

University of Puget Sound Faculty Senate Minutes, November 15, 2010

*Senators in attendance:* Bill Barry, Kris Bartanen, Dan Burgard, Fred Hamel, Rob Hutchinson, Kristin Johnson, Savannah LaFerrière, Tiffany Aldrich MacBain, Dan Miller, Elise Richman, Mike Segawa, Ross Singleton, Amy Spivey, Keith Ward

*Guests in attendance:* Todd Badham, Karly Siroky

- I. Call to order at 4:01 p.m.
- II. Minutes of October 25, 2010 were approved with three corrections.
- III. Announcements

To introduce Siroky, Pierce Transit Commute Options Liaison, Badham explained that the City of Tacoma and Pierce Transit received money from the State of Washington to fund two liaison positions in the county. The University of Puget Sound has received one of these positions due to the campus's record of interface with the city. Siroky's work with Puget Sound will include administering this year's faculty commuting survey (in the spring) and facilitating faculty improvements in that area this year.

Siroky showed a PowerPoint presentation to help Senators to understand faculty's commuting patterns and options. She also provided us with a list of resources and identified Badham and Nicole Mulhausen as campus Transit Coordinators. Siroky announced "Riding in the Rain," a workshop on "How to Stay Safe, Dry, and Visible" on a bike, to be held Monday, 11/15/2010 and Thursday, 11/18/2010 from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. at Tacoma Bike, 309 Puyallup Ave.

Badham reported that the Zip Car program on campus is going really well and issued a reminder that faculty and staff, not just students, are eligible for the program. About 55 students have enrolled in Zip Car so far; 10 or 11 faculty and staff have signed up. Badham announced that campus community members may register online and that members receive a card that they then swipe into a Zip Car when they need to use it. Cars can be reserved a year in advance and may be used for the day or overnight. Badham said that departmental memberships may soon be available.

Addressing Badham, Hamel noted that carpool parking spots often go unused during the day or throughout the week, a condition that can be frustrating for faculty searching for spots. Hamel asked if Badham had thoughts about how that incentive program is working and whether or not we should continue or adjust. Badham reported a year-to-year fluctuation on usage of the carpool program and said that demand changes pretty regularly. Security Services conceives of the carpool signs as advertising for the program. The unused spots also serve as holding spots for Security in case of injury or emergency. Badham said that more people are signed up for the carpool program than appear to be; the only spot technically available is in the library lot.

Singleton asked Badham if we have enough bike racks on campus. Badham replied that we do not; last year the campus saw an explosion in bicycle use. He amended his remark to say that there are more bike racks than it seems, but that they aren't where people want them to be. People want covered parking, yet the one covered rack (at Wheelock) is the one that's under-utilized. Badham is working to get bicycle storage to be a part of the long-term planning of the campus.

Neshyba asked what the Senate can do to support Siroky's mission. Siroky mentioned the cash incentive earmarked for improvements to faculty commuting at Puget Sound and offered as one possibility for utilizing the funds a building with lockers and showers. Also addressing Neshyba's question, Badham voiced the need for non-SOV commuting to become part of the campus culture. The Senate could help to represent faculty's desires surrounding commuting more well known in order to signal to the administration that we would like certain improvements. He added that aside from the stipend that attends Siroky's position, the campus has no resources for improvements.

Hutchinson offered that at the University of Oregon, all students' ID cards include bus passes. As a faculty member, Hutchinson would value such a system. Siroky added that the same system works well at the University of Washington's Seattle and Tacoma campuses.

Neshyba asked if Siroky's grant is for students or Commute Trip Reduction (CTR). Siroky said that it is for faculty and staff.

#### IV. Special Orders (1-minute concerns)

Bill Barry shared a special order from a colleague who requested that there be a reconsideration of the "WF" deadlines that were instituted a couple of years ago. It is the opinion of the colleague that the necessity of a student's petitioning the ASC at end of a semester usurps the judgment of professors in determining whether or not a student should fail a course.

Dan Burgard voiced a faculty concerned with a proposal authored by Todd Badham and coming out of the Staff Senate to ban dogs from university buildings unless those dogs serve as research animals or support the Americans with Disabilities Act. Bartanen identified the policy proposal as having originated with Human Resources in response to potential health (especially allergy) issues as well as custodial and staff concerns.

Ward offered to work with the Senate Executive Committee to investigate the policy proposal and report back to the Senate.

#### V. Reports of committee liaisons

Hutchinson, Childcare Committee: Hutchinson and Spivey attended the committee meeting last week. The committee has the results of the childcare survey, which amounts to a lot of information. They are just starting to make their way through it and will determine along with Institutional Research constructive ways in which to “slice and dice” it.

