

# Minutes: September 13, 2022

College of Liberal Arts Faculty Senate

<https://cla.purdue.edu/faculty-staff/facsenate/>

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*Approved by Faculty Senate on October 4, 2022.*

## Roll

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Senate Chair Michael Johnston welcomed CLA faculty to the meeting, convened using Zoom at 3:35pm. He opened with a land acknowledgement.

**Guests:** Matthew Allen, David Atkinson, Dorsey Armstrong, Fritz Davis, Joel Ebarb, Mark Haugen, Wei Hong, Trenton Jones, Sorin Matei, Erin Moodie, Nush Powell, David Reingold, Linda Renzulli, Daniel Smith, Lori Sparger, Holly Tittle-Hudson.

**Senators absent:** Benedicto, Browning, Marsh, Sypher, Veldwachter

Professor Brian Kelly present as alternate for Beth Hoffman (Sociology); Prof. Andrew Flachs present as alternate for Sen. Amanda Veile (Anthropology); Prof. Robert Marzec present as alternate for Sen Nancy Peterson (English); Prof. Dwayne Woods and Swati Srivastava present as alternates for Sen. Ann Clark and Melissa Will (Political Science).

## 1. Approval of the Minutes

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Chair Johnston presented the minutes from the meeting of April 12, 2022.

The Senate had no changes or corrections, so minutes were approved as submitted.

## 2. Chair's Remarks – Dr. Michael Johnston

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Johnston took a few minutes to introduce himself as the new Senate Chair, as well as the incoming Vice-Chair (Kaufmann-Buhler) and Secretary (Lindsay). In opening remarks, he outlined his vision for the coming semester, emphasizing a commitment to fostering transparency and shared governance in the relationship between the faculty and CLA administration. He illustrated these concerns with a couple of the topics from the Qualtrics survey (discussed more in Agenda item #5 below) related to faculty concerns with hiring allotments, new directions the college is taking without faculty input, and lack of reporting about the Dean's performance review last year.

Johnston also thanked last year's officers (Pat Boling, Rebecca Klein-Pejšová, and Bradley Dilger) for their work and continued diligence as they continued to serve over the summer to ensure continuity of the Senate. He closed by gesturing toward the remaining unfinished business from last year surrounding DEI issues tied to hiring/retention, parental leave, and policing on campus particularly as they relate to students and faculty of color.

A copy of Johnston's opening remarks will be available on the CLA Senate website.

### 3. Dean's Report

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Senior Associate Dean Ebarb introduced guest speakers representing 3 programs supporting language and writing skills campus wide.

- a) Senator Harry Denny presented on the recently relocated On-campus Writing Lab (OWL) space, encouraging all of us to visit and take advantage of it from undergrad to faculty, including course support. He especially encouraged faculty not to view OWL as a “penalty box” for poor writers, but as a tool for skills development that everyone can benefit from.
- b) Dr. Mark Haugen presented on the Oral English Proficiency Program (OEPP), which is geared to support international graduate students in their work as TAs and provides testing and training for students or departments who desire certification. Noted that Purdue will begin accepting Duolingo scores in Fall 2023 as evidence of language proficiency. Requests that we encourage ungraduated students to volunteer in the program.
- c) Dr. Matthew Allen presented on the Purdue Language and Cultural Exchange (PLaCE) program, which supports international and domestic students as they enter and advance through the university with language courses (ENG: 110 and 111) and campus collaborations. Also 6-wk short courses that work on targeted language skills (writing, presenting, conversing) and can be repeated as often as necessary.

No questions were raised from the Senate, so Chair encourage senators to relay information about these resources to their individual units. Slide decks detailing these programs are available for download on the CLA Senate website.

### 4. Committee Introductions and Reports

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Chair Johnston introduced representatives from four standing committees (EPC, DEI, Nominating, and FAC) to discuss some preliminary issues at the start of the semester (only three were on the agenda, but FAC was added during the meeting):

- a) Educational Policy (EPC) Committee: Sen. Will Gray, chair of the CLA EPC, offered an overview reminder of what the EPC is and issues they will cover this fall, based on their first committee meeting last Friday. He also reminded the senate that the EPC is not technically a committee of the Senate (and most EPC members are not in fact senators), but they do report to the Senate. Noted the job of the EPC has evolved over the past couple of years as the CLA curriculum requirements have become much more “streamlined.” The primary concern is no longer concerned as much with individual courses and how they fit into the core curriculum. This semester, they intend to look more closely at defining the new “Social Diversity” Category in the CLA curriculum, since CLA has not yet provided an official definition of what “social diversity” means in this sense. As they work to describe and characterize this category, they will consult with CLA stakeholders, and will bring a draft document before the senate later this semester for review and approval. In addition, they will seek additional data from individual departments about which courses fit that might fit into the social diversity category, and information about enrollments (not necessarily syllabi or other details).

