

**Minutes of the Portland State University Faculty Senate, 7 February 2022  
(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, Duncan, Dusicka, Eastin, Eppley, Farahmandpur, Feng (Wu-chang), Ferbel-Azcarate, Finn, Flores, Gamburd, Harris, Heilmair, Heryer, Hunt, Jaén Portillo, Kelley, Kennedy, Kinsella, Labissiere, Lafferriere, Law, Limbu, Lindsay, Loney, Luckett, Mikulski, Mudiamu, Raffo, Rai, Reitenauer, Sanchez, Smith, Taylor, Thieman, Thorne, Tretheway, Watanabe, Webb, Wern, Wilkinson.

**Alternates present:** Gwen Shusterman for Goforth.

**Senators absent:** Donlan, Erev, Gómez, Izumi, Oschwald, Romaniuk, Tuor.

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

The meeting was **called to order** at 3:03 p.m.

**A. ROLL CALL AND CONSENT AGENDA**

1. **Roll call** was effected using the participants list of the online meeting.
2. **Minutes of 3 January meeting** were **received** as part of the *Consent Agenda*.

**B. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**1. Announcements from Presiding Officer**

REITENAUER reflected on a term coined by Parker Palmer: the tragic gap between realities we face and things as they might be or could be. This describes the situation we are in at Portland State: the realities we face as an institution versus what we know might be possible with true, boundary-crossing collaborations.

REITENAUER relayed an announcement from Mike WALSH, Dean of Student Life, that feedback is being taken on proposed changes to the code of student conduct.

**2. Announcements from Secretary**

BEYLER noted that in the upcoming process of certifying the Faculty elections list, the academic degree (credential) can be a relevant criterion. This information is often out-of-date in the University's databases. He recommended therefore that colleagues check on this information for themselves and update it if necessary.

**C. DISCUSSION – shared governance**

REITENAUER said that the idea for this panel discussion came from a conversation with Judith RAMALEY, former PSU President, member of the Board of Trustees, and chair of the Board's new Governance Committee. She introduced other panel members: Jose COLL, Dean of SSW; Nya MBOCK, President of ASPSU; Rowanna CARPENTER, Presiding Officer Elect; Yves LABISSIERE, Faculty member of BoT.

The panelists received as starting questions:

- 1) When you use the term ‘shared governance,’ what do you mean? How does your institutional positionality inform your view on shared governance? What do you know about shared governance that you wish others knew?
- 2) Where do you see shared governance in productive action at PSU?
- 3) Where and how should we enhance our practices of shared governance, especially in light of the current challenges and opportunities at the University? What are immediate steps would could take to start making those enhancements?

RAMALEY: shared governance is defined formally as the way that issues affecting the entire institution or major portions of it are decided—structures and procedures for making such decisions. She did not have a concern at PSU with how each part of shared governance works, but what she hopes from her perspectives on the Board and as a former senior administrator is that we can operate from a shared sense of what is going on and where we are headed, what our opportunities and challenges are likely to be. That requires talking to each other, not only in formal sessions, but also showing up for each other—opportunities for listening and interaction. She hoped for a culture of inclusion in decision making.

COLL related that he had worked in different types of institutions—private, public, small, large, unionized, non-unionized. Shared governance took on different meanings in different types of institutions. As a concept it is less than seventy years old. Shared governance is a responsibility, as well as an opportunity to contribute, debate, and inform one another, in ways that improve our mission as an institution. Students, faculty, and staff support the overall success of the institution. Our role in higher education is to engage in scholarship and debate. Shared governance is not a way of getting away from responsibilities. As a dean, for example, he has fiduciary and budgetary responsibilities for his school, responsibilities for student and faculty success.

As an example, COLL related while he has been acting as Interim Dean of COE, they put together a working group of faculty and staff, with student input, to be informed about the COE budget and how to utilize the college’s resources sustainably and for long-term impact. [Other examples are] when he meets regularly with senators about the IPEB [budgeting] process, or at the start of the meeting today soliciting input on the student code of conduct.

