or morally acceptable role in shared**  
346 **governance.**

347 The Chair agreed to modify the motion.

348  
349 As two senators mentioned earlier, there could be a no-confidence motion, which could be used  
350 at an appropriate time.

351  
352 A senator said that such a motion is a very serious thing to do and requires deep discussion and  
353 we're not there yet. We should consider this later.

354



355 A senator agreed and suspects this is on the President's mind when he sets his head on his pillow  
356 at night.

357

358 A senator noted that the no-confidence votes against the previous president were successful  
359 because the Board was different. This Board just gave this President tenure and a raise because  
360 they think he's doing such a great job. A vote of no-confidence would be unlikely to be  
361 supported by the Board, but that doesn't mean that we would decide not to do it.

362

363 **ADJOURNMENT:** The Senate adjourned at 1:42pm.

364

365 The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 12:30pm.

366

367 **It will be an ONLINE meeting.**

368

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

371

372 Respectfully Submitted: Bill Duffy, Secretary