Temple University Representative Faculty Senate

10/20/26

Draft Minutes

1. Call to Order, Welcome, President's Report - 1:45 PM

• President's Report

- Faculty Representation on the Board: The Board has approved an official plan for faculty representation—1 faculty member per year, with two serving in two-year staggered terms. Up to 3 names will be submitted by the Senate and the Board will select from them. Pres. Bognanno has been selected for this year, but there is no requirement that the representative be an officer of the Senate or a Senator.
- Recommendations from the National Institute for Student Success's Audit of Temple
  - The key indicator is the drop in retention from 89 to 77% and significant increase in Pell recipients and first gen students.
  - A video of presentation will be made available.
  - The steps recommended by the audit have been successful elsewhere.
  - More details to come in Senate Update
  - Temple is revising its admissions strategy. This includes letting admitted students know in a timelier fashion.

  - The Federal Impact Taskforce has recently discussed these recent moves by the Trump Administration:
    - 24 medical and law programs are being investigated for racial discrimination, not including Temple. 9 findings so far—all found to be illegally using race in admissions. These investigations are being fast-tracked. Temple is examining its operations. Worst-case consequences--losing federal funding.
    - International students: There is a visa ban on students from 39 countries, and the OPT visa is getting more expensive—slated to rise to $70K, with $30K renewal.
    - 9 Universities are being investigated for alleged J-1 visa violations.

  - Budget Advisory Committee: The Committee met for first time yesterday. it is chaired by David Marino, CFO, and will be meeting at least quarterly. The

stated aims set by Pres. Fry are transparency and honesty in discussions, and representatives should have the university as a whole in mind, not just their corner of it. The faculty representatives are Pres. Bognanno (CLA), Jason Norris (TFMA), and Jay Sinha (Fox). Half of the voting members are faculty or deans.

Questions in response to the President's Report:

--Prof. Micah Magee (Film and Media Arts/CPCA) asked what was meant by an "institution first perspective." Pres. Bognanno explained that this refers to the charge to the committee members to approach fiscal issues from the perspective of what will benefit Temple as a whole, not just their department or school/college.

--Prof. Del Doktor (Music Theory/BCMD): Asked how many women are on the Budget Advisory Committee. Pres. Bognanno: 3. (*The correct number is 6.*)

--Prof. Tricia Jones (Communication and Social Influence/Klein): What is the relationship between the Senate's Budget Review Committee (BRC) to the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC)? Pres. Bognanno: Our aim is to have the BRC, which will now have access to better data, formulate questions for the BAC and as a place where faculty can gain the knowledge and skills to serve most effectively on the BAC.

2. Guest: Libby Wentz, Provost

Provost Wentz (LW) opened with an invitation to the Senate to ask questions about her goals.

Pres. Bognanno: What's at the top of your agenda?

LW: Shaping our approach to academics in line with Temple's Strategic Plan and the issues raised by the recent audit from NISS. This includes:

1) Engaging with Evelyn Thimba, VP for Enrollment Management, Heather Servaty-Seib, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, and Jodi Bailey, VP for Student Affairs to improve student success and especially retention. Our aim is to get us back up to 80% and even 90% retention.
2) Focusing on the First-Year Experience so that students can feel more engaged.
3) Acknowledging the key role faculty plays in student success. This includes reaching out to students whose participation in Canvas and attendance indicate that they are not sufficiently engaged.
4) Improving our transfer numbers and success: LW and other administrators have been meeting with reps from Community College of Philadelphia and those in

the collar counties to improve the pipeline. Retention from these students exceeds those from other populations.

5) Improving the process for students changing majors: RCM discouraged this, but we need to pivot to an "institution first" model.
6) Revising Gen Ed: LW and Vice Provost Servaty-Seib paused the reforms to review them and bring them in line with the strategic plan. The aim is to have the proposal for a new Gen Ed before the Board by the end of the academic year. Many elements focus on student success and career readiness.
7) Expanding online degree programs: Many community college students (see 4, above) are enrolled in such programs already. My own experience teaching in this modality was so positive that it shifted my view about it. But we're not going to force anybody to teach online.

Dialogue with members of the Senate

Parent Input

Jason Gallagher (Pharmacy): As the parent of a Temple student, I hope there is a plan to ask parents for input around strategies for student success.
EW: Yes, and I will follow up on this

The role of the Health Sciences Campus
Prof. Renee Fennell (Oral Health Sciences/Dentistry): Are there any specific plans for the Health Sciences Campus yet?
EW: Nothing specific yet, but there are active discussions.