The concept of shared governance, COLL noted, is about as old as PSU; we have grown together. He hoped this social experiment would continue to adapt and overcome challenges. Its philosophical tenets are remarkable, and you don’t see it anywhere else.

CARPENTER thought of shared governance as a set of principles and a set of associated practices. The work and challenges of the institution are complex, so one core principle is that we make better decisions when we include multiple perspectives and involve the people affected by those decisions. A second principle is acknowledgement of the core work of the institution: education and research. That means the work of faculty has a special consideration—not that others should be excluded, but that faculty must be included. We have to be accountable to those principles.

CARPENTER appreciated the broad definition of faculty at PSU, including not only those in tenure-line positions but also academic professionals and folks in non-tenure-track positions. The wide range of perspectives is valuable and will be increasingly important.

LABISSIERE focused on shared governance as an outcome of what we are really going after. It leads to a feeling that as members of the academic community we have a significant say in the decisions that impact our work. That doesn't mean we will always agree, but it requires us to define what we mean by 'we'. 'We' becomes a process. A cultivation of we-ness builds capacity or readiness for action. We-ness is predicated on a web of relationships we have with each other. reciprocity, linked experience. If there is enough practice over time, it generated a bank of trust or collective efficacy.\

It is important to invest in this we-ness, LABISSIERE continued. We are facing great uncertainty, [a prospect of] a lot of trial and error that will add to the stress we feel and magnify the sense of a lack of control. It is going to be critical to have the opportunity to go upstream and revisit what we mean by shared governance and how it functions at PSU.

MBOCK said that from the student perspective, shared governance means challenging hierarchical structures and the status quo of thought leaders and spaces. Shared governance allows for decision-making power to be distributed who [otherwise] maybe wouldn't have been consulted beforehand. It allows different voices to be heard, and creates spaces and influence for parties who haven't had it historically. But it can also be used [merely] as a buzzword. Shared governance has as much power and importance as we choose to give it. It require conscious effort to be collaborative, as other panelists have said. Shared governance is as potent and impactful as the people who are around the table and putting in the work of meeting challenges and problem solving.

RAMALEY: we are practicing here today something we need to practice all the time: how to talk to each other, contributing roles and experiences that work together to build capacity to respond to what lies ahead. She doesn't know what lies ahead, no one person can venture a guess, but we can inform each other.

MBOCK: we are all navigating uncertainty. Shared governance enables us to bring experiences to the table, so students remember that professors are people, too, and vice versa.

COLL: shared governance is being attacked across the United States; we are seeing an erosion of shared governance in higher education. We have an opportunity as an institution to operationalize shared governance—to grapple with how we use it collectively. We will make some mistakes. Sometimes we feel rushed to a conclusion, not even because of external pressures but just from wanting to make decisions. At times, after making a decision, you sit back and say, I wonder how a student would have seen this problem, or how one of my staff or faculty would have defined this problem or solved it differently there are opportunities for us to take time to learn from mistakes, to reflect on how we could use shared governance to create a better environment for our students. But we still have to make decisions.

LABISSIERE: there are some very strong practices at PSU, but it is important to look at some things that get in our way or make it an uphill struggle. It's important to see ways our work is siloed and hierarchical. Sometimes we take those hierarchies for granted. There are assumptions that expect governance to come from leaders, and that minimize our will, voice, and power. These are mindsets we have to take on explicitly. Another problem is that we often don't know what we have a say in, and are not asked in time. Research on why people are generous shows that the most significant reason they give is that they are asked. How do we invite people to be around the table?

RAMALEY: we are all leading towards a shared reality as a basis for frank and difficult conversations about the issues we face. Given the complexities—wicked problems—we all need to be supporting each other if we are going to get anywhere. We are not even sure how to describe the problems. In this situation, if we can really practice shared governance we will come out in a better place.

CARPENTER believed we had good structures for certain tasks that come at us over and over. For these known problems we can work within the structures we've created. However, she did not see structures that crossed organizational boundaries very well—spaces that, for example, brought together faculty across colleges, or across academic and student affairs functions. In some ways this is a very formalized place. We don't communicate easily across borders in generative ways. An important aspect of this is inviting students to participate. In committees, for example, it is often a problem that students don't show up; does the problem lie with the students or with our structures?

