

Minutes: February 7, 2023

College of Liberal Arts Faculty Senate

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

Prepared by Ian Lindsay, Secretary <ilindsay@purdue.edu>.

Approved by Faculty Senate on March 7, 2023.

Roll

Senate Chair Michael Johnston welcomed CLA faculty to the meeting, called meeting to order at 3:31pm.

Guests: Matthew Allen, Candace Croney, Marlo David, Fritz Davis, Joel Ebarb, Andrew Flachs, Arne Flaten, John Gates, Wei Hong, Brian Kelly, Brian Leung, Cherie Maestas, Sorin Matei, Christopher Munt, Nush Powell, David Reingold, Linda Renzulli, Lori Sparger, Holly Tittle-Hudson, Fiona Qian Wang, Susan Wegener, William White, Patrick Wolfe.

Senators absent: Benedicto, Browning, Clair, Marsh, McElhattan, DJ Olson, Parrish, Sanchez-Llama, Sypher, Veldwacher

1. Q&A with Provost Patrick Wolfe

Questions curated for Provost Wolfe by the Agenda Committee:

<https://www.cla.purdue.edu/faculty-staff/facsenate/2022-23/qa-provost-wolfe.pdf>.

Chair Johnston introduced Provost Wolfe with highlights from his professional bio, and jumped into the questions he was provided prior to the meeting (see link above). As with Dean Reingold's QA last month, Johnston repeated the questions, provided the Provost with time to respond, and opened the floor to follow questions from those in attendance.

Q1 re. Equity and Diversity

Provost's Response: Being new to the provost role, he is taking stock of his experiences on this issue at prior stages of his own career and at institutions like University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana (where was in the College of Arts and Sciences) and start to think about how we approach these issues and can benchmark ourselves relative to Big 10 and other institutions. He would like to have conversations with CLA faculty on the front lines of equity issues to help generate ideas about how we approach this, acknowledging that CLA is the heart of scholarly and intellectual activities around diversity, inclusion and belonging. He offers his appreciation and gratitude for the work in CLA to make Purdue become more welcoming and inclusive. Increasing diverse representation on campus is going to look different from discipline to discipline, where in some departments campus it is still the case that a new Black faculty member might be the first one in that department. So, we need to build on the scholarly activity in CLA, not in the sense of making change solely the responsibility of liberal arts at the expense of our primary research lanes, but to make sure we're taking good advantage of that expertise. Going back to undergraduate recruiting, he reminds us of the Board of Trustees' Equity Task Force (he was on the steering committee) that recognized quickly that the Black student enrollment had not changed in the past few decades. He envisions harnessing the intellectual and scholarly activity in CLA to help build representation and inclusion and belonging. But he hesitates to provide fuller answers at this early stage, but these issues have been the topic of

discussion with Dr. John Gates (in attendance). He also gestures to the recent opening ceremony for the new LGBTQ Center on campus that he attended. In terms of the final part of the question about expanding capacity at CLA, he says it will take some further collective thinking about what that looks like: broadening academic programs; departmental resources; activities to develop with the Vice Provost Office for Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging; external undergraduate recruiting events are some possible areas to think about collectively. He closes by emphasizing the importance of creating a diverse and welcoming community in Lafayette/West Lafayette to foster a sense of belonging and reduce the culture shock for everyone from rural, first-generation students from Indiana to Jewish students from New York.

Faculty questions/comments: None for this one.

Q2 re. Non-Tenure Track Faculty ratios

The Provost began by noting that this is a question at the forefront of everyone's mind in the past several years or more, and he is attuned to it and is interested in finding the right solution. Looking at the data, Purdue has historically been a tenure track-heavy institution, which carries both strengths and weaknesses. A strength to consider is the student-to-faculty ratio; but the downside is it is a significant financial commitment out of the university's operating budget over the course of a TT faculty member's career in terms of salaries for tenured faculty. Comparing data across AAU campuses, Purdue has a lot of tenure track faculty for our size. In terms of quality of life for non-TT faculty, Provost Wolfe acknowledged he sees a lot of work that can be done toward further professionalization and tracks for advancement for clinical faculty in the university, including opportunities for increase in rank and setting down guidelines for promotion reflective of their responsibilities, which can look quite different across the university. He says he wants Purdue to be a place where clinical faculty aren't offered repetitive jobs where they teach the same thing over and over, but where they can grow and advance professionally. He related that the College of Science where he came from only promoted its first clinical faculty member from assistant to associate a year and a half ago, and it took some guidance from more senior clinical faculty from across campus that helped sit in on the case. The College has since had 3 additional cases advance this year. He is also trying to make sure the Provost's Office is poised to offer the same kinds of support to clinical faculty professionalization that they have traditionally offered to TT faculty, for example in the scholarship of teaching and learning, or research. Connecting to the issue of retention of clinical faculty, it was something he focused on as a dean that it is important to make sure clinical faculty (CLs, LTLs, etc.) are getting the support they need.

