

Minutes of the CAS Faculty Senate Meeting of March 20, 2023

March 20, 2023, 4:01 PM ET - 4:42 PM ET

Attending: Olivia Amzallag; James Angelini; Jennifer Barker; Nonie Bell; Suzanne Burton; William Chain; Jon Cox; Theodore Davis, Jr.; Alicia Fontnette; Deni Galileo; John Gizis; Mark Greene; Christine Grogan; Katie Gwaltney; Alenka Hlousek-Radojcic; Jenny Lobasz; Dilia López-Gydosh; Edward Lyman; Bernard McKenna; John Morgan; Christopher Nichols; Nina Owczarek Herrera; John Pelesko; Rakesh; Thomas Rocek; Kimberly Schroeder; Jenn Trivedi; Yuanchong Wang; Robert West; Neal Zondlo

The meeting began with clarification that the Provost was unable to attend, so the agenda needed to be modified and CAS Faculty Senate President John Gizis clarifying with Parliamentarian John Morgan about how the Senate needed to go about adopting a modified agenda. President Gizis then proposed that we move Dean John Pelesko's remarks earlier in the meeting, where the Provost's remarks had been previously. The agenda was adopted without objection with those changes.

Dean Pelesko had no slides to share. He said that he assumed everyone had seen the news by this point that he would be stepping down from his role as the CAS Dean in July 2023, starting a new role as Provost and Senior Vice President at the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT). He explained that he leaves with incredibly mixed emotions, since UD has been his home for many years and he will miss the College. He clarified that he had not been actively looking for a new role and only interviewed at NJIT due to his connections there, as it is his alma mater, although he is looking forward to bagels and pizza.

He thanked everyone in the CAS Faculty Senate and noted that he is proud of the relationship that we have built between the Senate and the Dean's Office. He believes we have engaged in good shared governance and he is sure it will continue after he leaves. He will continue in his role through July and ensure the college is set up for continued success after he leaves. The UD President and Provost are working on setting up an interim dean appointment and he will let the CAS Faculty Senate know what is going on with that when he knows more.

Senator John Morgan said that he really appreciated the approach Dean Pelesko took with the CAS Faculty Senate and leadership in the Senate for the last 4.5 years, adding that Dean Pelesko had big shoes that would be hard to fill.

Senator Rakesh described the tremendous work Dean Pelesko had done and the impact they had, including related to organization, student recruitment, and more. He noted he was personally sorry to see Dean Pelesko go and he thanked him for his work.

President Gizis emphasized that many people in the senate shared these feelings and thanked Dean Pelesko again for his work.

The Senate then moved into approval of the minutes from the last meeting. Senator Morgan noted that Secretary Jenn Trivedi had asked him for his power point slides from the last meeting, but he had not gotten them to her yet, so those will be added later. There were no other additions or corrections and the minutes were then approved.

President Gizis then offered his remarks. Katie Gwaltney from the Dean's Office had asked him to share that she will be reaching out to department chairs for each senator whose term is expiring and will CC the senator on those messages. President Gizis noted that he hopes senators run again, but for senators who cannot or choose not to, their departments will need to elect a new senator for next year.

There were no additional remarks from Dean Pelesko, but President Gizis asked if the senators could ask questions, which Dean Pelesko agreed to.

President Gizis asked what faculty hiring plans looked like at the moment. Dean Pelesko clarified that the faculty hiring position meeting usually happens in February, but has been pushed into March and should happen soon. After that meeting, the plan will be with the Provost. Dean Pelesko is still planning on approving 3 year hiring plans, but it will be April or May before we have a better sense of where the larger plan is.

Senator Morgan raised concerns about the expertise needed to use the Concur software, a problem that has seemed more acute in CAS than elsewhere. Senator Rakesh also spoke regarding Concur and said while he is happy to use such software, Concur is badly designed. This was reinforced by other faculty members in chat. Dean Pelesko acknowledged that he had also heard a lot of concerns about Concur and said that it is being looked into.

Senator Jenny Lobasz acknowledged that Dean Pelesko's new role happened suddenly, but asked if we knew anything yet about the interim appointment for a new CAS Dean. Dean Pelesko noted that UD President Dennis Assanis and Provost Laura Carlson will be working to appoint an interim dean. Dean Pelesko will share more information as soon as it is known, but there is nothing concrete yet.

Senator Deni Galileo described how when a new Dean for CAS was put into place under the previous Provost, Robin Morgan, there were different groups she met with. He recalls she met with groups to rule out various potential candidates for interim dean and he hopes Provost Carlson does the same as there is no harm in getting input at this point. Senator Galileo pointed to the interim dean for the College of Earth, Ocean and Environment and said that he did not remember seeing any evidence for a search.

