

**LA & S Senate Minutes  
Meeting of April 19, 2023  
Wooster 360**

**Departments represented and attending:** Anthropology (Jessica Smeeks); Communication Studies (Lauren Mark); English (Usha Vishnuvajjala); History (Heather Morrison); Philosophy (Eugene Heath); Psychology (Elizabeth Hirshorn).

**Departments represented but not attending:** Political Science (Stephen Pampinella)

**Departments not represented by a senator:** Asian Studies; Black Studies; Communication Disorders; Digital Media & Journalism; Economics; Geography; Languages, Literatures & Cultures; Latin American, Caribbean, & Latinx Studies; Sociology; Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. The minutes of the March 22 were approved without edits. The Senate then turned to the following items.

Operating as a Committee of the Whole, the Senators considered each candidate for an LA & S Award in Scholarship, Teaching, and Service. For each award, an applicant was selected for recommendation to the Dean, College of LA & S, who will announce the awards at the meeting, May 10, of L A & S faculty.

In the course of discussing the nominees and their applications, it was noted that the amount of the teaching award given to part-time instructors might be raised to be in line with the award given to full-time instructors.

In addition, it was pointed out that part-time and non-tenure line faculty may not be receiving peer observations (of classroom instruction) that full-time faculty receive during their probationary period prior to continuing appointment.

Finally, several senators noted that the Senate as a body should revisit the award application criteria and guidelines. These revised criteria were put forth as possible revisions:

as a general but not absolute rule, the teaching observations of a candidate (for the teaching award) should *not* be from the same person who nominates the candidate;

a nomination for a service award should note whether a service endeavor has received any stipend or reduction in teaching load;

and any nomination should be required to include a c.v. in the standard SUNY format.

The Senate considered a proposal for a new minor, Asian American Studies. The proposal was approved with a recommendation for clarifying or editing the inclusion of emails endorsing the proposal.

The Senate then reviewed a proposal for revising the Environmental Studies major. This proposal was also approved (though with a recommendation to clearly state the reasons for the included syllabi.)

The Senate turned, finally, to consider whether the Senate should continue to review curricular matters. It was agreed to continue to review *program* changes and innovations and for these reasons:

the LA & S *curriculum* should be a matter of LA & S *faculty* consideration and concern;

LA & S faculty, via senatorial representation, should have some cognizance of what is happening across the college;

Senatorial review of program changes is not, in fact, redundant on prior reviews at the College;

Even if Senate review may not require substantive changes, at least some reviews, in the recent past, have delivered positive and substantive changes;

Removal of programmatic curricular review would leave the Senate with no real on-going function, thereby reducing its viability for other ancillary functions;

A significantly reduced responsibility for the Senate would mean that the Senate, as a body, was scarcely a *senate*. On this last point, it was also noted that the Senate, as a body that represents departments and faculty to the Dean, could, in some circumstances, serve as a "sounding board" and voice for the faculty when chairs could not do so. Reducing its role might also reduce this option.

Finally, it was also observed that, with the arrival of a new Provost, not to mention a President now completing his first year, it might be best to preserve the traditional role of the Senate.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Eugene Heath  
Convener, LA & S Senate "on call"