Singleton, International Education Committee: The committee is currently considering the impact of a new financial model on the Pacific Rim Program. The way in which students pay for their study-abroad experiences has changed recently. Under the new model, some students are negatively impacted because they can't use merit aid above their demonstrated need in order to help fund their study. So the IEC is attempting to figure out how to address this concern; they have so far drafted a letter to Kris Bartanen. The Pacific Rim Program is not the only one impacted, as a number of departments and students have begun to recognize.

Bartanen shared that Pac Rim leadership has communicated with her. She added that at the point of entry to UPS, students receive all of the information about the impact of their financial aid on international education.

Segawa asked if the Pac Rim program is being impacted because it's a year long. Baranen said that Pac Rim is affected because it is our own program. Singleton expressed the argument of Pac Rim leadership that they should be treated exceptionally *because* this is a UPS program run by UPS faculty and providing UPS course credit.

Hutchinson, Professional Standards Committee: The PSC has taken up 2 charges. One is Faculty Senate Charge 8, that “[T]he PSC should improve the description in the Faculty Code of the grievance process when it occurs within a faculty evaluation [...] and of the hearing board process [...]. The Code as written properly addresses such situations [...]. A point of emphasis should be added to the buff document's Departmental Evaluation Process section, so that evaluators would be aware of the consequences of raising ethical issues during the evaluation process.” (The quoted material is excerpted from the November 4, 2010 Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee.) The PSC is also in the process of reviewing and suggesting minor editorial changes to P&G evaluations guidelines.

Barry, Academic Standards Committee: The ASC is discussing expanding the pool of people who can report violations of academic honesty, to include staff members. Members are circulating a document amongst themselves that makes a provision for staff to report violations of academic honesty even if the instructor was not present to witness the violation or declines to be a part of the report. This ASC was not charged with this task; the concern arose organically out of the ASC. The ASC wishes to put the issue on hold until after consulting with the Senate. They would like a Senate charge or at least a conversation about the issue before moving forward.

Ward shared that only last week, unsolicited, a staff member came to him because s/he observed a person cheating in an exam that s/he was proctoring. The staff member did not know what to do.

Spivey, Student Life Committee. The SLC has mostly been focused on helping Student Life to think about the design for a new dorm—programs, style of housing, etc.—because the trustees want to advance the timeline on increasing the amount of on-campus housing. The SLC has also discussed the fourth fraternity that will join the campus and has received a report from Security Services about last year's security issues.

Richman, Institutional Review Board: Per the Senate's charge, the IRB has been scouring the current academic conduct policy to make sure it conforms to faculty and federal code.

Burgard, Diversity Committee: After having directed its efforts toward the Race and Pedagogy Conference, the Diversity Committee has turned its attention to the issue of faculty hiring according to the specifications of the campus's charge of and commitment to social diversity. The committee is also liaising with Student Life on making improvements to multicultural student services.

#### VI. Framing of the Pass/Fail question for Faculty Meeting of November 16, 2010

Barry reminded senators that he sent an email out shortly after our last meeting, suggesting that we in the Senate lift the delay on the Pass/Fail motion and have a clean slate as we enter the Faculty Meeting tomorrow, but some suggested it was presumptive to lift a delay instituted by the Faculty itself. Barry proposed that at the Faculty Meeting Neshyba announce that the Faculty stand at the delay now and hope that in the meeting we'll find resolution to two ASC proposals: to prohibit a pass/fail grade in the major or minor, and to limit the pass/fail option to juniors and seniors. Then, suggested Barry, once Neshyba explains that the delay exists, there will be, from the floor, a motion to repeal. That motion will trigger the discussion we will have in the Senate.

Neshyba asked that we back up a bit as he tried to recall where we left the issue at the last Senate meeting: was there a delay in effect? Bill, having checked up on it, asserted that the status of the p/f policy that was approved by the ASC in November 2009 is in a state of delay. That ought to be fixed, said Barry, either by stopping the delay or doing something else. He continued: because the delay was imposed by faculty, the Senate should present the issue at the Faculty Meeting but not push any particular action. According to Barry, we, the Senate, need to decide if we want to let the floor come up with a motion.

Hamel asked if we were only talking about these two items—to prohibit a pass/fail grade in the major or minor and to limit the pass/fail option to juniors and seniors. Barry said we were and added that the Senate took no action on the two items when the ASC passed them; therefore, the changes went into effect; then Bill Haltom put a delay on them during the Faculty Meeting.

