

## ASEF-PSOM EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Virtual and in person, 12:00pm – 1:30 pm, Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024,

Wood Room (John Morgan Building) and Zoom

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The meeting started at 12:01 pm called to order by Paul Lanken.

**Attendance was recorded:** Melpo Christofidou-Solomidou, Judith Aronchick, Frances Barg, Janice Bellace, Paul Lanken, Ana Lia Obaid, Steve Sondheimer, Joan Von Feldt, Peter Wilding (remote), Jeffrey Field, Arberetta Bowles, Jana Alrayes, Erin Rossello (remote), Priscilla Duncan, Judith McKenzie, Iris Reyes, Susan Heyner, Vicki Mulhern , Yvonne Paterson (remote).

**Absent:** Lesley Carson, John Hansen-Flaschen, Fred Henretig, Joel Greenberg, Marshall Myer.

1. **Minutes from last meeting – request for approval:**

Approved by all.

2. **Report and announcements by President, ASEF:** Paul Lanken reported:

- Defer talking about the lunch speakers for next years until May. Judy will be late today.
- We have all the bios and headshots submitted to Sarah from the SOM newly retired. I would like to thank Jeff, Joe, Fred, Fran, Steve, Joan, for contributing these bios. Paul asked Joel if it was a good idea to have a new tab on the website and every year to add everyone's bio on the website who is newly retired. Iris Reyes said she had a concern. She is part of the DEI effort and someone targeted one of the surgery residents from a podcast who was represented. Paul suggested that perhaps we can do this without the headshots. We also need as a council to decide if we add our personal emails (some retirees do not have professional emails anymore). The webpage of retired faculty disappears for many departments.
- **Yvonne** (remote) complained she can only see the agenda on the screen and not the people. We kept the format as is.
- April 16<sup>th</sup> is Steve Treat lunch lecture and the Lazaretto, May 15<sup>th</sup>. The retirement reception is May 6<sup>th</sup> and Mahoney lunch lecture on May 21<sup>st</sup>. The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Vicky Mulhern lecture is in January. Will need to finalize that.
- Regarding the social meeting after the last ASEF council in June, Arberetta suggested the 14<sup>th</sup> floor of BRB II/III. Must look into it-have not reserved yet. We could start that usual business meeting at 11:00 and end early by 12:30 to allow time to socialize.
- Regarding the Presidential Committee, it seemed that they want input from ASEF. They have an interim report. WE provided the link to everyone to read.

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We can be constructive in providing input into things we noticed in the medical School and the University and from the discussions with PASEF. Many groups feel disconnected. One of their goals is to build connectivity. We represent senior retired faculty (1000 emails to vote on candidates and had 72 responses-perhaps this indicates that people don't feel connected?); Many faculty are not in the handbook such as people in the Associated faculty or people in the SOM that do teaching (senior lecturers) that are non-faculty and I guess they do not feel connected; Also, graduate students organized to unionize-this can only happen if they do not feel they are well treated or represented. These are populations to bring to their attention as the commission tries to do their work. Also, the FIAP and utter disregard of retired and senior organizations of faculty, indicated we are not connected to the decision making of the institution. I hope we have a chance to share these ideas and bring up these populations. **Janice** commented that when they spoke to them, they focused a lot more on students. But the points raised were interesting. Lots of faculty feel that they are now treated not as faculty but instead they are informed of decisions, they are told what to do. Was it like this all the time, or since more recently? **Paul** reminded all, of the issue of Peter Wilding with the access to his computer if there is IP disputes post-retirement. He had no access to his computer and there is no policy to address this. **Janice** mentioned of a faculty member (Sheridan), Associated faculty, from the Dental School who tried to access her teaching slides post-retirement to teach as course, and everything was gone! Janice asked what are your rights as a faculty member post-retirement with regards to the information on your computer. Why are we denied access? We will need to bring this up to this committee. **Paul** agreed that this would be an issue of "connectivity". **Jeff** commented that they visited these issues especially with Associated faculty (he believed their pennkey was cut off) but was easily rectified by switching over to Workday. However, there is only the retiree status unless you become "adjunct". **Janice** commented that when people retire, whoever controls your accounts, cuts you off as if you were a staff person. Someone at the University level is trying to look at that. **Fran** commented that when you think of creating and sustaining a community, everyone here feels as a Penn person, representing the Penn values, and are a leading person in your field, and then all of a sudden, upon retirement you are out and no longer there! There is a cognitive dissidence between "we work hard as a university to retain you" and then all of a sudden, you are

