

**Minutes of the Portland State University Faculty Senate, 6 December 2021
(Online Conference)**

Presiding Officer: Vicki Reitenauer

Secretary: Richard Beyler

Senators present: Ajibade, Baccar, Borden, Carpenter, Caughman, Chorpenning, Clark, Clucas, Colligan, Cortez, Cruzan, De La Vega, Donlan, Duncan, Dusicka, Eastin, Eppley, Farahmandpur, Feng (Wu-chang), Ferbel-Azcarate, Finn, Flores, Gamburd, Goforth, Harris, Heilmair, Heryer, Hunt, Izumi, Jaén Portillo, Kelley, Kennedy, Labissiere, Lafferriere, Law, Limbu, Lindsay, Lockett, Mikulski, Mudiamu, Oschwald, Rai, Reitenauer, Romaniuk, Sanchez, Smith, Taylor, Thieman, Thorne, Tretheway, Tuor, Watanabe, Webb, Wern, Wilkinson.

Alternates present: Christopher Shortell for Kinsella.

Senators absent: Erev, Gómez, Loney, Raffo.

Ex-officio members present: Beyler, Bowman, Burgess, Bynum, Chabon, Chaillé, Chivers, Comer, Duh, Emery, Estes, Feng (Wu-chi), Ford, Jeffords, Lambert, Mulkerin, Nadeau, Percy, Podrabsky, Read, Recktenwald, Toppe, Wooster.

The meeting was **called to order** at 3:00 p.m.

A. ROLL CALL AND CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Roll call** was effected using the participants list of the online meeting.
2. **Minutes of 1 November meeting** were received as part of the *Consent Agenda*.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Announcements from Presiding Officer

REITENAUER announced that Senate meetings would continue as on-line conferences for winter term. She expressed appreciation for colleagues' dedication and perseverance in coming through an intense term.

REITENAUER said that the January meeting would include a reprise of November's budget forum. She also gave an overview of the current meeting's agenda.

2. Announcements from Secretary

BEYLER reminded senators that Senate would follow the general University inclement weather policy should that become relevant.

3. Announcement about DREAMers Support Services Center

REITENAUER recognized Óscar FERNÁNDEZ for a presentation regarding DREAMers at PSU. He in turn introduced Mayra CAPISTRÁN, graduate assistant for DREAMers support at PSU. CAPISTRÁN said that her role is support and programming for undocumented students or students from mixed-status families that will enhance retention and academic success.

FERNÁNDEZ said that they were in the process of creating a DREAMer Center—currently in the implementation stage with a report that went to the President; they are working with the Student Fee Committee on details of the budget.

FERNÁNDEZ asked senators to consider a question he had frequently been asked by DREAMers about participating in research or programs such as EXITO. Federally funded research is blocked to them. He suggested earmarking dollars to support DREAMers who want to participate in these high-impact practices.

KELLY agreed that many DREAMers want to participate in research, and that we should look for ways to facilitate that. LABISSIERE appreciated the work being done to make visible the needs of an underrepresented but invisible segment of our students. It is important to deliver on our equity goals. PERCY also expressed thanks for the work to support people who are living under uncertainty while trying to be successful. They are working to create a physical office, probably in Smith Center. There are also planned cultural support centers for Middle Eastern-North African and South Asian students.

C. **DISCUSSION:** Research at PSU

JAÉN PORTILLO, chair of Ad-Hoc Committee on Interdisciplinary Teaching and Research, highlighted three sections of the committee's report [see November meeting] that identified current obstacles to interdisciplinary teaching and research [ITR] practices. Perhaps the most important is the budget model, which in practice limits collaboration. Another barrier is the insufficient support and recognition for faculty implementing ITR. A third is the absence of central home for interdisciplinary studies, thus lack of systematic review of interdisciplinary programs, and missed opportunities for collaboration among units.

JAÉN continued to the committee's recommendations. First, build a budget model to foster collaboration rather than competition, while ensuring that these resources are distributed equitably. Review promotion and tenure guidelines to fully recognize and support ITR. Ensure that students understand and have access to interdisciplinary programs, with a central home to advertise and coordinate programs. Two options to carry this work forward are creation of a constitutional committee to foster ITR; and delegation to current committees who would work in parallel, but with someone to act as a coordinator among these groups.

It is important to take action, JAÉN concluded, because these issues have been identified multiple times—for example, the 2017 survey by the Academic Quality Committee, as well as the ad-hoc committee on program review in summer 2020. It is something we have known about for a long time now.

PODRABSKY summarized a report recently produced by Research and Graduate Studies [RGS]. The goal of RGS is create a culture of excellence in research, scholarship, and creative activities—to get more people involved in research that is meaningful to them. Early in 2021 the President charged RGS to study how we might advance research at PSU. It was an opportunity to collaborate with the newly formed Research Committee. They surveyed faculty, did focus groups with graduate students, and interviewed external partners as well as deans and other administrators. They also surveyed department chairs. This information can be found at the RGS website.