Segawa asked for clarification on whether the major/minor prohibition distinguishes between classes *in* the major or minor and classes counting *toward* the major or minor. Miller recollected that the policy change covered all classes in the major or minor discipline. Spivey corroborated, reading from page seven of the minutes from the Senate meeting of October 25, 2010: the language of the motion specifies that students may take “no p/f courses in the department of the major or minor.” Barry added that the theory behind the change is to encourage students to take risks in other fields. Students’ own fields should not constitute an area of risk. The idea is to discourage the use of p/f in what one would assume to be a comfortable area of study.

Neshyba asked what he should say if the Faculty were to ask what the Senate’s opinion is on this matter, and he suggested that we in the Senate take a straw poll. Singleton interjected that the Senate opinion is already on record: we did not take action on the policy change. Neshyba pointed out that the Senate who did not take action was a different Senate during a different year. Singleton opined that there has to be some continuity, that there is a certain merit to establishing a process and staying with it. This issue, he said, has already gone by the Senate. Neshyba disagreed, citing the fact that last year the Senate passed on the issue to the Faculty. The idea was that the matter was too important for the Senate to render a judgment on, particularly a judgment that could conceivably be reversed by the full faculty anyway. He argued that last year’s action does not preclude this senate from rendering an opinion on the p/f policy change.

Bartanen suggested that the Senate has an opportunity to possibly reestablish some relationship with its ASC, which is fairly angry, having worked for two years on various policies that get turned back without a lot of consideration by the Senate. She said that if the Senate were to explain the issue as Barry just outlined it but express the motions passed by the ASC affirmatively, it would demonstrate Senate support of the work of the ASC. Then if the Faculty wants to take the other position, it can vote in the other direction. Barry asked if Bartanen were suggesting that a motion come forward to affirm the ASC policy. Bartanen answered in the affirmative, adding that if people wanted to affirm the policy they could, or they could defeat it. Some discussion ensued as to whether such a motion would come after the motion to remove the delay. Barry said that the motion to repeal is not going to come from the Senate. It would come from someone else on the floor.

Barry’s recollection of the Senate meeting in question is that there was no consensus, that there was very little discussion of the ASC policy before we moved on to permission of the instructor. He believes that the Senate rejected a motion to send the issue on to the faculty and would be reluctant to suggest to the Faculty that there was agreement on this issue. To his knowledge, the Senate wanted to pursue other issues. Bartanen said that she doesn’t disagree but is only speaking to how the Senate wishes to present at the Faculty Meeting of 11-16-10.

Barry provided one other piece of information, his concern that no one from the ASC will attend the Faculty meeting. As a result, there stands to be no ownership of these issues at the meeting.

Miller introduced the Student Senate resolution on the issue of pass/fail. One of the Student Senate's biggest concerns is that it's hard for students to take a stand because they don't think the issue has been portrayed clearly in the minutes of the ASC or in subsequent discussion. Because the ASC's rationale has not been clearly articulated, the Student Senate must oppose. However, the Student Senate is more than willing to work with the ASC, Faculty, and Faculty Senate to understand why these changes might be occurring and to publicize the changes. (See Appendix A for the full text, Student Resolution on the Issue of Pass/Fail.) Students recommend that the issue go back to this body, the Senate, or to the ASC to create something more concise for students to read.

Neshyba responded that he does not see what is ambiguous or unclear about the two items. Miller explained that students do not see the benefits of the two policies. He suggested that problems with p/f could be solved on case-by-case bases; that some freshmen and sophomores might want to use p/f to explore majors that might be available to them; and that within a major or minor, there are some courses that *would* be reach courses for students, courses students might wish to take pass/fail in order to branch out. Miller reiterated that the Student Senate could not find concrete enough evidence in the ASC minutes to support the policies.

Spivey remarked that in talking to colleagues on the ASC she has learned that one of the reasons the policy arose came up was that Academic Advising consistently noted that students who had taken p/f in their early years wanted to use those courses toward their majors, but they could not so were stuck. Miller countered that this phenomenon seems not to require a blanket policy to fix it but rather could be addressed in advising with individual students so as not to limit people who want to use the pass/fail option in a positive manner.

Neshyba said that the only clear directive he as chair has received is to summarize what has happened, state that we would seek resolution of delay, and put forward a motion to approve these policies in the interest of maintaining the integrity of the process. For the ASC is an arm of the Senate, and the Senate will defend actions of the ASC.