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gone! What does it mean to belong here, and can we continue that beyond retirement? **Judith** commented: Once retiring, what value do we bring once we retire? **Fred** commented: What can we as emeritus faculty, contribute to? The answer is that we as the elders, we need to be consulted on things happening at the university. **Paul** commented that he agreed and that we have a voice. For example, PASEF has in their logo the word “advocate”, “inform”, and “engage”, so we DO have a voice. We need to have notes so we can reach back to them and remind them of what was said at our meeting. Also, by conveying concerns about other groups, not just us, shows our seniority. **Janice** commented: A few years back, at Penn, once your reunion class of undergrads reach the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion year, it is celebrated. Someone, an alumni said this is insulting and wanted to change the name of the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion, but people on the advisory board said NO, we cannot do that; so, we guard the Penn traditions. So, that is one of our roles, that is, institutional knowledge! Another comment on the IT: The medical school, for reasons of visibility, may want to keep our name somewhere.

3. **Report and announcements by President, PASEF:** Janice said that the faculty senate said that they are in favor of the idea to strengthen the paragraph in the handbook that talks about consultation, to say “and other groups” for matters that report to them. It is a weak sentence. From a legal sense, the university is not obligated to anything. It will be a stronger expression that they are supposed to consult with other groups. Janice also reported that Olivia Mitchel, an expert on retirement issues will give lecture on April 9<sup>th</sup> on longevity and awareness. Lecture by zoom at noon. They have the Lehman Trilogy at the Arden Theater Company on April 3<sup>rd</sup>.
4. **Reports by Chairs of ASEF Standing and Ad hoc Committees:**
  - a. **Lunch Talks and Other Lectures Committee** – Chair, Judith Aronchick: Paul mentioned that Judy asked to defer our voting until May. Just 9 people responded to the ranking email.
    - i. April 16 (Tuesday), 12-1 Lunch Lecture, by Dr. Steve Treat. SMILOW 12-146AB
    - ii. May 21, 2024 (Tuesday), 12-1, Lunch Lecture, by Kevin Mahoney. SMILOW 12-146AB
    - iii. Council’s preferences for speakers for Lunch Talks in FY25
    - iv. 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Vicki Mulhern Lecture (likely in January 2025) (Speaker will be Scott Halpern)

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- b. **Newsletter Committee** – Chair, John Hansen-Flaschen (absent): we have data on analytics. 85% opened the newsletter. There were over 1,000 email addresses. It was delivered to 96% (1,016 people received it but 43 bounced). We need to find out why it bounced and correct that. John wants to have another edition of the Encore to come out in the Fall. **Judith** commented that this was an example of building community! **Iris** commented that the newsletter could showcase one of us each time. **Judith** thanked Jana and Priscilla for keeping up with the website and for all their help.
  - c. **Website Committee** – Chair, Joel Greenberg: Not present
  - d. **Special Events** (includes the Joint Spring Reception for Retirees with PASEF and other ASEF sponsored events) – Chair, Yvonne Paterson (Paul Lanken and Fran Barg): **Yvonne** commented that they already had 2 events. We have the Lazzaretto coming up. 24 people signed up out of 40. Some people need carpooling. We would need help getting the proper place to park for this event.
    - i. Joint ASEF-PASEF Spring Reception for FY24 Retirees: Monday, May 6, 2024 (4-6 PM) in JMEC lobby
    - ii. Update re posters and registration numbers for Special Events: (Priscilla and Arberetta)
      - 1. Lazzaretto tour and talk (Wed, May 15, 2024) 10:30 -12 pm
  - e. **Community Outreach committee** (Fred Henretig, chair): **Fred** commented regarding participating to the outpatient clinics in September. Second and third year medical students will function as hands care providers with faculty preceptors. Assistant deans Horace Delisser and Cindy Christian from that program, were active into recruiting them in this idea to get retired faculty members recruited into this. The recent survey said 40 people indicated definite interest and >60 indicated they might be interested and more would be interested to participate. Now they are trying to form a panel to take the place of one of the monthly lecture slots (on September 16<sup>th</sup>) to offer a chance to some of the clinics to present themselves and showcase what they can do.
5. **Meeting with Presidential Commission’s representatives:** 12:44 pm  
Paul introduced the visitors. Everyone introduced themselves.
- a. Visitor: Vijay Kumar, PhD, School of Engineering and Applied Science
  - b. Visitor: Katharine O. Strunk, PhD, MA, Graduate School of Education
  - c. Agenda:
    - i. 12:45-12:50 – Introduction regarding mission of Commission (VK & KOS)
    - ii. 12:50-1:00 – ASEF Executive Council’s Statement (Joan Von Feldt)