Basic questions were: How do we strengthen and expand research at PSU? How do we integrate research with our educational mission? What is the importance of partnerships and collaborations? What is the public impact of research? How do we talk about research as an institution, both internally and externally? What resources do we have now, and will we need in the future? How can we better integrate research into the fabric of the institution?

Unsurprisingly, PODRABSKY said, a central finding was that all stakeholders considered research central to our mission. Students and faculty value research, and chairs and deans identify research potential as critical for hiring and retaining faculty. The survey noted reciprocal relationships between our research, educational, and service missions, and their importance to the community. Several good areas for investment were identified.

The report also reveals barriers; PODRABSKY stated that only 30 out of 230 NSF grants had multiple primary investigators from PSU. Collaboration tends to be outside of the institution.

Areas of emerging strength, PODRABSKY said, include, among others, environmental and climate science, health and biomedical sciences, social justice, and computational science. NSF frequently asks for convergent research involving humanities, arts, natural science, social science—thinking about the same problems and coming up with solutions. The future of research is interdisciplinary, he concluded.

It seemed to REITENAUER that there is much interest among PSU faculty in helping our students engage collaboratively across disciplines. She asked what they saw as hopeful signs. JAÉN: faculty provided much evidence about activities already happening, but this went along with frustration at current barriers. Faculty are eager to collaborate, across the humanities and sciences. It is a question of reorganization and reflection on our practices. PODRABSKY observed that previously the response to interdisciplinarity tended to be “First we need strong disciplines,” but now there seemed less apprehension about jumping into multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary work. People are ready to do it—many graduate students, for example—but the structures need care. JAÉN agreed with the observation about students.

FORD, speaking from the perspective of the Library faculty, asked how to move forward with interdisciplinary work for co-curricular faculty, where the conventional support of a course buyout is unavailable. REITENAUER: how do we allow for the time investment in these cases? JAÉN: we need to understand better what resources to invest in.

PODRABSKY: we have the tools, but maybe don't use them as much [as we could]. During his time as department chair, he could alter people's teaching loads to allow them to do this kind of work. If we are intentional, we have that ability now. We need to think more flexibly.

THORNE observed that under the condition of [academic program review and curricular adjustment], many colleagues are nervous about SCH [student credit hours]. It is a constraint we all feel. When he was a Penn State—not a very innovative university—one course he taught was cross-listed in five departments. Team teaching within and potentially across departments was relatively easy. In Europe as well as at Penn State, with a two-two schedule and a 25% appointment in another department, you could teach there, interact with graduate students substantively there, while keeping your main line and tenure home. He saw little evidence of that happening [at Portland State]. We should think about this certainty in PhD programs that are inter-departmental or maybe cross-college programs. At the University of Arizona, a PhD program in second language acquisition has faculty members from seventeen collaborating departments across five colleges. This is a way could concretely begin.

PODRABSKY agreed that the easiest place to start would probably be graduate programs. With support of Faculty Senate, this is a great idea.

CRUZAN: SCH comes up again and again. Would it be feasible to give each participant full SCH for their units? That would be a way to really encourage collaboration.

REITENAUER wondered how to communicate about efforts already going on. There are many [colleagues] who are not contractually expected to do research but do so anyway—often research that is not funded. How can we find out about this research and creative achievement that is happening underground?

MULKERIN reminded senators of the work done on the budget model when David MADDOX was here: one of the [budget] pools was for research and collaboration. She thought this provided an opportunity to look at how to strengthen that pool.

LABISSIERE said that at the recent Interinstitutional Faculty Senate meeting, a major topic of discussion with HECC [Higher Education Coordinating Commission] Executive Director Ben CANNON was budget models: how to support curricular innovations, etc., and how HECC can work with campuses on this. Faculty from across the campuses shared similar struggles with the SCH issue.

KELLEY referred to the President's Convocation comments on climate change and on racial equity. These were opportunities to put values and visions into concrete practice.

JAÉN reiterated the importance of creating a central structure so we can change our distribution practices. We are operating in a zero-sum game; that is the biggest obstacle for collaboration. Investment is key, namely support for practices that are happening organically from faculty and students. Rather than just creating another center, etc., we need to support those efforts. PODRABSKY said that RGS would gather together faculty groups interested in some of these research topics. We are in an era when it can seem easier to do a web search for potential collaborators than to walk across the Park Blocks. We may have to put in a little time and effort identifying our colleagues—we have world-class researchers here.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Curricular proposals (GC, UCC) – *Consent Agenda*

The new courses, changes to courses, dropped courses, and changes to programs listed in **December Agenda Attachment E.1** were approved as part of the *Consent Agenda*, there having been no objection before the end of announcements.

