

MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE, OCTOBER 14, 1996

The University Senate met in regular session at 3:00 p.m., Monday, October 14, 1996 in Room 115 of the Nursing Health Sciences Building.

Professor Jan Schach, Chairperson of the Senate Council, presided.

Members absent were: Allan Aja, M. Muhktar Ali*, Gary Anglin, John Ballantine, Vasant Bhapkar, Patricia Birchfield, Terry Birdwhistell, Darla Botkin, Joseph Burch, Mary Burke*, Laretta Byars, Johnny Cailleteau, Joan Callahan, Berry Campbell, Ben Carr, Edward Carter, Jordan L. Cohen*, Scott Coovert, Philip DeSimone*, Andrew Dreibel, Richard Edwards, Robert Farquhar*, Juanita Fleming*, William Fortune*, Donald Frazier*, Richard Furst, Thomas Garrity*, Beatrice Gaunder, Philip Greasley, Ottfried Hahn*, Christine Havice, James Holsinger, Robert Houtz*, Betty Huff*, Edward Jennings*, James Knoblett, Craig Koontz, Thomas Lester*, G.T. Lineberry*, C. Oran Little, M. Pinar Menguc, Douglas Michael*, Jenny Miller, Karen Mingst*, David Mohny*, David Nash*, Phyllis Nash*, Wolfgang Natter*, Anthony Newberry, Thomas Nieman, Michael Nietzel, William OConnor, Melanie Shay Onkst, Daniel Reedy, Thomas Robinson, Michael Rohmiller, Avinash Sathaye*, David Shipley, David Stockham, George Wagner, Jesse Weil*, Charles Wethington*, Carolyn Williams*, Eugene Williams, Lionel Williamson, Emery Wilson, Phyllis Wise, Craig Wood, Ernest Yanarella*, Elisabeth Zinser*.

* Absence Explained

Chairperson Schach stated the Minutes of the September meeting had been distributed and asked if there were any corrections or additions. Professor Gretchen LaGodna asked that the questions following the Presidents remarks be included in the minutes. The minutes were approved as amended.

The Chair made the following announcements:

The Senate Council discussed the issue of Student Senator attendance at the Senate meetings and whether they should be included in the policy of three strikes and youre out. With careful consideration and consultation with the student government president, Alan Aja, it was decided they should be included in the attendance policy. In the future the policy will be communicated to students who are considering running for those positions and that their attendance in both the Senates is a part of that election. The policy will be made more clear, so when those people consider running they will adjust their schedules accordingly in the future.

A reminder about midterm grades and the Senate Rule regarding midterm grades, Section 5.1.0.1 which states, by the last day of class before the midterm withdrawal date all teachers must inform the undergraduate students in their courses of their current grade based on the criteria within the syllabus. October 25, 1996 is the last day to drop.

There was a decision by the Rules and Election Committee on a question regarding the posting of syllabi on the Web or electronic posting. The were problems regarding long paper syllabi that are being put on the Web as a way to eliminate duplication and wasted paper. The Rules Committee has decided that it is against the Senate Rule concerning providing free copies of the syllabus to students. In the future all students must be given a free paper copy of the syllabus. The students are now being charged to print from the Web, so this was in contradiction to the rules, according the to Rules Committee.

A point of order was raised from the floor concerning appointments to the Senate Standing Committees. Four of the Standing Committees have non-senators as chairs. Do the rules permit the Senate Council to make these appointments? Rules and Elections, which seems to be a key committee, is chaired by a non-senator, Academic Planning and Priority is chaired by a non-senator who is not from an academic department. Is this appropriate and within the rules?

Chairperson Schach said her understanding is that the Senate Council has the ability to waive that rule. When senators are called to commit to committees, it is difficult to get a yes answer, particularly when it comes to the responsibilities of the chair of a committee. It is common practice for the Senate Council to have to go outside the Senate in order to get people to agree to serve. The Senate Council carefully considers people they believe have strong backgrounds in that area and are committed and responsible. Professor LaGodna said the same question was raised in a previous year and the case was the same, that particular people are selected to chair committees because of their background and expertise in relation to the charge of that committee. The chair of some committees requires very specific types of background and sometimes that is not found in the group of senators.

