Faculty Senate Steering Committee Meeting
Wednesday, October 21, 2026
Draft Minutes

Present: Michael Bognanno (MB), Robin Kolodny (RK), Steve Newman (SN); Ana Gamero, Chad Curtis, Lisa Ferretti, Lilya Jiang, Dominic Letarte, Barry McCarthy, Sabrina Minhas, Jason Norris, Rafael Porrata-Doria, Deb Racano, Mike Schirmer, Ryan Tierney, Jeff Godel, Gareth Jones, Jeffrey Solow

Absent: Fauzia Ahmad

Called to Order at 1:03

1. Guest: Jen Wood, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

VPFA Wood introduced the new Faculty Success platform to be released at the end of the semester.

- It is designed to make these processes more convenient and less burdensome and duplicative. AROFA, for instance, is only open for 3 months. This will be available 365 days/year and 24/7.
- It will allow faculty to use Web of Science, ORCID, and Google Scholar to pull in publications and to easily upload teaching and grants data. There will also be ways for faculty to upload creative performances.
- It will take 2 years to phase in fully, starting with those up for promotion and tenure.

MB: This will replace AROFA and then how we apply for merit?
A: Yes.

MB: Will it populate with Student Feedback Forms?

A: Not yet. But looking into it.

MB: Will this platform to be used to monitor faculty productivity, such as teaching load?

A: No.

Q: The merit process differs across colleges and schools. Will this system regularize it?

A: It's an open discussion about how to balance uniformity and the differences that are needed for different colleges and schools.

2. President's Report

    - Faculty members will now be full Faculty Representatives on the Board of Trustees. There is currently space for two faculty members, serving staggered two-year terms. These Faculty Representatives will have seats on Academic Affairs and Finance and Investment Committees as well as the Executive Committee. Should either Faculty Representative choose to not serve on a Board Committee, a process is being discussed whereby an alternate faculty member could serve. though since they will be serving on one than more committee, it may be possible to include others. We will have seats on Academic Affairs and Finance and Investment as well as the Executive Committee.
    - We need to clarify whether the faculty representatives will have the right to vote. (It has subsequently been clarified that Faculty Representatives will not cast votes.)
    - The Steering Committee will be asked to provide up to three names to the Board Nominations Committee and they will select one.
    - This is the result of many years of work, a process initiated by Kimmika Williams-Witherspoon and furthered by Shohreh Amini.
- NISS Report: The entire presentation will be made available behind security wall.
- Federal impact advisory group
    - 24 medical and law programs are being investigated for racial discrimination. 9 findings so far—all found to be illegally using race in admissions. These investigations are being fast-tracked .
    - Q: Have our schools been investigated?
    - A: No.
    - Worst case scenario is no federal money
- International students: Restrictions on OPT Visa, which will make it harder for them to work while in a program or after it.
- 9 schools are being investigated over their use of J-1 Visas. Temple is not among them.
- SN: Are there any law school and med school faculty on the Task Force?
- A: No. I will raise it with the group.
- Member: This is the first any of us in the Law School have heard about this.
- Heather Servaty-Seib, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, is creating cross-unit group focused on possible university-level efforts to support students who are on warning or probation. She is seeking faculty representation.
- Rich Soberiay, our COO, wants the Senate to solicit faculty questions prior to our Budget Forums

- Update on Budget Advisory Cmte: 17 people all told; 2 are ex-officio; 2 students (one undergrad, one grad); 3 faculty members (MB; Jason Norris; Jah Sinha, Chair of the Budget Review Committee); 3 Deans (Ibrahim, Madavan, Hansen), serving in staggered 3 year terms. A concern was raised about lack of representation from the Health Sciences Campus, but remember these are rotating posts and we're not supposed to be fighting for our own turf.