Chair Johnston took the opportunity to let the Provost know that at this meeting we are scheduled to vote on our college-level clinical faculty promotion guidelines document, which he was happy to hear about.

Faculty questions/comments: Prof. Flachs asks in the chat about the survey data Briggitta August reported on at our last meeting highlighting the lack of messaging about CLA in university undergraduate recruitment, which college-bound students reportedly take as a signal that Purdue does not offer a diverse set of life experiences and college opportunities. He says the faculty would welcome the chance to work with the Provost to change that if CLA could be more central

to these efforts in recruiting and early advising. Sen. Flachs also asked for more information about retention efforts beyond salary and cost of living adjustments as forms of support.

Provost response: Provost Wolfe replied that he hasn't yet seen the presentation referred to, but he does think there is a more substantive role Liberal Arts could have in undergraduate recruitment. In his town halls he did with President Chiang with undergraduate and graduate students, there were questions posed about what they can do to support liberal arts at Purdue. While we have a STEM-intensive orientation, he feels we cannot be a leading national and international university without being visibly comprehensive. He is eager to figure out ways to weave in the narrative of the importance of liberal arts into recruiting and early advising; he feels particularly sensitive to this as someone who holds one STEM degree and one non-STEM degree, and says he is in a good position to be an advocate for it.

For the retention part of the question beyond compensation, he reiterates that it is really about building a community and cohort and opportunities for professional development and networking. He emphasized the importance of focusing on what keeps people at a university beyond just the paycheck, though that is important too. He's been collecting information about this in the Provost's Office, and his happy to share out on this afterwards.

Chair Johnston says that we can try to get Briggitta August's presentation slides to the Provost if he is interested. [A subsequent email exchange with Director August indicated it might be more appropriate if Dr. Gates' office shared those data from within the Provost's office, since that is where they originated.]

Q3a: re. Hiring Issues—prioritization of STEM-adjacent scholarship within CLA hiring, research and curriculum, and vision of CLA's role at Purdue

The Provost replied that there is a balance to be had, and he suggests CLA be aware of and try to play to the institution's strengths without Purdue tipping over into a narrowly technical institute. He related how in his interview for the Provost job, he gave the example of MIT being a narrowly focused technical institute, but it is in Boston which has a diverse environment with fine, applied, and performing arts and sciences in the area. That's not how he sees us developing, but we need to pick where we want to be winners and national and international leaders. He doesn't see us dividing up all the opportunities evenly in every direction. Rather he suggests we find a way to play to Purdue's STEM strengths without being beholden to them.

Prof. Leung notes in the chat that he appreciates hearing the support for CLA and would like to learn more about how rebuff efforts to become a homogeneous STEM-focused institution.

Q3b: re. Hiring Issues—lack of diversity among current faculty and candidate pools

The provost replied that he would like to learn about what the experiences have been with this in CLA. He has faced this question in the Sciences where it looked and felt different by discipline, such that the gender diversity in biology applicant pools differed from the applicant pools of physics, and the gender balance has gotten less skewed over time in biology. Some departments are still male-dominated, but it gets more and more gender diverse among the junior faculty. So he'd like to hear more about where we are running into problems with diverse candidate pools.

As dean, he said he looked closely at the applicant pool statistics, and if the long or short lists of candidates was not representative of the overall pool, he sent them back to the hiring committees. He is not sure how that works at the Provost level, but he has instituted a new policy where he reviews all draft offer letters. He said that so far the offer letters that have come through his office from CLA have been stunning in terms of quality, which has not been universally the case across campus. So he would like to hear from us where we think we are having issues to get more information about it. In terms of future plans, he is a big believer in robust processes, and he wants to do everything possible to generate a diverse and broad pool, and let the best candidates make it to the top. He wants to hold deans to account for ensuring that the hiring processes are robust. There is a longer conversation that needs to be had about recruiting people to Purdue, and once we have brought them here then making them successful and keeping the wind at their backs; but to begin with he wants to ensure that the hiring process is relevant.

