

Minutes

Lecturers and Educators Congress

Nov. 29, 2023

4:00-5:30 PM – Fenster 590 or [via Zoom](#)

Present (in person or online):

Maria Stanko (President), Jaskirat Sodhi (Vice President), Scott Kent (Treasurer), Catherine Siemann (Secretary), Gerry Milano (Webmaster), Jose Alcala (HCAD), David Brothers (HCAD), Mark Chiusano (IS), Ben Chou, Andy Cianci (NCE), Caroline Devan (Biology), John Esche (PSA), Julio Garcia Figuero (HCAD), David Fisher (CES), Wayne Fox (MTSM), Otay Gokce, Risa Gorelick, Ken Horwitz, Andres Jerez, Mary Konsolaki (Biology), Swapnil Moon (NCE), Padma Nataranjan, Dipesh Patel, Matt Toegel (IT), Esmerelda Vataj, John Jun Wu, Chris Zeiner (NCE)

Attendees with partial screennames: Mdriegel, Santos, Wiggins

Guest: Provost John Pelesko

- I. *President's Report* - Maria Stanko –
PSA survey re. the effect
an adjunct strike would have on
our work and our students – fill it

out honestly. PSA does not want us to take up the slack – it's important that the work the adjuncts and graduate students do should be made clear to the administration.

II. Committee Reports

a. *Finance Committee*: Chris Zeiner – reviewed the current financial situation and new rules about decentralized budget control. Lack of clarity as to what happened with the funds of sale of NJII's incubator.

b. *Faculty Senate* - Jaskirat Sodhi / Maria Stanko – active discussion about whether Associate Professors can sit on the University P&T committee. Mood of Senate on potential change. Andrew Crist reported that there may be more teaching and learning spaces moving to Fenster and some 3rd and 4th floor administrative offices moved off campus. Next Fall City MD opening in Maple Hall. Library is seeking funding for renovation to the building to make it more of a student center, with more student workspaces. New standards for posthumous degrees. Staff evaluation test run is complete and they hope to do more.

c. *TLT* - Maria Stanko – University is investing in Box.com for offline storage, not replacing

Google, but in anticipation of Google's imposing limits on storage space. Opportunity to pilot some new software incl. Atomic Exams for quizzes, etc., Harmonize Learning (conversation tool), Poll Everywhere. Places on website to New XR Labspace in GITC for VR tools and etc.

III. *Visit from Provost John Pelesko:*

Discussed his educational background and his PhD in Mathematical Sciences from NJIT and postdoc at Caltech. Was at Georgia Tech, and then at the University of Delaware for the past 21 years, ending as Dean of Arts & Sciences. Came back to NJIT because the alumni consistently say that NJIT changed their lives; because of our diverse student body; our technology focus. Not because we're an R1, but because of the students.

To empower our students, we need to empower ULs and adjuncts. Has been through this process with U of Delaware. Our group should be part of the faculty, with its rights and responsibilities. Surprised that ITE is not a hard-funded institution. ULs as part of the faculty – robust support for teaching, professional development, the ability for us to take sabbaticals. Changing the culture – ULs coming to meetings,

having a vote, committee involvement, sabbaticals.

Questions: Maria: how do you see us changing not only policy, but the culture? Accountability in hiring practices, in allocation of resources. Moving forward, hiring plans will include not only tenure-track faculty (as previously) but also University Lecturers.

Scott: Gets asked about the UCAN contract – concerns about keeping good quality adjuncts by paying them adequately – i.e. the same as what they get at Rutgers-Newark. Response: within

Caroline: Voting rights for ULs. Response: As ULs become faculty, the faculty need to be involved. Building a culture of mutual respect for faculty members having different roles, based on those roles.

Chris: Salaries not going up for longer-serving adjuncts.

Julio: In HCAD – UL credentials based on experience in the field rather than terminal degrees.

Mark: As a new Informatics SUL, what is NJIT's need? Move to research?

Risa: Travel funds for lecturers for conferences and professional development.

Pelesko says these resources are important and need to be available to all faculty, which includes ULs. Should this be institution-driven or locally

driven? College-driven.
(Dean, not department.)

David Brothers: Going to conferences, even if not presenting. Pelesko says this may vary by discipline.

Catherine: asked for clarification in new budgeting model – for departments like HSS that are largely service departments. 75% tuition driven, 25% majors – because instruction is the largest cost.

David Fisher: laboratory fees.

Caroline: Concerns about faculty getting to decide whether we're in their club.

How can we help to facilitate that? Pelesko says he thinks we have the support of large swathes of the current faculty.

IV. More Committee Reports

d. UCAN- Scott Kent – negotiations are stalled, still refusing to make a counteroffer, bringing in a mediator from the state. Strike vote during the next couple of days. Rutgers-Newark is offering us their strike fund. Monday, practice strike during Board of Trustees meeting. Negotiating everything but compensation – current offer is \$2500 a class less than RU-N. What they want is less than 2% of NJIT's budget.

V. New business – Risa: please RSVP for the Committee on Women's Leadership event next Tuesday.

Caroline: please fill out PSA survey on strike.

Risa: raised issue of salary compression. Caroline suggested PSA might be able to help with special salary adjustments.

The meeting was concluded at 5:38pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Siemann, Treasurer