Chairperson Schach said she would be glad to explain the rationale for the selection of those individuals in question. She stated the rule would be reviewed before the next Senate meeting and presented then.

The Chair recognized Professor Loys Mather for a report on the activities of The Council of Senate Faculty Leaders. Loys is the chair of that committee. They have been quite active in working with the governors Task Force on Higher Education.

Professor Mather made the following remarks:

I am here to bring you up to date on what is happening with COSFL and how it is tied in with the Governors Task Force on Post Secondary Education.

What is COSFL? COSFL is the Coalition on Senate and Faculty Leaders for Higher Education in Kentucky. It is made up of the University Faculty Trustees and Faculty Regents from the eight public universities, the Senate Chairs from each of the institutions, and one or two additional representatives as the Senate Councils of the various schools might designate.

We meet on a fairly regular basis. The major role of the organization is to serve an advocacy role for higher education. In addition there is a subgroup of COSFL, the faculty trustees and faculty regents which serves as an advisory committee to the staff of the Council on Higher Education. While that group was inactive for a good number of years, last year it became quite active and now meets with the CHE staff on a more frequent basis. We will be meeting with them next month to give faculty input into the program review process that the Council has in place which they are considering some modifications to.

The faculty trustees and regents are also involved with the Governors Task Force and have been invited to serve as an advisory committee along with various other groups for this commission on post secondary education. The task force has had several public meetings. There was an organizational meeting in the summer and a meeting in September when they heard their first report from the consultants. The task force has hired two consultants. One is from NCHEMS, which is a higher education management consultant group. The second consultant is from the Education Commission of the States. Both consultants are headquartered in Colorado. I think both of these persons are providing some very useful overview and insight into this process.

The advisory groups (faculty, students, employers, etc), have been invited to present position papers to the task force. They will be due very shortly. COSFL is also developing some papers to present. One of the papers will deal with distance education, providing the faculty perspective on the role of distance education. One will likely deal with technology and the type of support that we feel is necessary from the faculty perspective on increasing technology needs. One will address governance. The Governor has specifically invited faculty to be a part of this process. He has said publicly that one of the mistakes made with KERA was that faculty were not involved at an early stage in the planning of KERA and that he did not want to see that done a second time. We appreciate the

fact that we have been involved in the post secondary education review task force and are supportive of the effort he is providing. On the other hand, we feel in order to make a meaningful input as faculty, we need to be involved on a continuing basis, so one of the proposals we will be making to the task force is that a faculty representative be placed on the Council on Higher Education or whatever successive body they might choose.

During the meeting this morning the consultants gave their presentation on some alternative funding models for higher education. This included one very excellent presentation on the state of existing funding for higher education. Of even more interest was a second presentation by the consultants on "What are Some Alternatives and Where do We Go From Here."

Where is this review of higher education going to go? No one really knows at this point. The Governor and the Task Force members have indicated that these are basically public hearings and they are keeping an open mind to the various viewpoints that are being presented. This is why we as faculty decided we needed to make a response through our position papers. We felt it was important to at least speak our view points and get them on the agenda. It does appear that the Governor seems to have an open mind in terms of what direction the system might go. If there is a preconceived plan then it has been very well concealed. It appears to be an open agenda at this point and could involve funding or governance. The next meeting will be a month from today in Frankfurt and the main topic will deal with governance.

Professor Virginia Davis-Nordin asked if there were going to be open hearings by the commission around the state and would he recommend faculty attend.

Professor Mather said in the early stages they thought that would happen but he had not hear any dates yet. He felt that it was imperative the faculty, especially faculty senators attend. The task force needs to hear from faculty and they especially need to hear from UK as the primary land grant and research institution in the state. They need to hear our perspective.