Chair Johnston voiced appreciation for the Provost's gesture to have a back and forth with us, rather than dictating solutions to CLA, and hopes that colleagues in CLA will see that as an opportunity to engage in dialogue with the Provost's office.

Faculty questions/comments: Chair Johnston notes the comment in the chat by Prof. David that she would welcome the Provost reviewing how CLA hiring committees are constituted in CLA, and also hiring commitments and retention. Several 'thumbs up' reactions in the chat. Chair Johnston thanks Provost Wolfe for joining us.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Chair Johnston presented the minutes from the meeting of January 10, 2023.

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

3. Chair's Remarks – Dr. Michael Johnston

Chair Johnston opened the remainder of the meeting by reiterating that, in the face of declining morale among CLA faculty, he hopes our colleagues view the Senate as a mechanism for amplifying their concerns to the administration and providing a stronger sense of agency through shared governance. An example of this is the ad hoc faculty committee on hiring practices taking a closer look at how faculty lines are decided and how search committees are populated in the College; the Qualtrics survey we're using to assemble input about this topic has received a flood of responses testifying to the magnitude of interest and concern among the faculty.

Another issue where the Senate can amplify faculty voices is the one raised to Provost Wolfe about perceptions that CLA is being turned into a STEM-adjacent college, and the dwindling role some faculty see for the arts, humanities, and parts of the social sciences in this new direction. He encouraged Senators with these concerns to use the relevant committees to raise ideas for how we can best address these concerns as a body.

He closed by requesting faculty and senators consider volunteering for Senate committee and officer positions that will be opening the end of this semester, and to contact Sen. Peterson as

chair of the Nominating and Elections Committee. We hope to avoid a last-minute scramble to fill leadership seats for AY 2023-24.

A copy of Chair [Johnston's full opening remarks](#) is available on the CLA Senate website.

4. Dean's Report

a) **Research Academy**-presented by Prof. Brian Kelly (Inaugural Director)

Prof. Kelly gave a reminder about/introduction to the Research Academy in CLA, which is a new initiative funded by the Office of the Executive Vice President for Research. The initial effort to fund the Academy was spearhead by department heads Cherie Maestas, Jen William, Melissa Remis, and Fritz Davis, and Prof. Kelly thanked them for their work. The mission of the Academy is to find ways to help CLA faculty elevate the scope and impact of their research. He has been meeting with several early career faculty to discuss the Academy's initiatives, but it is not his goal to convince anybody to do anything they are not already interested in doing. Rather, he aims to help people find ways to support the opportunities to apply for grants and fellowships, and to help them place their scholarship in high profile journals.

The support infrastructure is still falling into place as Prof. Kelly only signed on as Director around Thanksgiving, and so he cautions that everyone's needs are not going to be met immediately during this period of growth. There was a strategic decision to focus early efforts this year on supporting the needs of early career faculty (loosely defined), since there is a high volume of funding opportunities targeted toward scholars in this category. There is an 'early career faculty listserv' that is comprised of faculty who earned their terminal degree on or after 2010. He anticipates the Academy will be fully up to speed in about 3 years to support everyone else's needs.

Examples of activities this semester include an 8-week workshop led by Prof. Kelly and Dr. Perry Kirkham from OVPR focused on health research and developing NIH proposals for those new to submitting to NIH. Later this semester they will be focusing on NSF. Another working group will focus on faculty working on or planning their first book, which has about 15 faculty participants. Recently promoted associate professors with successful books have agreed to help meet with junior faculty in this group. The Academy is also running some short-term workshops focused in things like navigating IRB submissions, and responding to peer review and editorial comments during the publication process. He anticipates formal programming will slow down over the summer, but he will be available for consultation and mentoring as needed. He listed some additional programming that will coming in the fall, including Op-Ed writing advice and NEH proposal workshops, and hopes to expand these opportunities to the wider faculty.

Comments/questions: Sen. Gray asked if some of these opportunities will be advertised to the whole faculty. Director Kelly reiterated that they are first rolling these opportunities out to faculty who received their degrees on or after 2010, and build outward from there.

Assoc. Dean Matei noted that the initial funds for this came from the college, and another \$300,000 came from EVPRP.