MBOCK said the from the student perspective it becomes an equity issue, when it's hard to find the time to be an active participant. She wished to find ways to get students and faculty more engaged [with each other].

LUCKETT suggested that in conversations like this, we always agree on the general principles. Meaningful shared governance happens in the heat of the moment when important decisions have to be made by someone in the administration. It's at that moment that they need to remember: wait a minute, maybe we'd better consult with Senate or the relevant committee—rather than, instead, the relevant committee hearing about it by some kind of public announcement. He urged the administration to remember that consultation doesn't mean giving up the authority to make decisions, but that executive decisions will be better if made after consulting with those with relevant expertise.

COLL, when serving in the military, found that you learned how to march by repetition. That is how we learned to make informed decisions: by doing it over and over again. We can learn from mistakes and come back to the conversations. We shouldn't assume that there is a kind of magical book that says, when a given scenario happens, consult this or that committee. We should think about how to prepare department chairs, program directors, deans, provosts, and so on, to utilize shared governance in a meaningful way. In the heat of the moment, we haven't always engaged with each other consistently. In the heat of the moment, the natural reaction is fight or flight, to make decisions based on what's immediately in front of us. It's the responsibility of deans, coordinators, chairs, to have [ongoing] conversations with faculty so that when issues do come up we have the practice to [deploy] shared governance. With more repetition it becomes easier.

RAMALEY: shared governance is not the same as consultation. Many decisions don't have to be made right this minute. Reaching out to those with expertise is good practice.

DE LA VEGA: when decisions are made, often students are the least empowered to speak out, particularly first-generation or BIPOC students. The way PSU has been moving towards social justice and equity is transformative. Shared governance falls under culturally responsive practices. She cautioned, however, that we should think about the faculty to do this often hidden work of being a culturally responsive practitioner.

JAÉN PORTILLO, reverting to CARPENTER's comments about boundary crossing, said that we have come a long way in building bridges and communicating among students, faculty, administration, board, and in understanding the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in shared governance. We have work to do, but have come a long way. A theme which is still taboo is balance in our boards, with at most one student or faculty member. As boards acquire more decision making capabilities, how do we ensure that we have balanced representation? LABISSIERE: this is at the heart of how we make our processes and structures more inclusive. It's being asked at universities across the state. We have to evolve structures and practices so as to cross boundaries and connect silos.

SANCHEZ: it is critical that staff be given the time to participate in shared governance. It's not always an element of our jobs. The recent reclassification of advisors and counselors has been demoralizing. Many have felt through this process that they should step away from shared governance because the new classifications don't value shared governance or committee work. That's a great loss, because advisors and counselors are the people who most often interface with students and hear what they are going through.

Rachel CUNLIFFE (co-chair of AHC-APRCA) observed that we need to have shared participation in setting the problem, as well as in thinking about solutions when a problem is handed to us. Opportunity to participate is [often] channeled towards solution of a problem which we may not agree is a problem. That is what's happening now, in terms of how problems are being set, and who gets to set them. We need more transparency in how problems come to be set.

CUNLIFFE observed, further, that it becomes a workload equity issue. Perhaps there are advisory teams to administrators: who can actually participate, whose promotion prospects depend on [it] or may benefit from their participation?

#### **D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – none**

#### **E. NEW BUSINESS**

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

The new courses, changes to courses, and changes to programs listed in **February 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 Canadian Studies (UCC) – *Consent Agenda***

The Certificate in Canadian Studies (a undergraduate program on moratorium) was eliminated, as stated in **February Agenda Attachment E.2**, as part of the *Consent Agenda*, there having been no objection before the end of announcements.

##### **3. New program: PSM in Applied Geoscience (CLAS via GC)**

BORDEN / WATANABE **moved** approval of the Professional Science Master's in Applied Geoscience, a new program in CLAS, as summarized in **February Agenda Attachment E.3** and proposed in full in the [Online Curriculum Management System](#).