Chairperson Schach thanked Professor Mather for his great leadership of that group. She has attended a number of meetings and can attest to the fact that there are representatives from all the different schools with all their different interests at these meetings and the group tends to wander. Lois is able to manage the meeting extremely well.

AGENDA ITEM I: Proposal to amend University Senate Rules, Section V - Oral Communication Requirement, University Studies Program.

Proposal

All programs currently offering alternative routes to fulfillment of the USP oral communication requirement outside the Department of Communication who wish to continue these offerings may submit requests for recertification of those alternatives to the USP Committee over the next three years (until the end of the 1998-99 academic year.) Those alternatives not requesting and receiving recertification will no longer qualify as alternative routes beginning in the 1999-2000 academic year. During those three years a moratorium on any new alternative is declared while the recertification process is completed and evaluated. At that time a decision will be made regarding whether the moratorium should be lifted.

The USP Committee will develop, in cooperation with the Department of Communication, a set of criteria outlining the basis for recertification which will be made available to all programs currently offering alternative routes for fulfillment of the oral communication requirement. The Department of Communication will provide an evaluation of recertification proposals to the USP committee prior to the USP Committee's decision.

To be recertified, alternatives would typically satisfy the following minimum criteria in addition to those developed by the USP Committee. For those alternative routes composed of multiple course sequences it would be expected that these criteria would be met by the sequence though perhaps

not by every course in that sequence.

-Students will receive instruction from instructors with appropriate expertise in the development of oral communication ability

-Students will utilize substantial and credible resource material (e.g., textbooks

focused on oral communication skill development)

-Students will be provided substantial opportunity to practice, receive feedback, and be evaluated on the core oral communication competencies

-Students will be required to develop the ability to communicate across diverse

audiences

-A significant part of the final grade(s) offered in the course(s) will be dependent on the acquisition of the oral communication abilities taught

This proposal is offered in the hopes of ensuring that students acquire the oral communication skills necessary to fulfill their role as an active member of a democratic society while recognizing the realities of the current University environment. The ability to use language ethically and effectively in oral communication contexts and across a diverse community of interests is a quality of any liberally educated person in contemporary society.

Rationale:

For the 1995-96 academic year the USP Committee reviewed the alternatives routes for satisfying the Oral Communication requirement in general education which were approved when the program first went into place in 1988. Some of these routes appear to be quite effective; other are little more than superficial attempts to provide students with an opportunity to speak in front of a group. In the latter case the USP Committee was dismayed both by the absence of any special competency on the part of the instructor and by the paucity of classroom instruction regarding the principles and practices of public speaking or interpersonal communication.

In addition, the USP Committee found that in alternative routes, the focus of oral communication instruction was on communication practices specific to particular professions rather than on the development of general oral communication abilities applicable across a variety of communication contexts. The goal of University Studies is to provide foundational skills and knowledge which are applicable across many different situations and circumstances. Courses in USP do not take as their primary objective preparation for a particular major or profession although academic programs typically do supplement areas of USP with specific applications (e.g., in writing, history). General studies courses in oral communication, like those in other areas, should prepare students to function in a multiplicity of contexts and across varied groups of people. For this reason, the USP Committee recommended that the oral communication requirement be fulfilled with the foundation of offerings in the Department of Communication, where highly qualified persons in the field can establish a basis on which to add professionally oriented courses in public speaking or interpersonal communication. The Committee commended the efforts of some programs for creating such specialized opportunities across the curriculum in hopes they would continue those programs for their majors as supplemental to the general education program.

The USP Committee believed that it was time to place the responsibility for developing the students general oral communication skills precisely where it belongs, in the Communication Department. For that reason the Committee recommended to the Senate Council that all alternative routes for fulfilling the oral communication requirement be eliminated over a three year period.

However, after extended discussion with involved parties the Senate Council arrived at the present compromise which allows for recertification

if alternative routes which meet criteria designed to ensure students receive meaningful instruction in the development of oral communication ability.