Vice Chair Kaufmann-Buhler asked whether early career clinical faculty are eligible to participate at this stage, or just tenure track faculty. Director Kelly replied that anyone with a full-time teaching role, including clinical or research assistant professors, and other lines are all on the list; this also includes people with either PhDs or MFAs if that is their terminal degree. He reminded the faculty to reach out to people in their own units to get on the list by contacting him if they fall under these categories and have not been getting his emails.

Sen. Klein-Pejšová asked if opportunities available to clinical faculty would include enforcing reduction in teaching load, since a main concern of clinical faculty is that they do not have the time to concentrate on research. Director Kelly replied that the power to give course releases or adjust parameters of teaching responsibilities is outside of his remit.

He closed by reminding everyone that the listerv membership is flexible so if someone feels like they are still new to Purdue, or their role has recently changed despite getting their PhDs before 2010, he is happy to add them to the list.

Sen. Flachs asked in the chat if there will still be funding for running workshops and lecture series that also raise the profile of scholars and can lead to special journal issues. Director Kelly responds that the main focus of the Academy is going to be on federal funding agencies, whereas conference grants are more funded by foundations and are not as prevalent as they used to be. But he said he is willing to work with people interested in hosting conferences. Dean Matei jumped in to note that CLA will still be running the Engage Program through CLA, which typically supports convening groups of scholars and related activities.

Sen. Freeman-Marshall asked in the chat about the Aspire Grants. Director Kelly noted that the Academy does not control the Aspire funding, but he does not see the Academy activities taking away from the Aspire program. In fact, the number of Aspire grants may even increase in fall, which Dean Matei confirmed.

Chair Johnston thanked Director Kelly for his time and reminded faculty to reach out to the Academy with further questions.

5. Committee Reports

a) Faculty Affairs Committee – presented by Committee Chair Nush Powell (co-Chair Stacey Connaughton absent due to time conflict)

Prof. Powell presented a brief review of the proposed promotion guidelines for clinical faculty (see [minutes from December 2022](#) meeting for further details). She then presented the amended document to the Senate for approval, which had been previously circulated to faculty to review via email and the senate website. (<https://www.cla.purdue.edu/faculty-staff/facsenate/2022-23/clinical-promotion-draft-revised.pdf>).

Secretary Lindsay makes a motion to adopt the guidelines as presented. Sen. Freeman Marshall seconded.

Chair Johnston opens floor for discussion. No additional comment or suggestions. Chair Johnston raises a voice vote. All ayes, and no nays or abstentions. Motion passes unanimously.

b) *Curriculum Committee Report*-presented by Associate Dean Ebarb

Dean Ebarb presented the new courses and changes reviewed by the Curriculum Committee in January (see [link to document](#)). Chair asked for amendments (none suggested) and then a motion to approve.

Motion to approve: Sen. Denny. Chair Johnston opens the floor for questions.

Comments/questions: Sen. Rand asks about the possibility of cross listing new theatre course, and Dean Ebarb recommends talking to the Dance Department about their interest in doing that.

Chair Johnston takes a voice vote. All ayes, no nays or abstentions. Report is approved.

c) *Nominations and Elections Committee (Senate Reapportionment)* – presented by Committee Chair Nancy Peterson

Sen. Peterson presented the [Reapportionment document for AY 2023-24](#) for approval. She reviewed the process for dividing Senate seats based on the size of departments as reflected in the hiring patterns of the past couple of years. For example, English and History will each lose a seat next year, and Philosophy and Sociology will each gain one. The Bylaws hold that each department will have a minimum of two senators, and remaining seats are apportioned based on size. But the proportions are sometime counterintuitive in that History is losing a senate seat even though their faculty numbers grew. We need to approve the document this early in the spring semester so departments can start filling their seats for the next AY.

Chair Johnston calls for a motion to approve: Sen. Peterson makes the motion [not second needed since it is coming out of a standing committee (as Prof. Powell points out)].

Comments/discussion: Prof. Powell thanks Sen. Peterson for the committee's work on this. Sen. Peterson thanks Dean Hong and her office for helping with the counts.

Voice vote: all ayes, no nays, no abstentions. Document approved.

d) *Educational Policy Committee*

[report deferred until the March meeting]

6. New Business

Sen. Klein-Pejšová brought it to the Senate's attention that there was an incident of criminal mischief over the prior weekend where someone threw a beer bottle through the window of Hillel House. Sen. Powell posted links to the Journal & Courier and Bangert substack about the incident.

7. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:48pm.