Online Education
Prof. Mohammad Kiani (Mechanical Engineering/Engineering): I have a concern about expanding online education. At some universities, 70% of the revenue goes to the outside companies who are basically running these programs. This also raises concerns about faculty control over curricula.

EW: In some universities, that is the model. It will not be the model at Temple. These programs will be built from the grassroots; these are Temple curricula to be taught by Temple faculty. We have engaged with an external partner, but they are focused on marketing, not curriculum. They will get some percentage of the revenues, but not close to 70% and only if they hit enrollment targets.

Prof. Eileen Ryan (History/CLA): I am concerned that expansion of online education will repeat the recent decision to expand majors at TU-Rome, which was done without consultation with faculty.

EW: I understand this concern, but online programs will be built out of departments and colleges on main campus.

Impact of Cuts to the Library Budget on Student Success

Prof. Kim Williams (Anthropology/CLA): I am concerned that recent cuts to the Library budget is negatively affecting student success. For instance, the textbook I assigned allows only one user at a time.

EW: I will explore that. One potential exacerbating factor is that publishing companies have been adding to fees exorbitantly.

Balancing College/School-Specific First-Year Seminars with a University-Wide One

Vladi Wilent (Chemistry/CLST): For colleges that have their own first-year seminar, how will this be integrated into the university-wide 1st year seminar that is being contemplated?

EW: This is a "yes and" situation. Let's draw on successes from individual colleges. We have to customize these seminars for specific colleges; but we need to be mindful that students need to learn how to navigate Temple as a whole.

Prof. Bognanno: One thing advising has to consider is that a student getting a C in intro course in their prospective major is a bad sign for retention and graduation.

Immediate Moves on Retention

Prof. Vinod Ventrakaman (Marketing/Fox): What is our short-term strategy for addressing retention? Also, wouldn't a new approach to changing majors require a more centralized advising team?

EW: One step we plan to take immediately is to look at courses with high D/F/Ws: Math 702 is one of them, and we've already been working on that. Student attendance is key there. We have to look into whether there are variations across sections and what accounts for that. On advising: It would be a challenge to expect

advisors could advise across the curriculum—this is really more about directing the student to the right person.

Faculty Hiring
Profs. Jeff Solow (Cello/Boyer), Eileen Ryan (History/CLA), and Stephen LePore (Social and Behavioral Sciences/CPH) all asked about the role of faculty hiring, especially given the sharp drop in tenure-stream faculty, and about balancing research commitments with commitments to teaching and student success.

EW: I approved the hiring plan from each of the colleges last week. My directive was to be forward looking; this isn't just about replacing those who have retired or left. Departments and colleges/schools need to be cutting edge about where their fields are going.

The move from RCM to a One Temple budget model will affect hiring in multiple ways. When individuals retire or resign, the money comes to central. This year, we prioritized searches that weren't successful last year. We don't want to send the message, "Hire even if the person you have found isn't the best fit." If a search fails a second time, then the department should go back to the drawing board and see if, for instance, the job isn't too narrow.

We have also prioritized: Center Directors, who are very important for leadership and external visibility; hiring in schools and colleges where enrollments are growing; faculty who can bring in external research dollars.

72% of proposed hires were approved, with all colleges and schools getting at least some hires, with a mix of TT/NTT hires.

Concerns about future budget cuts and faculty governance
Prof. Tricia Jones (Communication and Social Influence/Klein): We have been told that we can expect another cut this year of $35-40 million. These austerity conditions would seem to complicate a hiring plan, and I'm worried about the effects of these cuts since so many departments are already so under-resourced. I'm also concerned about recent moves to change the shape of colleges and schools without proper consultation with the faculty.

EW: These are complex issues that will require multiple years to address. Yes, the deficit will persist; we are closing the gap. We don't know yet if we'll have to make a cut as deep as this last year. One of our needs is to diversify revenue streams, and wea are We are starting to see some results—including increased philanthropy, as with the gifts to establish the Sullivan Honors College.

If we recruit a student and give them a big chunk of financial aid and they don't persist that's a serious loss for us. I meet regularly with COO Sobieray to address this.

This coming year, we plan to be more deliberative about the hiring plan, asking Deans for one in the Spring. We will also be considering interdisciplinary and cluster hires.

Secretary Newman: I believe Prof. Jones was also raising her concerns about the move of Film and Media Arts from CPCA to Klein without any prior faculty consultation.

Prof. Jones: Yes, and also a recently announced reorganization of departments in Klein.