Barry replied that one of the things Neshyba should consider is how the motion should appear. Do we simply affirm the motion because we want it to go into effect? We might also lift the delay, which would have the same effect. Barry said his primary concern was parliamentary procedure. He suggested that the Senate take a vote before Neshyba represents the Senate as affirming a motion to support the pass/fail policy.

Neshyba suggested a poll to establish who would be in favor of the Senate Chair moving to recommend approval of these policy changes. Hutchinson said that he

understood Bartanen to suggest that the Senate present the policies as they are created, that we are not going to impede the process, that we will provide no negative stamp or positive stamp. Bartanen affirmed Hutchinson's encapsulation of her remarks. Neshyba added that the idea is also to put the motion in the affirmative, as in "I move that faculty approve this policy." Burgard asked if it matters whether we resubmit the issue or remove the delay; both choices would bring the matter back to the Faculty. MacBain expressed a reluctance to affirm the policy absent the information the Student Senate has expressed an interest in gathering from the ASC. Barry reminded the Senate that he has laid out for the ASC the possibility that there would be a motion to repeal and indicated that this action would be something simply to trigger conversation. Therefore, the ASC won't necessarily misread the motion to repeal as not getting support from the Senate.

Neshyba polled the Senate, asking who would like for him to put forward a motion approving the ASC's actions in the affirmative. 7 yes; 6 no. Neshyba announced he would think about these results and decide tomorrow, but that he will probably indicate that we had a split vote. Barry added that if any senator is in support of the policy, s/he should attend the Faculty Meeting and speak on its behalf.

Segawa expressed a process concern addressing the relationship between the Senate and our committees. He said that ASC worked extremely hard on this policy, did their due diligence, and that the Senate seems to have very little regard for and trust in that effort. Segawa thinks that this dynamic is damaging. Neshyba replied that the purpose of the Senate is to frame such decisions and to give clarity. Barry said that this issue seems to be an unusual one before the Senate in that the issue has been owned by the Faculty for a long time; when it first came up in the Senate, we should have refused to touch it. Barry thinks we are doing that right now, for this is the Faculty's decision to make. Segawa said that for the Senate to charge the ASC and then say we're not going to touch this seems disingenuous to me.

Miller raised the concern that if no one from the ASC can make it to the faculty meeting, perhaps even the ASC no longer finds the policy favorable. Ward shared his impression, gathered from the meeting with the ASC and the Senate Executive Committee, that communication within our governmental system has been going awry for a little while. He reported frustration from ASC and a sense from the Senate Faculty that there hasn't always been good communication from the subcommittees. Said Ward, we need to be aware of this two-way communications issue within our governance system, and we have to be mindful of not finger-pointing. It's a community issue right now.

Neshyba said that at that meeting with the ASC, one of things he emphasized to them is that there should be on their part a certain amount of Senate management. Singleton objected. He believes that it is our responsibility as Senators to read those minutes; if there's anything that concerns us there, we have the opportunity to discuss it. Singleton thinks that the ASC's absence from the Faculty Meeting

could be an indication of their frustration. He worries that the Senate is potentially creating a poisonous environment by not giving due consideration to the hard work and depth of analysis that our committees perform. Barry reported that his observation was silence when it was asked at the ASC meeting who would be at the Faculty Meeting. There was some anxiety expressed by the chair that no one would show up. Barry does not think that the Senate has done anything wrong with regard to the issue of pass/fail. Where we need to mend fences, he said, is with regard to incompletes. With pass/fail, procedurally everything has gone according to plan. The ASC has come forward with some proposals that some Senators and a lot of faculty haven't liked, and that's bound to happen. Singleton said he wasn't suggesting that we are being high handed with respect to this issue but was just remarking a danger out there. Nonetheless, he would still go back to the process; he wasn't on the Senate last spring, but he knows the Senate did have the opportunity at that time to take action. The fact that the Senate did not means that these policies would have gone into effect had not the hold been put on them in a faculty meeting. He concluded that it may be high-handed to go back *now* and try to come up with some kind of a rationale for opposing the policies.

Hamel said that the Senate did a lot of engagement with this issue last year, had healthy discussion. However, he added, we are really not responsible to the ASC to approve everything they put forward. Hamel said that when he was on the ASC committee members understood that. Hamel believes that in the matter currently before us, the less we do in relationship with it, the better: the Senate should simply acknowledge that there's a debate to occur in lifting the delay, and then it should be in the Faculty's hands. Bartanen attempted to clarify by asking if Hamel meant that the Senate would explain the framing and not say anything about the motion and then let the motion come from the faculty. Hamel said that it may be hard for the ASC to hear a repeal motion; therefore, Neshyba could provide the history of the discussion—that the Senate let the policy stand and that the faculty delayed it.