READ noted that the degree program includes eight credits of internship or experiential learning. In GC discussion, the question was raised about the level of support for

experiential learning, which required developing relationships with community organizations, or whether it's students working on special projects. Current startup resources would not be a problem, but there was conversation about the [ongoing] level of support, and she wished to put that on the record.

READ also noted that this is not a new type of degree program at PSU, but does have some distinctive features to it. READ called on Alex RUZICKA and John BERSHAW (both GLG) for comments.

RUZICKA: the experiential component requires external partners. In Geology and some other departments they are stretched thin with faculty attrition. This program is nice for students and for student success. They have been in discussions with the administration about helping out with this sort of program; if there would be college-wide support for managing the external partners, that would be much appreciated. BERSHAW added that the curriculum was developed in consultation with an advisory panel consisting of public- and private-sector geoscientists at institutions like Northwest Natural, transportation managers, etc. Besides informing the curriculum, a secondary benefit is establishing relationship with these local organizations. There is a network to get started. There is also a re-imagine proposal together with Geography and ESM to work on more formal collaborations among the three departments.

GAMBURD wanted to confirm that we will be able to sustain this program given the deficit in staffing in their department. RUZICKA said they have identified a large list of external partners who helped craft the ideas of the program—on the order of twenty or so. For a sustainable program years down the line, it would be good to have help to grow the number of external partners.

The new program PSM in Applied Geoscience, summarized in **Attachment E.3**, was **approved** (42 yes, 4 no, 3 abstain, vote recorded by online survey).

## F. QUESTION PERIOD

### 1. Question to Provost

BEYLER read the question to the Provost given in **February Agenda Attachment F.1**.

To respond to the first two parts of the question dealing with budget projections, JEFFORDS called upon Amy MULKERIN. Referring to the presentation made at the [BoT] Finance and Administration Committee meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup>, MULKERIN stated that gross tuition revenue is down \$6.4 million from our budget for fiscal year '22, partially offset by less remissions spending. State support increased by \$7.2 million over budget, due to the new funding formula and increased investments. Expenses are under budget, mostly due to personnel savings—for the all funds budget, about \$12.7 million, and for education & general [E&G] \$9.9 million. The use of operating reserves will likely be less than the \$15 million included in the E&G budget. Auxiliary revenues are lower than budget due to slower return on on-campus activities.

Regarding the second question on specific markers, MULKERIN stated the process should support our ability to meet graduation and enrollment goals outlined in University metrics and to meet student needs. Additionally, we want to allocate budget resources to meet the needs of our students and priorities of the University through a deeper understanding of departments and programs and their contributions to the University. We

will move beyond random attrition to support our budget allocation. By fiscal year '25 we want to have an operational budget that's not dependent upon reserves to fund operations. In the F&A Committee meeting, it was estimated that for FY '23 \$7 to 9 million will be used from reserves to support our operations.

To part three of the question, JEFFORDS responded: (1) Increase familiarity broadly across the institution with the use of data to inform department-level decision making, so that we can have alignment around common ways of achieving institutional goals. (2) Align the use of resources to support student enrollment, persistence, and completion. (3) Identify areas of opportunity for increasing new student enrollments. (4) Approach this process as an opportunity to expand beyond the metrics and to provide greater opportunities within and across units.

FARAHMANDPUR asked if there was longitudinal data on the ratio of indirect to direct [academically related] expenditures. He also noted that the University used \$27 million of federal funding for replacing lost revenue from auxiliary and academic sources. How has that money been spent? JEFFORDS: presentations have been made in various forums on this, but that she would see if information could be made available to senators. The bulk of this funding went to direct student aid. She asked for clarification about indirect expenditures. FARAHMANDPUR: expenditures for the University's operation and maintenance, but also sources of funding to OAA and the Foundation being taken from divisions to support indirect expenditures. Is the University moving to reduce these indirect expenditures to balance the budget? JEFFORDS: so, sources of funding other than state funding and tuition dollars. FARAHMANDPUR: yes. JEFFORDS: there are many cases in which we are trying to identify other sources of funds to enhance our overall revenue picture—for example, non-credit certificate programs.