2. Elimination of program: Undergraduate Certificate in Revitalizing Endangered Indigenous Languages (UCC) – *Consent Agenda*

Elimination of the Undergraduate Certificate in Revitalizing Endangered Indigenous Languages (on moratorium since 2015-16) was approved as part of the *Consent Agenda*, there having been no objection before the end of announcements.

F. QUESTION PERIOD – *none*

1. Question to Provost with regard to internationalization.

Senator RAI submitted the following question to the Provost [December Agenda Attachment F.1]:

How is PSU advancing our internationalization vision and goals as we move forward with academic program reduction and reorganization? How does the administration propose to invest in international and global education and research, partnerships, and community outreach at PSU?

JEFFORDS responded: The University continues to focus on bringing more international students to PSU and also working with academic units and faculty to support their internationalization goals. Much of this work is done out of the office that used to be Office of International Affairs but is now reorganized as the Office of Global Engagement and Innovation [OGEI]. That office is working actively to advance international goals. Among their tasks are assisting academic units to internationalize curriculum, and supporting the Internationalization Council. OGEI oversees the Collaborative Online International Learning program [COIL], which gives students an opportunity to participate in international virtual learning environments, expanding the demographics of students who can have international experiences. OGEI collaborates with RGS to help faculty find international research funding opportunities and partners. It also supports international scholars and students who come to PSU.

A large project taken up recently, JEFFORDS said, is to work with partners in MCECS and CLAS to launch a new partnership with the Nanjing University of Posts and Telecommunication[NJUPT]. There are over 200 students enrolled in the program in Nanjing and it is off to a quite successful start.

Regarding the second question, JEFFORDS said that they have an opportunity to get good information about this: Internationalization Council recently sent a survey to department chairs, to ask about current levels of international engagement and also to get feedback about where chairs would like to see additional investments from University around internationalization of the curriculum. She looked forward to receiving these ideas coming from across the institution.

Many faculty had questions, JEFFORDS knew, about international student enrollments. They have gone up slightly this fall; the numbers are still not large, but they are moving in the right direction. The University began a partnership last year with a group called Study Portals that advertises our programs to students all around the world in targeted ways, and helps recruit those students. As things settle down from the pandemic, we hope to see the benefits of that partnership.

OGEI has set up a new database that chronicles international engagement, JEFFORDS said, and is participating in a study of BIPOC students' involvement in global learning.

PERCY commented about NJUPT that eventually some of our faculty will go to teach there, and a portion of those students will come to PSU during their junior and senior years. It's an example of a rich partnership.

G. REPORTS

1. President's report

PERCY said he is a strong supporter of interdisciplinary initiatives. The problems we face today are multi-dimensional and complex; we can only solve them by bringing to bear different disciplines and perspectives. He appreciated KELLY's mentioning climate change response, an action he remains excited about. He hopes to have dialogues at the winter symposium.

PERCY recognized that the IPEB budgeting process was build around SCH. Though it may have had advantages, it seemingly discouraged many people. We are smart enough to get beyond it, he thought—to create a system for accountability that doesn't impede us.

An example is the Emergency Management program, which involves faculty across the campus. Credit hours flow to the people offering the courses. Hence the prefix code for the program seemingly generates hardly any SCH—they are going to the units offering the courses. Does it really matter where they are, if they are contributing to our mission?

PERCY thanked PODRABSKY for the report on research; he was glad that URC was actively involved in [producing] it; he appreciated the comments today. We can find specific areas where we can reduce or remove barriers.

He was absent in November when Senate passed the motion regarding academic freedom to teach and research race and gender justice and critical race theory, which included asking the administration to create a statement. PERCY said that they are aligned in approach and vision. They are working on a statement. They need to make sure they don't violate any relevant state or local laws in making such a statement.

PERCY thanked Senate for enabling multiple venues to discuss the budget situation. It is important in times of challenge, when we're doing financial sustainability work. He has learned more than he thought there was to know about the complex elements of the budgeting process. He knew Budget Committee had also been working on these. In addition to these welcome conversations, they are working on a new financial website which would include key elements of the budgeting process. He would like everyone to feel comfortable understanding the basics: how we estimate enrollment and tuition revenue, how reserves work, clarification of terms, comparison of budgeted with actual expenditures and revenues. Earlier today he discussed with BC one-time investments they hope to make on key priorities. They reflect what they had heard from the faculty about the importance of trying to grow revenue, not just simply cut. Faculty want decisions to be based on evidence; we need to make sure we study the impact of these investments.