Dean Pelesko clarified that there was a search for his role as dean. From his memory from 2018-2019, George Watson announced he was stepping down in the summer of 2018. Provost Robin Morgan sent out an email asking for nominations in a survey and collected input from across the college. She then met with many different groups, although Dean Pelesko was not privy to the list of people or groups involved. She then asked Dean Pelesko to step into the role

of Interim Dean. After this point, Dean Pelesko had to give a town hall, go through different meetings, meet with the Board of Trustees, and more before they offered him the position of Dean.

He also clarified that the College of Earth, Ocean and Environment also had a search and their new dean was also put through a formal search. Dean Pelesko said he would communicate Senator Galileo's thoughts with the Provost's office.

Senator Morgan then added that Dean Watson informed Provost Morgan he was stepping down in mid-June 2018 and this became final a few weeks later in early July. It was very soon after, within about 1-2 weeks, that Provost Morgan met with the CAS Faculty Senate Executive Committee to discuss potential candidates. That went well, Senator Morgan clarified, and there was consensus around Dean Pelesko. He also noted that the Committee felt that it had to be someone who was already in the Dean's office. He added that Provost Morgan met with the Executive Committee regarding Dean Pelesko's work as Interim Dean, noting that he had done such a good job in that role and discussing moving him into the role of Dean permanently. The Executive Committee had consensus in support of this, although pointed questions were asked. A Qualtrics survey was sent to all of the faculty in the college and an overwhelming percentage of the faculty were happy with the idea of having no formal search and appointing Dean Pelesko into the permanent role. Senator Morgan noted that he has emails of all of this that he could track down with some lead time to substantiate what he said. Dean Pelesko said he would share this chronology with the Provost.

Senator Morgan said that it would be a good idea for the UD President and Provost to meet with the CAS Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the CAS Faculty Senate as a whole so they can hear from more people. He thinks this should be a very high priority for them and the CAS Faculty Senate may need to have a special meeting if they cannot arrange to come to our normal meeting time, something the CAS Faculty Senate President has the authority to make the call for and something that is further facilitated by the use of Zoom. Senator Morgan emphasized the importance of having a good interim dean moving forward since Dean Pelesko has done such a good job and the importance of the UD President and Provost making every effort to engage with a large and diverse college. Dean Pelesko said he would pass all of this on.

It was further noted that in the previous search, Dean Pelesko would only be moved from Interim Dean to Dean if support for that move was overwhelming. Not having a search was unusual.

Senator Morgan then suggested that the relevant portion of the recording of this meeting be sent to the UD President and Provost for their reference. Others agreed with this in the chat.

President Gizis then thanked Dean Pelesko again and said that he hoped that Dean Pelesko would help the administration understand the faculty's desire for faculty input and their concerns

and needs. Dean Pelesko reminded the CAS Faculty Senate that he would be here until the end of July and would do everything in his power to make sure we are set up for continued success.

We then moved into the Educational Affairs Committee materials. Committee Chair James Angelini told President Gizis that he could continue to lead on the issue.

There were no objections and no discussion points on the consent agenda. They were then voted on collectively, passing unanimously, with 26 yeases and 0 nos. This vote resulted in the passing of the following degrees:

- Anthropology Honors (HBA)
- Criminal Justice (BA)
- Criminal Justice - Law and Society Concentration (BA)
- International Relations - U. S. Foreign Policy and National Security Concentration (BA)

President Gizis then clarified with Committee Chair Angelini if the CAS Faculty Senate was done with Educational Affairs issues for the semester. Committee Chair Angelini said that there were about 3 things sitting with various Associate Deans for various reasons, which should be with the CAS Faculty Senate in April to meet May deadlines.

COCAN Chair John Morgan then gave a report on issues from the committee. He said that we are in pretty good shape for most committees. At the last CAS Faculty Senate meeting we filled almost all of the empty positions on the Promotion and Tenure (P&T) Committee and a second candidate from the Social Sciences Portfolio, Thomas (Tom) Rocek, is up for a vote today. He would be filling the spot of Stuart Kauffman who was unable to complete the second year of his term due to service commitments in his own department.

Other commitments with shortages are the Educational Affairs Committee. Senator Morgan said that he had solicited volunteers 6 weeks ago but had received no responses. He sent out an additional solicitation today, but had not yet received any additional volunteers. This is another committee with a heavy workload.

Senator Morgan added that other committees are in better shape. There is a potential volunteer for the Advisement and Retention Committee.

Senator Morgan said that if a committee has more than 7 members and if those members typically have teaching loads of 2 courses per semester (for tenure track) or 3-4 courses per semester (for continuing track), it gets increasingly difficult to find a common meeting time. Moving a committee up to 9-10 people gets more complicated, increasingly tied to the complexities of the course schedule.

He then said that something needs to happen with the size and scale of the Diversity Committee, likely the formation of subcommittees that can meet in real time to discuss sensitive issues and deal with other issues via email.