- b) Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee: Dr. Andrew Flachs (Chair of DEI Committee) reminded the faculty that the three major issues the committee focused on last year included draft reports and resolutions about equity in Paid Parental Leave policies in CLA, the PUPD incident with Adonis Tuggle last winter, and responses to sexual assault on campus. He noted that some of these issues were tabled last year due to lack of time (sexual assault response), or requests to reconsider the issues (PPL and PUPD incident). Dr. Flachs acknowledged that the moment to respond the PUPD incident through a resolution seems to have passed, given some recent changes enacted within PUPD as a result of the incident. PPL is still an active concern the Committee will continue to engage with. Among the issues he identified that remain to be addressed surrounding parental leave is the difficult balancing act between autonomy and independence and confidentiality in negotiations between individuals and heads, given the inherent power relationships. He encouraged this year's senators to look at the report and the comments to help understand that some folks on campus feel singled out for unequal treatment due to their positionality. The committee will return to those issues this semester, and requested the current Senate provide a specific charge where it feels the DEI committee should best focus their investigative energies. But he suggests two areas of possible interest: (1) address the vulnerabilities felt by instructors (faculty and grad TAs) who are feeling exposed by the increased needs to cover sensitive issues of race, identity, class, gender topics in the classroom. Some policies around safety, oversight, and success markers would be welcome to support the increased need for these in the classroom. This is particularly true of Cornerstone classes, and there is also some confusion about the governance of Cornerstone in relation to the Senate given that it seems to operate outside of the Senate. (2) Dr. Flachs also raised the ongoing issue of recruitment and retention of faculty of color, particularly in the context of the current wave of hiring in CLA. There was some concern voiced about requiring the separate DEI statement from applicants of color, when individual Purdue departments they may applying to don't have their own publicly facing DEI statements for applicants to consult. These kinds of statements may be something the committee investigates further and considers requesting departments develop them for themselves.
- c) Nominating and Elections Committee: Chair Johnston (also chair of the Nominating and Elections Committee) notes that he only recently took over chairship from Sen. Nancy Peterson while she is on sabbatical this term. As a result, there were a few last-minute slots that needed to be filled, and he thanked Sen. Freeman Marshall (SIS) for agreeing to serve as the Dean's appointee to the committee, and Kortney Hargrove (Assoc. Dean Hong's assistant) for serving as the staff member from the Dean's office. However, there is still a need to fill a 2-year slot on the Agenda Committee, so Johnston made a strong appeal to anyone with 2 years left in their Senate term to volunteer for this important committee. He also solicited volunteers interested in serving as Senate Parliamentarian this year, whose role is to help answer procedural questions that arise during meetings.
- d) Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC): Not on agenda but added during the meeting. Dr. Nush Powell, co-chair (with Dr. Stacey Connaughton) of the FAC reported that the main charge of the FAC this semester is to put together a CLA-wide umbrella document to supplement departmental and unit procedures governing the promotion of clinical faculty. The

committee is working on it now and hopes to have a draft for the Senate to consider in December, and a final version to put for a vote in spring. She noted that other business the Senate would like the FAC to take up can be sent to her, Dr. Connaughton, or Sen. Lindsay (who is also on the FAC).

## 5. Qualtrics/Open Discussion of Issues

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Johnston put up a the few slides he showed at the start of the meeting with the three themes that emerged from the anonymous responses to the [open Qualtrics poll on faculty concerns](#). He summarized each of the issues in turn and opened the floor for discussion of each topic and how the Senate might move to address them this year. He reiterated that the slides reflect aggregated responses of the anonymous feedback and thus are not directly quoting anyone.

- a. Issue 1: Hiring practices. numerous respondents to the survey noted that hiring needs of individual departments are being ignored in favor of college-wide initiatives, which themselves are not always clear. In addition, concern was voiced that hiring committees are being determined by the CLA admin, violating traditions of faculty autonomy in setting the intellectual priorities of departments.
  1. Discussion and recommendations: Sen Flachs noted that it's a lot of work being on a search and it can be frustrating when you go through these efforts to and select and recommend exciting job candidates, just to encounter a "black box" about how a candidates are ultimately selected by the administration to interview or hire. And accounting and documentation of how those selection decisions get made by the administration after the search puts in its hard work would be helpful for committees to understand. Chair Johnston asks if this an issue that we take up, and if so would this be for the FAC committee to take up? No answer, so he tabled the issue and moved on for the sake of time.
  