PERCY shared that over the last year he has seen growing appreciation for what PSU does in the community, how we translate knowledge into practice and how we are involved in problem-solving. An example was the investment of the Meyer Memorial Trust in our STEM partnerships. We are on the verge of a new agreement with Metro [government] to support work implementing the new housing bonds program. The University Relations Office is working on agreements with [other] units of local government to fast track research or knowledge application projects. The State provided \$1 million to support the Build EXITO project. The Center for Women's Leadership received \$1 million. HECC granted over \$800 thousand to support high impact practices for students of color. We are having conversations about significant state support for our work on homelessness and on cyber security. At the Federal level we received an earmark for expanding our work on cyber security.

PERCY thanked faculty for coming through a challenging year, often with personal sacrifice. Though the tough part isn't over, or not as much as we hoped, we kept our students learning through the fall term, kept research operations and governance going. He and all the campus leadership appreciated the great work to meet these challenges.

2. Provost's report

JEFFORDS seconded the gratitude expressed by PERCY.

JEFFORDS reported that for the upcoming winter term, the schedule looks similar to fall, with about 65% of classes in-person. They continue to hear from students that they value having in-person classes available, as well as options for online and remote classes. They are gathering data on learning outcomes in these multiple modalities. She reminded faculty who have not done so to submit book orders; there have been some stories from bookstore around the country about supply-chain problems impacting deliveries.

Following up on the previous announcement of plans to conduct a search for the Vice Provost for Student Success, JEFFORDS reported that HR has approved the position description and they have been granted a waiver to conduct an internal search. Yves LABISSIERE and Michele TOPPE are co-chairing the search. By January they hope to have gathered a pool of individuals to consider.

JEFFORDS addressed a question she'd received about colleges that currently have interim deans. In the Library, colleagues are discussing the process and weighing pros and cons of national versus local searches. COE and CUPA are undergoing a number of internal conversations about the organization of the college, which she thought are best concluded before beginning a search for a new dean.

JEFFORDS reported that there were 32 Reimagine PSU proposals. She characterized them as exciting, broad-ranging, and affirming of the University's commitments and values. She expected to fund the majority of these proposals; they might ask colleagues who may not have known about another similar concept to work collaboratively.

3. Report from Interinstitutional Faculty Senate

LABISSIERE reported on the meeting of Institutional Faculty Senate at the end of November. IFS invited HECC Executive Director CANNON to talk about their priorities. He said that during 2022 a main goal will be stakeholder engagement. He will work with campuses to develop a comprehensive vision for higher education and craft a legislative agenda. HECC is highly interested in ideas to improve access and outcomes for Oregon learners and workers. He will discuss with the provosts strategies for transformation and innovation around the delivery of instruction. He also anticipated conversations about proposals to address equitable student success. Another HECC priority will be affordability for post-secondary-age learners. Finally, HECC would work on a strategic roadmap for increasing public investment to meet education goals.

IFS also discussed the budget model, LABISSIERE said, with various representatives talking about the pain points they were having. Representatives also talked about interdisciplinary learning, and how a budget model could support collaboration.

LABISSIERE reported that IFS is tracking three bills in the legislative short session. The first is SB 233, which deals with the transferability of credits. As senators would remember, last year IFS formed a Transfer Council, on which members from PSU are serving, to do work connected with this. The bill would require a common numbering system for introductory and lower-level courses with similar learning outcomes. HB 2590 funds student success for underrepresented students; what's being discussed now is what exactly what "underrepresented" means. The third is SB 551, regarding health care for part-time workers; there is an attempt to extend that to include vision and dental.

IFS further had a robust conversation, LABISSIERE said, about strategies to face the challenges their institutions are facing. Budget models appeared over and over as a topic. Another topic was the talk about potential changes to how trustees are selected.

CHORPENNING asked if he could share any more about potential changes to the selection of trustees. LABISSIERE: one of the ideas is for board members to be elected.

BEYLER urged senators to look at the reports on the Consent Agenda: the monthly AHC-APRCA report; a report from Graduate Council on a topic which had generated some intense conversation, namely, the application of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom; and a report of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Constitutional Definitions. The latter might seem to be sheer wonkiness, but in fact embodies fundamental, philosophical questions of shared governance. If we take the duties and responsibilities of Faculty seriously, such as authority over the curriculum as reflected in the motion on academic freedom voted last month, it is crucial to take these matters of definition seriously. Senate might return to this topic in various ways in the upcoming terms.

*The following reports were received as part of the Consent Agenda [see the **respective December Agenda Attachments**]:*

- 4. Final Report of Ad-Hoc Committee to Consider Definitions of Faculty, Department, and Program in the Faculty Constitution**
- 5. Report of Graduate Council with regard to ongoing concerns with accountability for OCMS DEI question classroom implementation**
- 6. Monthly Report of Ad-Hoc Committee on Academic Program Reduction and Curricular Adjustments**

H. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was **adjourned** at 4:49 p.m.