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# The University Senate

FACULTY · STUDENT · P&A · CIVIL SERVICE

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## UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

### **P&A Consultative Committee (PACC)**

**April 18, 2024**

### **Minutes of the Meeting**

*These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.*

[**In these minutes:** Welcome; Civil Service Consultative Committee Report; Chair and Chair-elect Report; P&A Subcommittee Reports; Revising Language in P&A Senate Bylaws Regarding Length of Term; Discussion: Workforce Reinvestment Resolution; Public Employment Labor Relations Act (PELRA) Discussion]

**PRESENT:** Whitney Taha Frakes (chair), Kit Breshears (chair-elect), Toni Abts, Adolfo Carrillo Cabello, Stacy Doepner-Hove, Marti Fasteland, Monica Kocon, Maureen Long, Angela Vetsch

**REGRETS:** Molly Bendzick

**GUESTS:** Stacy Maher, chair-elect, Civil Service Senate/Civil Service Consultative Committee

**OTHERS:** John Butler, Megan Sweet

#### **1. Welcome**

Whitney Taha Frakes, chair, P&A Senate/P&A Consultative Committee (PACC), welcomed committee members and guests and began the meeting.

#### **2. Civil Service Consultative Committee (CSCC) Report**

Stacy Maher, chair-elect, Civil Service Senate/Civil Service Consultative Committee (CSCC), shared a written report that can be found on this [document](#).

#### **3. Chair and Chair-elect Report**

Taha Frakes and Kit Breshears, chair-elect, P&A Senate/PACC, shared updates with committee members on the following:

- End of year Subcommittee Reports are due by May 16, 2024. These reports will be used to compile the 2023-24 P&A Senate Report to the Board of Regents.
- An invitation to newly elected PACC members will be extended for the May 16, 2024, meeting.
- PACC must recommend for appointment one P&A employee to serve on the Term Faculty and Academic Professionals Subcommittee (TFAPS) no later than Monday, April

22, 2024. Two P&A employees were recommended to chair Taha Frakes for consideration: Helena Ruf, director of language instruction, Department of German, Nordic, Slavic, and Dutch, College of Liberal Arts, and Kevin Wendt, teaching specialist, College of Science and Engineering.

Adolfo Carrillo Cabello suggested that current representation on TFAPS is lacking in P&A instructors who might be able to enlighten the subcommittee by sharing their personal narratives and who have a commitment to representing similar voices. Taha Frakes thanked committee members for suggestions and said she would make recommendations on behalf of the committee by the due date.

#### **4. P&A Subcommittee Reports**

Monthly subcommittee reports can be found on [this document](#).

#### **5. Revising Language in P&A Senate Bylaws Regarding Length of Term**

Taha Frakes introduced the idea of amending language in the P&A Senate Bylaws to clarify language regarding the term lengths for those serving in the senate and whether/how that differs from term lengths for P&A Senate officers. The committee had a robust discussion and illuminated the following points:

- The six-year term limit (consecutive years) applies to all senate members except the chair and chair-elect. The chair and chair-elect must vacate their seats in their units so are no longer representing their unit when they become chair or chair-elect; they are representatives of the entire senate. (Article VIII, Section 5, Point A: “*Once elected, the P&A Consultative Committee chair and chair-elect will relinquish their unit-elected seats in the P&A Senate*”)
- Those serving as co-chairs or chairs of P&A Senate subcommittees, who make up PACC, are still representing their units. These senate members should be considered differently than the chair and chair-elect, who have vacated their positions in their units.
- When these governing documents were originally written, the intent was to allow senate members with significant experience to run for chair and chair-elect positions. The intention was to allow interested parties to have as much experience on the senate as possible before taking on leadership positions.
- Holding officer elections prior to unit elections was intentionally designed so that, if a senate member were elected to serve on PACC, even if their term in their unit was set to end that year, the person elected could continue to serve on PACC for one additional year.
- The language in the bylaws should be clarified; language in the University Senate Bylaws regarding P&A Senate members serving on University Senate whose terms on the P&A Senate have ended could be used as a template.

Taha Frakes shared with the committee comments she had received from the University Senate Parliamentarian, Nancy Sims, after she had reached out to her regarding [her interpretation](#) of the bylaws language. Taha Frakes thanked the committee for the discussion, and said she would draft language with the help of Stacy Doepner-Hove, Toni Abts, and Kit Breshears, and have it ready for review by PACC at its May 15, 2024, meeting.