He added that the P&T committee, unlike any other college committee, is a requirement and must be elected by either the faculty of the college at large (difficult in a college with 550 faculty members) or a representative body like the CAS Faculty Senate. There is nothing he can do to provide inducements for good faculty to volunteer to be members of the P&T committee. In his view, something should be done to provide some sort of predictable course relief that is not left to negotiations between individual faculty members and their chairs because that gives chairs power to decide who is or is not on the P&T committee.

Last year the University Faculty Handbook was changed to allow for members of the University Faculty Senate Executive Committee to get a course release due to the fact that they meet a few times a month and are busy in between preparing for meetings. Senator Morgan suggested that it might be worth doing something similar to make sure that the CAS P&T Committee always has the right number of volunteers from the right portfolios and are not put in a position to negotiate individually with their department chair. This is dangerous because if the committee is not properly constituted anyone who applied for tenure is not turned down could file a grievance and a lawsuit, making this a very serious matter that needs to be solved. Senator Morgan noted that progress was made on this before the pandemic and that Dean Pelesko told the Executive Committee that he had told department chairs that service on the P&T Committee should be recognized somehow in workload agreements. Senator Morgan said that something more formal should be done because the workload of the CAS P&T Committee is guaranteed to increase dramatically in the next few years because of the hiring we are doing, mostly at the assistant professor level.

President Gizis then noted that this was approaching new business and was something that should be discussed with the Dean. Senator Morgan proposed we should discuss this with the Dean, as well as in a meeting with the current chair of the CAS P&T Committee and Associate Deans to try and get some sort of understanding that is memorialized in a written document. Dean Pelesko said that he is happy to have such a meeting and that each year since that conversation at the chairs meeting around this time he has raised this topic and had this discussion with the chairs. He is planning accordingly and will have this conversation with the chairs again in their next meeting. Senator Morgan says that is good, but adds that especially with Dean Pelesko stepping down it is really important to first get an agreement about this issue with him and the Associate Deans, but then to get that established in writing going forward.

President Gizis says this settles the issue for this meeting, but encourages Senator Morgan's efforts to continue his work filling those other gaps and wishes him luck with the Educational Affairs Committee. He also said that he noticed there are not a lot of full professors volunteering outside of the P&T Committee, but he does not know what to do about that.

We then moved into the election to fill the spot on the CAS P&T Committee. Senator Morgan said there was 1 volunteer for the last open spot on the committee, Tom Rocek, a Full Professor in Anthropology. We voted simply yes/no as to if we approved of him or not. President Gizis asked a clarifying question about if this was a vacancy related to if Stuart Kauffman having to step down or a different vacancy. Senator Morgan confirmed it is the vacancy left by Professor

Kauffman. Professor Rocek was elected to the CAS P&T Committee by a unanimous vote with 27 yeases and 0 nos.

President Gizis then moved the Senate into new business. Senator Galileo said he was going to discuss the idea of raising the importance of the Provost discussing interim dean candidates with the CAS Faculty Senate and faculty members, but it had already been discussed.

Senator Morgan said it was a good idea to revise the college by-laws to clarify that anyone applying for promotion cannot currently be a member of the CAS P&T Committee, as even a recusal could leave some questions. He also added that the CAS Faculty Senate voted last May to restore the old system of numbering and lettering in the college by-laws (versus the Arabic numbering), but this has not been done yet. He appealed to Dean Pelesko to get in touch with whoever is in charge of the website to restore the old numeration, of which Senator Morgan can supply a copy. Dean Pelesko confirmed that would be helpful.

Senator Nina Owczarek raised a question, asking how CAS Senators are delegated for the UD University Faculty Senate. Senator Morgan says that the apportionment has been carried out and our college now has enough seats for each department who wants their own Senator. For department senators, the Dean's office should be in communication with the chairs of each department. In addition, per college by-laws, if there are more seats allocated to the college than there are departments, we would have a college-wide election for 1-2 at-large college senators in an election coordinated by COCAN. Dean Pelesko said that he got notice from the University Senate a few weeks ago, which he and Katie Gwaltney confirmed said that CAS had been allocated 26 senators and has 24 departments, resulting in 2 at-large seats that will need to be filled. Senator Morgan said that he will consult with COCAN to conduct that election and will send out a solicitation for at-large senators for that election in April.

President Gizis then said that there will be elections for at-large senators for the UD Faculty Senate, for at-large senators for the CAS Faculty Senate, and for the college's 13 seats on the Graduate College Council. Senator Morgan noted that there is a limit of 2 consecutive terms for the Graduate College Council, no limits for at-large seats in the CAS Faculty Senate, and a limit of 3 terms for at-large seats in the UD Faculty Senate. President Gizis asked people in the CAS Faculty Senate to support people in their department to run.

Senator Trivedi moved to adjourn the meeting and Senator Morgan seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:42 PM ET.