Spivey proposed the following language: “We have a motion to lift the delay and allow the new policies the ASC enacted to take effect.”

Barry interjected a brief comment: if the Faculty vote not to lift the delay, then we'll still have an unresolved issue on our hands. Neshyba said that it is correct to say that by making this motion it implicitly lifts the delay. In consideration of the motion, we are asking the faculty to make some decisions. If people wanted to continue the delay, then that motion could be struck down. Spivey suggested that we could leave the language of the delay out of the motion. Neshyba said that he would like to.

LaFerrière wondered if, since we are not sure if anyone from the ASC will be present at the meeting, we are presenting some bias to the faculty. She then asked if it is necessary to present a bias during the motion. Neshyba replied that parliamentary procedure says the chair should let the person who calls the motion speak first in support of it. At that time, Neshyba will also make remarks about



our process. Miller cited the fact that the delay was put in place so that the conversation could continue. Since the item is already on the agenda for the meeting tomorrow, he said, the discussion could occur, and then someone could move on the issue w/out the need to remove the delay.

VII. Adjournment. 5:37 p.m. M (Ward)/S/P

Respectfully submitted,

Tiffany Aldrich MacBain, Secretary, Scribe-of-the-Day

## Appendix A

### Student Resolution on the Issue of Pass/Fail

Much discussion surrounds the Pass/Fail Policy and potential changes to it. As student representatives, we, the ASUPS Senate, believe that the goals of the faculty in regards to improved communication and class participation can be achieved without sacrificing the privacy of students. We propose maintaining the Pass/Fail system as it existed prior to the Academic Standards Committee's recommendations, and would support the focused encouragement of a voluntary communication of Pass/Fail status. The students in question should be prompted by their advisors to get into contact with the professors of any course they are taking Pass/Fail. Students and faculty should be communicating, but knowledge of Pass/Fail status should remain the student's prerogative to disclose.

Beyond our issues with the proposed changes to the Pass/Fail policy, we would ask the ASC to bring forward a clear and concise argument in favor of these changes. We are willing to assist the ASC in publicizing their arguments. At this point, we have not received enough information from the committee to take any action aside from opposition to their proposals.

After looking through the various minutes of faculty meetings, we have found several arguments that attempt to support the ASC's effort to make structural changes to the Pass/Fail policy. However, these arguments all operate under the assumption that the Pass/Fail opportunity is flawed and needs correction. We cannot find evidence within the minutes that shows a need for change. Such structural changes would be necessary if these were widespread issues, but as they seem to be localized, we believe that local solutions rather than policy change would be the most effective way to address the issues.

Many high-achieving students use pass/fail during a semester when they have an internship or other outside commitments that will occupy a substantial portion of their time. This doesn't mean that they have resigned themselves to a simple C- grade, but are seeking the ease that comes with knowing that they don't have to hit 95% for 16 weeks to maintain their GPA.

Instead, Pass/Fail flexibility allows them to continue to produce high quality work across their various commitments.

With the caliber of students attending Puget Sound, and the consistent rigor of courses, it is unlikely that a significant number of students are using Pass/Fail out of laziness. As a residential, liberal arts institution, Puget Sound provides a comprehensive education that extends outside the classroom. Students are taught the value of the work/life balance, as well as the balance between curricular and co-curricular activities. Pass/Fail provides the opportunity for greater diversity of student interests and backgrounds in the classroom, which will help not only majors in the course, but also non-majors as each group is challenged to expand its thinking.

With most issues, we support soft solutions (changes within the existing policy) over hard solutions (policy change). Advising students about potential Pass/Fail issues during the registration process may achieve the same goals as a blanket policy change without sacrificing the benefits to the majority of students. Mandatory communication will not achieve the desired goal. Voluntary communication would improve student-faculty relations without violating privacy, while keeping students' work consistent with the quality that is associated with a Puget Sound degree.

We would welcome a response from Faculty Senate or from the Academic Standards Committee. This document is based on the minutes below gathered from Faculty Meetings, Faculty Senate and ASC Meetings. We are eager to enter into a conversation with the ASC or faculty about these issues.

The Associated Students University of Puget Sound  
Senator Erin Jamroz  
Senator Brendan Witt  
Senator Jordan Greiner  
Senator Peter Cellier  
Senator Pieter Ver Haar  
Senator Sohan Punatar  
Senator Scott Miller  
Senator Santiago Rodriguez  
Vice President Alex Lewis  
Senator Steve Rodgers (Faculty)  
President Dan Miller