#### **6. Discussion: Workforce Reinvestment Resolution**

Taha Frakes then invited the committee to share their reactions to and questions regarding the administration's response to the Workforce Reinvestment Resolution. She added that the

administrative response will be discussed at the April 25, 2024, University Senate Meeting. She offered a few comments to get the conversation started:

- Elements of the administration's response will greatly impact how PACC and the P&A Senate advocate for its constituents in 2025 and 2026.
- Some requests were “taken off the table” by the administration. Should there be a continued effort to address them anyway? (example: tuition benefit beyond employees to include spouses and children)

Committee members shared comments which included the following:

- The response was extremely faculty-centric, while the language in the original document specifically mentioned employees in all job classifications as well as students.
- Were there system campus representatives on the task force? System campus representatives were called in for consultation when there were items specific to a particular campus. Connor Pride, Human Resources Professional II from UMD, was added to the committee mid-way to represent the system campuses.
- There is a concern that many people do not know about the resolution and response.
- In response to a question as to whether or not system campus voices were represented in the process of creating and responding to the report, Adolfo Carillo Cabello (member of the task force) said he felt they were. He added that there is a distinction between lived experiences of system campus colleagues and data. He said there is sufficient data in the report but a lack of lived experiences and personal stories.
- Who was on the task force? Members are listed in the opening paragraph of the [Workforce Reinvestment Resolution Task Force Report](#).
- The proposal in the administrative response to use “skill mastery” for determining merit increases may have a significant impact on the P&A employee group. There are challenges that the P&A employee group continues to face regarding how well supervisors know what an employee’s actual performance and responsibilities are compared to their written job description.
- Marti Fasteland shared [a recording](#) of the April 2024 Benefits and Compensation (B&C) Subcommittee meeting where subcommittee members discussed the administration’s response to the resolution with Paula Merrill, director of compensation, Office of Human Resources.
- What’s the most effective way for PACC/P&A Senate to follow up with the administration and hold them accountable for operationalizing the items in the response?
- The response seemed to focus on retaining employees; it will be important to advocate for improvements that will help recruiting efforts as well.
- The response didn’t seem to fit the nature of the original request in some cases. For example, “faculty” workload is referred to in the response; the workload of *all employees* was referenced in the original resolution.
- There is interest in advocating at the state level (Minnesota Legislature) especially for benefits and compensation packages at the University. Taha Frakes echoed that interest and said PACC/P&A Senate have made significant strides in connecting its advocacy with administration within the University system; now the opportunity is to make the same progress with external partners.

Fasteland recommended providing a summary of how to read the three documents that will be presented to P&A Senate members for review and discussion at the May 2024 P&A Senate

meeting. It was also suggested to make clear *which* document is being referred to and to include page numbers in the summary, if one is provided.

## **7. Public Employment Labor Relations Act (PELRA) Discussion**

Taha Frakes began the conversation by sharing a [summary of responses](#) received from P&A constituents regarding an email she sent to all P&A employees on April 17, 2024. She had also invited P&A Senate members to share their responses in an email dated March 13, 2024. The summary of responses includes responses from both feedback opportunities. Frakes said in order to preserve transparency and remain neutral on the topic, she anonymized the information and sorted the responses into three buckets:

- Comments in support of PELRA reform bills
- Neutral or some reservations re: PELRA reform bills
- Opposed to PELRA reform bills

Taha Frakes asked committee members if they had questions on the summary of responses, either of the emails that she sent, or PELRA in general. She reminded committee members that even if proposed amendments to the bills pass, any type of change at the University regarding job classifications would not take place immediately, if at all. PACC members had a robust discussion which included the following:

- Constituents have emailed PACC members asking that they keep employees informed about the potential changes and about specific opportunities where they can voice their support for the proposed changes. Taha Frakes noted that while she would provide updates on the process, she would not provide information on who to contact for voicing support for the bill in an effort, as a governance leader, to remain neutral on the topic.
- The pro-PELRA reform coalition seems to be very organized and are communicating well.
- It is alarming how many people apparently don't know about or understand what is happening. There is a lack of awareness of proceedings outside of shared governance.
- While remaining neutral in providing updates on both the PELRA reform bills, it is valuable to offer resources to constituents about how to communicate with their state representatives.

Taha Frakes briefly updated the committee on a meeting she held with Meg Luger, attorney who is working with Senator Jen McEwen on the PELRA reform bill, and P&A Senate members from the UM Duluth, UM Morris, UM Rochester, and UM Extension. Taha Frakes said she was seeking to clarify the language in the SF 4597 bill which refers to an “outstate instructional unit.” It was determined that the language instructs that, should the bill pass, the employees at UM Rochester and UM Morris *may* opt into the outstate unit of which UM Duluth and UM Crookston are already a part (University Education Association or UEA) . Taha Frakes invited senate members in the meeting to weigh in after the meeting as to any concerns about the language in the bill. Taha Frakes said that members from Duluth, Morris, and Extension let her know they approve the language as it appears in the bill, and that she is waiting to hear from Rochester senate members.

Angela Vetsch noted that the number of employees on the Morris campus is too small to organize alone so they would need to join with other campuses if organizing efforts were to happen. The main sentiment at UM Morris, Vetsch said, is that it does not want to be part of UM Twin Cities organization efforts.

In the interest of time, Taha Frakes thanked committee members and adjourned the meeting.

Geanette Poole  
University Senate Office