- b. Issue 2: New Research Orientations Initiated by the College. Responses also reflect a desire for clarity about criteria used to determine which departments get hires under new directions CLA is taking. In particular, there is an increased emphasis on STEM fields reflected recent hiring, to the exclusion of the humanities and arts, and the concern that these new priorities in the college are not made with faculty input. Finally, he voiced the concern expressed by several respondents about an increasing reliance on non-tenure track instructors across the college. A related concerns was about the ways in which Cornerstone is impacting curricula across departments and impacting the staffing of departmental courses in ways that are not transparent.
  1. Discussion and recommendations: Sen. Brian Kelly raised the point that since around 2008 and over several deans, CLA faculty have been arguing for more hires, and we're now getting them. He suggests the new wave of hires and resources we're seeing are a result of new initiatives like Cornerstone and STEM foci, and he urged "caution" about how we approach these initiatives. Using his own department as an example, he noted that even if the searches may not be the ones individual faculty or departments would prioritize, they can still result in the addition of fantastic colleagues who can contribute to their units in unanticipated ways.

Sen. Marzec spoke about the creation of the Institute for Sustainable Futures as a center where humanities, social sciences, and the arts faculty can come together with STEM colleagues, and the diverse intellectual frameworks can spawn research teams that can collaborate in grant applications. He has mixed feelings about it since with the emphasis on big NSF grants, humanities and arts don't have a long history of applying for these grants since their research doesn't always translate into "pragmatic, utilitarian" issues attractive to large granting agencies. And this can lead the humanities to be "demonized" for not getting the big grant dollars the university would like to see everyone applying for. Critical Humanities on the other hand may be a place where these fields can form productive connections with STEM in ways that would make the administration happy.

Toward the end of the meeting, Sen. Gray circled back with a response to Sen. Kelly, that he welcomes the additional resources, but would appreciate more dialogue with CLA leadership on new intellectual directions the college is taking. For example, why we are moving toward engineering and technology fields, and not management, agriculture, or other fields Purdue is known for. He calls for increased input from the departments about this process, and how it can be used to shape our programs and contribute to faculty strengths. These comments were further echoed by Sen. Klein-Pejšová at the end of the meeting, noting that the faculty are often excited about change and exploring new areas of inquiry, but again calling for more openness about the process and justification for the changes we are seeing.

Sen. Flachs took up the question about governance and structure of Cornerstone, and its representation in CLA. He raises the question about how Cornerstone course evaluations are used in tenure and promotion cases in departments. Assoc Dean Ebarb responded that these are good questions that are being considered by the College but will take more time to provide detailed response to, so he asked that Flachs send those questions to him over email, and they will address them at the next Senate meeting after giving them due consideration. Chair Johnston agreed that this will be taken up by the Agenda Committee as something to reserve time for at the October meeting and submit a formal set of questions for Dean Ebarb. And also request some more formal responses from the College about the intellectual direction of CLA. Toward the end of the meeting Sen. Dan Olsen circled back to this with a question about hiring practices in Cornerstone, and the impact of teaching commitments to Cornerstone vs. home departments and whether those are distributed equally. Johnston noted that would be on the agenda for next meeting as well.

- c. Issue 3: Recruitment and Retention of Faculty of Color. the third issue that came up was hiring and retention of faculty of color, number of colleagues noted that we need. We're lacking programs right now, specific programs and policies to help retain faculty of color. And then we need also, we need clear communication about hires associated with the equity task force. This is something that a number of people are asking about, and people commented that faculty of color are feeling targeted by students, and often find Purdue a hostile or unsafe environment.
  - 1. Sen. Flachs reiterated that some of the concerns that were brought to him as chair of the DEI committee were also reflected in the Senate's Qualtrics survey, so clearly these are issues we need to be aware of. In particular, the concern that faculty of color are feeling targeted particularly for teaching politically sensitive topics in

Cornerstone, and what sorts of things we can do as a Senate to create a safer and more hospitable environment for everyone. He requested that the Senate provide a charge to the DEI Committee to investigate and report on this further, and will wait for specific recommendation from the Senate about how the committee should proceed. Sen. Powell noted that some of these issues also intersect with the FAC, and agreed with Sen. Flachs that the next step would be to have specific charges from the Senate go to these committees as to the outcomes and deliverable the Senate would like to see. Chair Johnston agreed with that plan, but initially identifying the issues was the goal for this initial meeting.

## **7. Adjourn**

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Johnston closed by repeating the call for the open Agenda Committee seat for a 2 year term, and encouraging Senators to report out senate business to their units. Entertained a motion to adjourn at 5:30

Motion to adjourn by Sen. Wood, seconded by [muffled].

Adjournment was approved by voice vote.