PERCY added that a major portion of federal HEERF money went to students; some went to auxiliaries to replace lost fees. We also spent some money on things related directly to COVID: testing, supplies, infrastructure, upgrading air circulation systems, etc. Compensation for lost tuition is the basis of the strategic investments discussed at the previous meeting. The University has provided some funding for the Foundation, which was the plan from the time it was created as a separate entity, but as the University [as a whole] has had cuts, so also this funding has had cuts.

CHIVERS related that she teaches across three departments, and is an example of what lowering the employee headcount looks like in practice. One-third to one-half of instructors at PSU are on short-term contracts, with no health care benefits. As PSU has cut personnel costs, she is down from five classes this year to three next year; she travels 270 miles a week to teach at other colleges in the Willamette Valley. Her annual salary is equivalent of one month salary of the Provost. Adjuncts have to work at other institutions, and enrollment at those schools is looking bleak. Contact with first-generation students is being lost when PSU refuses to hire adjuncts to teach full-time the classes we are already teaching and mentoring students. Every spring, she's asked by students to help with research and community development, but is told by her department and HR that she is not allowed to teach more than 22 credit hours per academic year. We are failing our students, especially those who need access to higher education the most. Cutting graduate programs, defunding graduate students, and cutting personnel costs, especially part-time faculty seems to be going in a direction opposite to relationship- and

trust-building. PSUFA, the union for part-time faculty, is inquiring of administrators and hiring committees whether they will promote internally from part-time faculty to fill new positions in high-enrollment areas. JEFFORDS expressed gratitude for the commitment and passion that she and other bring to teaching students. If a proposal is being brought forward by the union there would be another context to have that conversation. However, the question of opportunities for those are teaching part-time to have access to have access to full-time positions is one the institution will want to look into.

SANCHEZ had spoken to many colleagues across campus and heard incredible anxiety about the program review and reduction process, particularly from the eighteen named departments. If there is any way JEFFORDS or MULKERIN could be more specific in their answers—giving a specific marker—that would really help people. She [SANCHEZ] didn't hear in the answer a specific end goal. She would appreciate a straightforward answer.

JEFFORDS: the University's budget is changing over time, and so one number this year might not be the appropriate number next year if other fluctuations happen. For example, inflation has greatly increased the cost of the new Vernier Science Center. We want to get to a place where our budget doesn't depend on reserves. At the beginning of the process we were using about \$11 million to fund ongoing activities across OAA, and that is not sustainable. We have to match our expenditures in a way that our recurring budget covers recurring costs. It's difficult to have a specific marker because the budget is built on both revenue forecasts, which is built in turn on enrollment, tuition, and state funding, as well as expenses. If we don't meet our enrollment, persistence, and graduation goals, that impacts revenue, whereas if we meet and exceed them there is a [positive] impact. Right now we are balancing the difference between expenses and revenues with reserves, and we want to stop doing that.

## G. REPORTS

1. **President's Report** – *dropped due to time*
2. **Provost's Report** – *dropped due to time*
3. **Report from Budget Committee**

EMERY noted the sources for the BC report: Kevin REYNOLDS's presentations to BC and to BoT F&A Committee, OAA budget overviews, and the compiled driver metrics for the program review and reduction process [for slides see **February Agenda Attachment G.3**]. She acknowledged the work that had gone into these documents, and affirmed that the same information was being presented in the different forums.

EMERY briefly reviewed the history of budgeting at PSU, beginning with performance-based budgeting [PBB] under the Oregon University System. With the change to an independent board in 2016, we began to manage reserves in a consistent way, began to integrate enrollment planning, and tried to break up the insistence under PBB on student credit hours driving the budget.

Changes in enrollment, EMERY stated, a major reason why we are talking about the budget and program review—meeting students as, where, and when we need to. She urged colleagues to look at the undergraduate and graduate dashboards. Driver elements such as faculty composition, student credit hours, enrollments, graduation rates and timelines,



and research expenditures play into the review of programs. Units in which there has been a shortfall in these metrics are asked to address that. The narrative for OAA is a place where again faculty can be engaged within the department or program: why the situation is the way it is, how we might reconsider the metrics being used. It's important that [Faculty] participate in this work and help inform the next steps. The communication highlighted that it's not going straight to elimination: we are trying to work through different ways of restructuring and reorganizing before determining anything that might have to go an elimination process.