- Q: International Students get academic credit and are paid for working at orchestras. Will this stop under the Trump administration's new proposed work rules?
- A: A probable target. If these jobs are not deemed necessary to the program and the student is international it would be more difficult for them. There are also new fees: $70K for initial application and $30K renewal.
- Member: First year residency students are required to work. This now seems under threat, and this may make students ask: Why go through the program if you can't get a residency?

2. Approval of Minutes from October 7, 2026 with revisions

3. Vice President's Report: Robin Kolodny - 1:30-2:00 PM

• Committee Updates

We need someone from Dental School or CST on Invention and Patents. We have many people from Engineering; it's great that they are stepping up, but we need a wider array of schools represented. The administration also wants representation from the law and medical schools. The committee will need a revision to its charge, which dates from 1985. Among the elements needing revision are the terms, which are 5 years.

• Faculty Senate Service Awards Committee: We have to clarify the specific awards and the process because the call for nominations will have to come out soon.

• Discussion of Committee Charges

The new RPPC charge addresses changes like the lack of Seed Grant Money. The committee should also include people with those who have received external grants.

Forthcoming is a discussion about the appropriate size of committees.

Member: The RPPC want senior/productive researchers. Will we be able to get them? And can they be replaced, since it may be hard to find replacements?

MB: Agreed with concern over recruitment; also a pretty large committee still—10 members.

RK: Prof. Leah Bellas (Bioengineering) will be the liaison b/t RPPC and Inventions and Patents

4. Guest: Heather Servaty-Seib (HSS) Vice President for Undergraduate Education

• Status update on GenEd reform process:

- A letter just went out from Dustin Kidd, the Director of GenEd to those who have been involved in the proposed reforms. The changes are about bringing the initial proposal into alignment with a new strategic plan. Here is a summary of the key points:
    - The new name for GenEd will be "Temple Ready" and the proposed launch date is Fall 2028.
    - Rather than competencies, the new GenEd will be based on 4 pillars of purpose: 1) self-discovery; 2) knowledge activation; 3) career preparation; 4) civic and global engagement
    - IH will be renamed Temple Seminar Program, but Good Life and the Common Good will remain as the two courses, though the Common Good will be taken later in a student's career, probably after 60 credits.
    - Departments can apply to have as many as two upper-level courses count toward GenEd.
    - A D- or better will be sufficient to pass.
    - Environmental Literacy will be a new "breadth area."
    - The number of Science courses required will drop from 2 to 1
    - There is no plan to move forward with a developmental math course; though there will still be a Quantitative Literacy Component

RK: What will the process be for discussing and perhaps revising GenEd? There are old Board policies around GenEd dating from Pres. Adamany that will probably need to be repealed. More importantly, let's make sure that this is a process where there's real faculty input.

HSS: Dustin should come to the full faculty senate to discuss these changes. The communication plan is still in development. Input will be solicited and taken seriously. coming to full faculty senate?

MB: Are there courses that were recently certified that will now not be certified?

HSS: When they have to come up for re-approval, we'll be using the new criteria.

SN: Are there any changes in the breadth courses?

HSS: Just the new course—Environmental Literacy—and the reduction in Science courses from 2 to 1.

SN: How will the new Gen Ed sort with the potential move toward 3 year degrees?

HSS: The Provost generally supportive of idea of 90 credit or 90 to 120 credits in specific circumstances.

SN: I worry about the pressures that will be put on us to adopt 3 year degrees, especially since the data suggests students are *less* prepared to do college-level work.

Member: What is the process for soliciting feedback and what effect will input have? The new proposal sounds complete.

HSS: There will be an opportunity of feedback; the timeline for that is not clear. Most of these reforms have come directly from the work that had been done by the macro groups, which included many faculty. The pillars are not likely to change because they are tied to strategic plan. The changes to what is currently IH were made by CLA admin and unlikely to change. But there are many other pieces where input may well change the shape of the proposal. s.

SN: Has the GEEC signed off on this yet?

HSS: No, we're very early in the communication process. If Deans weren't directly involved, then even they don't know yet. But we wanted to put the word out about the changes because there was an unhelpful sense of this proposal simply being in limbo.