EW: We made our very best effort to make all of those conversations happen in an order that made sense for the faculty who are involved. So, the deans first spoke to their college-level leadership, the associate deans and the department chairs, and then the department chairs then talked to their faculty, and that was how it was intended to roll out. I think there was some concern about our conversations with the executive committee of the Faculty Senate, which took place before some of the conversations that happened with the faculty, and I think that some of the Faculty Senate executive representatives felt like they were asked to embargo the information until the affected faculty, were involved, but that didn't exactly work out the way that I had hoped. The intent is to bring as much transparency and to as much engagement to the Faculty Senate as possible. But I also think that it's important that we roll things out with the faculty who are affected first, in conversations before we roll it out to the faculty as a whole. And it's impossible to not have faculty talk to one another, and so rumors do spread, and people do hear information from their colleagues, and that's going to be inevitable. We're trying to change some of the processes so that faculty are part of the conversations, and that these things are driven by what we really think is going to be best for the students, as

well as for the faculty. And in the case of this particular change, I know that the conversations were taking place long before I arrived here, on July 1st. And so while the actual decision and when it happened, may have been a surprise, I hope that those conversations were taking place beforehand.

Prof. Jones (in the Chat): Respectfully, faculty were not really involved in any consultations on the FMA move. They were informed that this was happening.

Students' Math Preparation

Craig Bromwell (CST/Biology): Many students come here with insufficient math preparation, which leads to delays in their progress through the program.

EW: Yes, I know that's a problem. Our challenge is to maintain rigor while helping them to make their way through. We are looking at Summer Bridge and Pre-College Programs to address this issue.

Cutting, Establishing, and Growing Academic Programs

Prof. Clifton Fordham (Architecture/Tyler): What plans are there for cutting programs to save money or to start new ones? On the latter, it's important that these are faculty-driven efforts, especially given all of the time required to establish a good new program.

EW: I am leery of cutting programs just because their enrollments have declined. Perhaps a matter of re-focusing rather than cutting. I don't want us to be in the same position as Pen State, which just cut 47 programs. And we also have to think about new programs when called for. We established cytology at Arizona State, and that was a success, though it was more top-down.

Secy. Newman: We know that the Provost has to leave for other meetings, but I want to acknowledge the question in the chat from Prof. Carolina Grest (Social Work/CPH), asking about whether any workload guidelines are going to be released. This is among the topics we can discuss when the Executive Committee meets with you next.

3. Unfinished Business

Elvis Wagner (TESOL/Education): I feel that COO Sobieray's presentation was too long and too focused on his background. (In the Chat, Prof. Doktor from Boyer expressed a similar concern about a lack of chances for dialogue.)

Pres. Bognanno: I should have given him better guidance.

Secy. Newman: I have found COO Sobieray to be very interactive and responsive, but I understand the concern. Many years ago, the Steering Committee passed a guideline that no administrator, excepting the President, could talk at the Senate for more than 20 minutes. Perhaps we should revive this in order to give our guests proper guidance.

Pres. Bognanno: Yes, that's been my experience with the COO, as well. He decided not to get into the weeds on the budget. There will be opportunities for that in the future.

Kim Williams (Anthropology/CLA): I want to report back from the first Strategic Planning Committee. One thing that's clear from the NISS report is the need to get the right data to the right people at the right time around student success and other matters. We now have an opportunity to make sure that that happens.

Jeff Doshna (Community and Regional Planning/Tyler): To follow up on the inclusion of faculty members on the Board of Trustees, has there been any discussion of representation from other constituencies: staff, students, community members, etc.?

Pres. Bognanno: Not to my knowledge.

Secy. Newman: I've been asked to make an announcement about the Rally for Temple's Future, sponsored by a range of unions at Temple on 10/14 at noon outside Charles Library.

4. Minutes from 10/1 meeting adopted

Motion to adjourn passed 3:13 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings

• Budget Forum Session One, Thursday, November 5, 2026
1:45pm-3:15pm EST, ITS Innovation Lab, Bell Building Room 306
Guests: COO Richard Sobieray, David Marino, and Jaison Kurichi
• Budget Forum Session Two, Tuesday, November 17, 2026
1:45pm-3:15pm EST, ITS Innovation Lab, Bell Building Room 306
Guests: COO Richard Sobieray, David Marino, and Jaison Kurichi
• University Faculty Senate Meeting, Wednesday, December 2, 2026
1:45pm-3:15pm EST, Center for Anti-Racism, 140 Mazur Hall
Guest: President John Fry and Provost Elizabeth Wentz