

FORMATION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

An informational presentation citing primarily from official institute planning and accreditation documents, institute policy documents, Senate Bylaws and the Pratt Faculty Handbook.

INTRODUCTION

The Senate thanks President Schutte for undertaking the important review of academic governance. We agree that the issue calls for thoughtful examination, and we pledge our support to the effort. We are gratified that the Consultant's recommendations recognize the importance of consultation with the Senate.

Guidelines for implementation:

After **conferring with the Provost's Office and the Academic Senate**, the Governance Facilitator will recommend to the President of Pratt Institute the changes to be implemented and the date for implementation.

Consultant's Report To Pratt Institute: Academic Governance and Decision-making, John H. Erickson, 1/20/2009; RECOMMENDATION 13, page 15

EXAMINATION

Our examination of facts fall within three contexts:

1. Structural
2. Historical (Past Practice)
3. Textual

1. STRUCTURAL CONTEXT

Senate Bylaws approved by the Board of Trustees, specify as follows:

NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

The Academic Senate is a faculty/administration **governance body** that will **relate directly to the President** and Provost **without review by any other group**.

PURPOSE

... to give faculty and chairs responsibilities including, but not limited to, **(a) Approving academic policies and procedures; (b) Reviewing structures of programs, curricula, and schools; (c) Providing for appropriate review of course additions and changes**

As noted in Pratt's 1991 report to Middle States:

"The Academic Senate...will be responsible for the academic policy-making normally associated with such bodies – academic review, academic policy...."

“An equally important function is the senate's potential role in curriculum development, and in **ensuring that the curriculum is delivered effectively and efficiently**. As a body charged with curricular and program review, the Academic Senate is a **safeguard against both curricular omissions and redundancies....**”

“... It also **serves as a forum for candid and professional discussions about a core curriculum and the appropriateness and location of additional offerings outside the core**. The Academic Senate can also contribute most usefully to discussion and decisions about the ranking of academic priorities, consonant with the Institute's mission statement.”

HISTORICAL CONTEXT { PAST PRACTICE }

Since its inception in 1991, the Senate has reviewed and approved courses, programs and curricula.

As noted in the Institute's 2002 self-study:

“The Senate reviews and approves all academic offerings at the Institute in conjunction with the Office of the Provost.”

As specified in the Provost's directions to chairs (e-mail dated April 10, 2005):

The attached Course Approval Tracking Sheet shows the actions taken recently by the Academic Senate on courses you have submitted.

An explanation of the Senate's actions can be found in the attached 'Senate Course Approval Actions.doc'...

SENATE ACTIONS

Approved: The course has been approved by the Academic Senate and the Office of the Provost...

Approved Conditionally: The Senate has reviewed your proposal and found that it meets most standards. Additional information is required, however, for the Senate to give final approval...

Course Approval Tracking Sheet, 2001

And as specified in the Provost's directions in a Memorandum about Bulletin Production Protocols (2005-2007) to deans, directors and chairs (e-mail dated July 16, 2004):

Only course changes with complete Academic Senate approval by August 1, 2004 (deadline) will be included...

TEXTUAL CONTEXT

re-view: noun

1. a looking over or examination with a view to amendment or improvement
2. judicial reexamination (as of the proceedings of a lower tribunal by a higher)
3. an explanatory and critical account of an artistic production or performance (as a book, play, exhibition, or concert) usually in a periodical
4. (a): renewed study of material previously studied (b): an exercise facilitating such study

re-view: verb [transitive]

1. to examine or study again; especially to reexamine judicially <a higher court may review the proceedings and judgments of a lower one>
2. to look back on; take a retrospective view of
3. a: to go over or examine critically or deliberately, as to go over with critical examination in order to discover excellences or defects
b: to give a critical evaluation of

FACULTY GOVERNANCE

The charter of Pratt Institute vests the Board of Trustees with the primary responsibility for the educational and financial well being of the institution. The Board, in turn, authorizes the president and administration to direct the Institute in its many and complex operations. The Board, the president, and the administration **recognize the important role of the faculty in developing, implementing, and monitoring the content and quality of Institute programs, curricula, and courses.**

To this end the Institute has established an academic senate composed of faculty and chair representatives elected directly by the faculty and chairs of the Institute.

The academic senate is a faculty administration **governance body that relates directly to the president** and provost **without review by any other Institute group.**

*Faculty Handbook, Part 1: Pratt Institute Organization & Governance
Faculty Governance Structure, page 15*

The 1993 NASAD accreditation report noted of President Schutte's decision to form the Senate:

“He has created an Academic Senate to make key academic decisions - a good move we think...”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Senate thanks the President for his pivotal role in the formation of the Senate in 1991 to remedy deficiencies in governance noted during accreditation.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

We rely on 11 official documents from Pratt Institute and the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary

1. Consultant's Report To PRATT INSTITUTE: Academic Governance and Decision-making, John H. Erickson, 1/20/2009; pages 10 to 15
2. Senate Bylaws, approved by the board in 1991, 1993, 2003, 2004 and 2005
3. Faculty Handbook, Part 1: Institute Organization and Governance, Faculty Governance Structure

Planning and accreditation documents

http://www.pratt.edu/presidents_corner/strategic_plan

4. Report to the Pratt Community and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 1991
5. Middle States Report to Pratt, after campus visit Oct. 6-9, 1991
6. NASAD Report to Pratt, 1993
7. Periodic Review Report to the Commission on Higher Education May 1996"
8. Pratt Institute Self Study, August 2002

Documents on academic policies and procedures related to Course and Curriculum Review, jointly issued by the Provost and Academic Senate

10. APPC Guidelines, 2001; Dimitri Hazzikostas, APPC Chair
9. Bulletin Copy Guidelines, Provost's office, 2004
11. Senate Actions and email instructions from Provost's office, 2005