2. Bereavement/Family Leave Policy

HSS: My research background is in psychology and especially grief and loss experience of undergraduate students. Part of that work is advocacy for such leaves. I didn't plan to bring such a policy, but even in my 3.5 months at Temple, this keeps getting raised. This would be a reflection of our investment in students and an acknowledgement of complexity of their lives.

25-30% of students experience serious loss each year. A majority are friend or grandparent. This number can go up to 50% for those with demographics like Temple's.

The general rule for such policies is to allow students the same number of days they offer to faculty and staff, usually 3-5 days.

Such a policy would ease faculty concerns when student experiences a death loss. They wouldn't have to ask student for proof or require details since the student would provide any needed documentation centrally and then a communication would go out to all instructors. The policy allowing for makeup work would set a minimum. Instructors would have discretion to go beyond it.

There's a national group that has developed a tool-kit but would have to be applied to Temple's circumstances.

MB: We deal with this on a routine basis, but the response varies widely. I don't ask for verification.

Member: You and I are on the same workgroup in Evermore. I am in full support of this.

Member: We teach students in Counseling Psychology trauma-informed care that matches up well wit this.

HSS: We did do an assessment of students who had this deathloss and students who did. We tried to account for every variable, and our research showed those who suffered such a loss had a lower GPA.

Member: I support this; having a centralized process.

SN: This a great example of faculty expertise shaping university policy. What would be involved in the policy beyond the 3-5 day grace period?

HSS: Centralizing this will make students visible to be offered further support. A support group is doable.

Faculty often only hearing about death losses on the day there are exams—that's the threshold for many students to make them get past their reticence. Certain subgroups of students who already feel marginalized—very hard for them to ask for 'special treatment'

MB: I don't foresee any objections to this and part of larger standardization around retention.

HSS: You are the first group I've come to; could you bring me a proposal?

RK: We would need VPO Jodi Bailey's input re: Care Team, which should be built into this process.

HSS: This is the kind of policy where faculty have a key role in student success. Another would involve a change we're contemplating re: the SFFs, switching out one of the open-ended question to: What advice would you have for future students in taking this class? Would be useful for faculty who can't have student perspective.

RK: What is the plan for rolling out the NISS audit to the wider campus community?

HSS: There is a plan for a whole-campus forum in early November. The whole report, not just the PowerPoint, will be made available through TUPortal. We are now working on mapping the NISS audit on to the Strategic Plan.

RK: 80% of the recommendations of the report are things we have called for years.

HSS: The lead consultant acknowledged this. Often these reports make things happen by externally validating what many members of the university community already know need to happen.

RK: I'm also concerned that Georgia State, where NISS is headquartered, has a lower 4-year and 6-year grad rate, lower tuition, and is more selective. It might not be the best match for us.

MB: We're not trying to copy them, but there may well be things that were effective there that might work for Temple..

HSS: The crucial thing is to take the recommendations that speak most to us. Change of program processes is a high priority. Directors of Academic Advisors have already been working on this. The Academic Advising ratio is crucial to retention. And I am putting together a ross-campus group to look at Academic Warning and Probation. We don't have a dashboard and need one.

Member: We need a centralization of data.

HSS: This was one of the NISS audit's main points of emphasis. We need data to develop and evaluate evidence-based practices.

4. Unfinished Business

• The move from FMA to Klein

5. New Business

6. Announcements and Upcoming Meetings

1:00pm-3:00pm EST, Conwell Hall Conference Room 3B
Guest: Jodi Levine Laufgraben, Vice Provost for Academic Programs and Institutional Effectiveness
Budget Forum Session One, Thursday, November 5, 2026
1:45pm-3:15pm EST, ITS Innovation Lab, Bell Building Room 306
Budget Forum Session Two, Tuesday, November 17, 2026
1:45pm-3:15pm EST, ITS Innovation Lab, Bell Building Room 306
7. Adjournment - 3:00 PM