

**LA & S Senate Minutes
Meeting of March 22, 2023
Wooster 360**

Departments represented and attending: Anthropology (Jessica Smeeks); English (Usha Vishnuvajjala); History (Heather Morrison); Philosophy (Eugene Heath); Political Science (Stephen Pampinella); Psychology (Elizabeth Hirshorn).

Departments represented but unable to attend: Communication Studies (Lauren Mark)

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 was called to order at 4:02 p.m. The minutes of the January 25 and February 22 meetings were circulated and approved without correction. The Senate then turned to the following items of business.

It was agreed that the nominations for LA & S awards would be determined by the Senate operating as a "Committee of the Whole."

At the meeting of January 25, 2023, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Laura Barrett, discussed the status and responsibilities of the LA & S Senate. Department Chairs, she noted, do not believe that the Senate should continue as it has been constituted: It is too difficult to find representatives and the process of curricular review, up to now a major responsibility of the Senate, is "redundant." Most chairs thought it useful to have a senatorial body that would do "other things." The Dean suggested these:

Review of faculty candidates for LA & S Awards in Scholarship, Teaching, or Service.

Oversee an early career faculty mentorship program (with mentors outside of the faculty member's department).

Some LA & S Senators could liaise with the DEI or represent the Senate on the DEI council.

Manage the LA & S "Without Limits" program: for example, select a theme well enough in advance so that the "Without Limits" planning committee could function more effectively.

Strategizing and planning a "First-year seminar."

The Senators discussed each proposal and agreed to continue evaluating nominations for LA & S Awards in Scholarship, Teaching, or Service, contingent on funding from the Dean's Office. The Senate may seek to revisit the awards process or the criteria for conferring the awards.

The Senators also agreed that an early faculty mentorship program should be undertaken. Among the reasons given for doing so was the concern that young faculty are often isolated within their departments. Stephen Pampinella and Usha Vishnuvajjala volunteered to lead this effort, starting in early Fall of 2023.

As for the other proposed responsibilities, the Senate agreed that it is not within its purview to allocate a senator to the DEI council. Nor did the Senate wish to manage, or have a subcommittee manage, the "Without Limits" program. Faculty who wish to serve on these endeavors already have a route by which to do so. The Senate chose not to strategize or to plan a "First-year seminar," at least not without any prior university-wide commitment.

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