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- iii. 1:00-1:25 – Plenary or breakout group discussions
- iv. 1:25-1:30 – Plenary: Summaries of discussions and recommendations

**Vijay Kumar** mentioned that he appreciated the vision/value statement, and it aligns with the commission, The commission was having meetings with many groups at Penn. Thinking of future of Penn and its values and how we can uphold them.

**Kathrine Strunk** commented that they are interested in building community. The focus is on values. The recommendations will go into a big report and given to the president. Paul commented we have over 700 people-years of experience and we could help with that!

The following is what ASEF prepared to facilitate the conversation with the presidential committee:

*This is our formal statement to the Presidential Commission on countering hate and building community: **We are part of the wider University community and as such, we endorse academic freedom, equity, excellence in scholarship and fairness. But, as a medical school we also believe that our values reflect our focus on individual, family and population health.***

***These are our goals incorporating established values and priorities and addressing building community.***

- 1) Excellence in medical research and innovation, clinical care scholarship and health science education**
- 2) Prioritizing and demonstrating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in medical research and innovation, clinical care, scholarship and health science education**
- 3) Academic Freedom, respect, and responsibility in healthcare and medical communications, promoting diversity, equity and inclusion**
- 4) Ensuring that all communications are peer reviewed, honest, and with the latest evidence supporting information that is disseminated.**
- 5) Supporting faculty, students and staff throughout their academic careers and providing for continued connection and involvement with Penn throughout retirement.**

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*Following are some issues that ASEF identified that would like to bring up to the visitors:*

- 1. Issue of ageism and bias against older faculty or retired faculty - as exemplified by the low priority to ensuring all retirees keep their upenn.edu email, PennKey and access to their computer files in retirement if desired. The inferior dental insurance plan is another anomaly that may reflect this bias. There was a complete lack of consultation with ASEF or PASEF when they changed the rules for FIAP reflects lack of respect as well as making us "invisible" - certainly not a vital connected part of the whole.*
- 2. Issues of graduate students who organized as a labor union (UPHS residents) or are in the process of organizing - why? Do they feel like they are a valued part of the Penn community? Listened to? Treated with respect consistently?*
- 3. Apparent lack of connection of senior and retired faculty to Penn, e.g., only 72 out of more than 1000 ASEF members voted re new Council members last June and only ? voted to approve the revised Bylaws. It looks like PSOM retired faculty this year - less than 50% will attend the May 6<sup>th</sup> reception.*
- 4. I would add that there is also bias against retired Associated Faculty such as the Research Track faculty! For example, the University administration has committed to conferring certain rights and privileges after retirement to faculty, but the commitment extends only those who were standing faculty and meet the Rule of 75. As far as we can tell, there is no University commitment to Associated faculty other than the fact that associated faculty can have a PennCard. Additionally, the University lets each School decide on its own whether to grant any rights or privileges. Recent search on this matter, could find no statement anywhere regarding how any of the 12 Schools treats retired Associated faculty.*

Meeting adjourned at 1:34.

Respectfully submitted,  
Melpo Christofidou-Solomidou, Ph.D., ML  
Secretary, ASEF Executive Council