Forecasts, EMERY continued, try to come with a likely quantitative scenario for the budget, and there are many moving parts: enrollment and retention; inflation of salary and benefits as well as services and supplies; recovery of downtown Portland; and other external factors. We are basically looking at \$308 million general fund expenditure for next fiscal year. A 1% change in inflation results in about \$3 million, a significant shift that we have to think about, because we don't necessarily have such a cushion right now. 84% of the general fund is spent on personnel costs. This means that the greatest asset of the University is its people. We should not see this number as something negative.

The overall revenue outlook has improved, EMERY said, but we have to be cautious going forward. Thanks to the work of REYNOLDS and Kevin NEELY we have seen an increase in state funding. Our arguments to HECC and to the state government resonated. We had reduced budget allocations and actual expenditures over the last two years because we weren't operating normally—furloughs, temporary pay cuts for administrators—so we are a bit head of where we thought we would be. There was also an increase in new first-year and transfer students. Chuck KNEPFLE and Enrollment Management services are making good on their promise to find ways to increase enrollment. Inflation, however, is higher than it has been in the past couple of years.

EMERY believed there are reasonable expectations for increases in state support. NEELY and REYNOLDS are working on a new set of presentations on why PSU needs to be better funded than we currently are. We can all get behind efforts to attract students. Our resident undergraduate tuition increases have been capped at or below inflation, and a slight increase shouldn't have a huge impact on overall enrollment. We are spending some money out of reserves in part to meet goals that the President has put forward in previous Faculty Senate meetings—January in particular—and faculty involvement is going to be key there. We have also seen an increase in retention and more students graduating, in part due to work of ARC, EPC, and Faculty Senate. Changes we enacted last year will, she thought, help more students finish their degree.

Academic program review will be difficult, EMERY said, and will impact all of us one way or another. We need to find the way to support one another during these changes that we're going to have to make. Our biggest risk is that we don't meet the general fund revenue target or that we don't contain costs to the extent we need to. That would mean more drawing on reserves and higher cuts in the future. The impact on workload, services, and morale is problematic throughout campus—something we need to address.

Next steps, EMERY said, are for departments to put together their preliminary forecast of what they need to do next year. These are going to be reviewed with BC over the next couple of months, to get to a final budget by July.

EMERY imparted the good news that student loan debt has decreased in the past five years for PSU students. This is something faculty have contributed to, trying to keep costs down for students. One third of 2021 graduates had no student loan debt. At a time when we hear so much about this problem, it's something we can be proud of.

RAFFO, looking at enrollment trends, asked if numbers have been adjusted taking into account that we are going through an unprecedented pandemic, while also having a good economy when it comes to jobs, which always causes a temporary downturn in enrollments at PSU. Are we taking transitory effects into account when modelling enrollment trends? EMERY believed that the last couple of years were understood to be outliers. At the same time, we have made some gains with first-year enrollments that we hadn't previously. CRUZAN: we were in trouble before the pandemic, which just made it worse. RAFFO: the accelerated trend of the pandemic made the numbers look more grim.

CRUZAN: faculty serving on BC don't have power to make decisions. Their role is to ask questions, both to inform faculty, but also to help administrators think about the decisions they are making—an example of the shared governance as discussed earlier.

PERCY added: the pandemic has confused the situation. We are on something of a decline anyway, and it is hard to tease out how much effect COVID [specifically] had. We sometimes expect that during recessions more students go back to college; we didn't see that this time, except during the first summer. Preliminary information on applications for next fall shows some positive trend.

Bringing the meeting to a close, REITENAUER echoed EMERY's words that we are going to need each other, which was also the spirit of the discussion that started the meeting today.

#### 4. Monthly Report of AHC-APRCA – *Consent Agenda*

The February report from the Ad-Hoc Committee on Academic Program Review and Curricular Adjustments was **received** as part of the *Consent Agenda*.

**H. ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was **adjourned** at 5:08 p.m.