If approved, the proposal will be sent to the Rules Committee for codification.

Implementation Date: Immediate

Chairperson Schach recognized Professor Jim Applegate, chair-elect of the Senate Council for introduction of the item. Professor Applegate reviewed the background of the proposal and stated it came with the recommendation of the Senate Council.

Chairperson Schach then recognized Professor Lou Swift from Undergraduate Studies to give some background on the original proposal by the USP Committee. She stated Professor Swift is the chair of the USP Committee and will be informing the Senate about what the original USP Committee proposal was about.

Professor Swift made the following remarks:

The proposal you have to consider this afternoon is not the one originally submitted by the University Studies Committee, but it resembles in large measure the minority view of the Committee when a vote was taken last spring about what we thought should be done. The majority of the Committee on a very close vote recommended that over a period for three years the alternate routes be discontinued and that students satisfy the requirement through a course in the Department of Communication. I will explain the rationale for this in a moment, but first let me provide a little history of the general activities of the Committee and some of the background on the Oral Communications recommendation.

For the past few years, the Committee has taken upon itself to review one component of the University Studies Program each year. A few years ago we focused on the cross-cultural component and actually changed the rule regarding who should be covered by this requirement. Two years ago we looked at the Cross-Disciplinary component, and most recently we spent most of the academic year examining the Oral Communication Requirement. Our procedure here was to invite a variety of programs to talk with the Committee about what they were doing. Our intention was simply to understand how things were going; we had no intention at the time to recommend changes.

The results of our interviews were both positive and negative. Some of the alternate routes were quite good. Faculty were working hard in designing and implementing programs, and students were acquiring some needed skills. In other cases this was not at all true. Individuals with little or no knowledge or experience in oral communication were doing their, best but one would be hard pressed to say that they were doing a really professional job.

The second thing we discovered was that all of the alternate routes were focused on developing a students skills either in connection with a particular discipline or in preparation for a particular profession. We commended and do commend those departments and colleges which are training their students in particular areas or majors to communicate well. We hoped that with the proposed change these departments would continue their own programs and allow students to build upon the foundation acquired in the Department of Communication.

In short, the Committee was dismayed over some of the alternate routes currently in place, but the thrust of its recommendation really was not predicated on that issue. The recommendation to discontinue the alternate routes over a three year period was primarily focused on the fact that the alternate routes really were designed for a particular purpose or a particular field whereas the University Studies Program is intended to address the generic training of individuals. The feeling of the majority of the Committee was that, following the pattern of other requirements in USP (e.g. the writing requirement is taught by English faculty, the Math

requirement by math faculty and the foreign language requirement by foreign language faculty), the foundational course in oral communication belonged in the College of Communication and Information Systems.

I think it is important to remember that the alternate routes were established initially to solve a financial problem. When the Oral Communication requirement was included in the USP program, there were not sufficient funds available to provide enough resources to the Department of Communication to handle all of the students who were covered by the new requirement. For this reason the USP Committee originally spent at least a year and a half reviewing proposals from a variety of units to provide alternate routes. I should say that the sub-committee chaired by Mike Kerwin did its work very well. At that time we established three criteria for endorsing alternate routes. There needed to be some instruction in communication, there needed to be a sufficient amount of time devoted to practice, and there needed to be a grading system that primarily focused on the students communicative skills as distinct from his or her command of particular subject matter. The sub-committee did a consistent and careful job of scrutinizing each of the proposals, and the result is that we now have twenty two departments or colleges with alternate means of fulfilling the oral communication requirement.

At this juncture I think it is fair to say that the criteria we employed at the time have proven to be insufficient to assure quality of instruction or the kind of broad focus which we thought was part of every USP offering. Even the alternate routes which combine a one-credit course in the Principles of Communications taught by the Communication Department with senior seminars in the discipline have not proven very satisfactory. A student can take COM 199 in her freshman or sophomore year and not use this knowledge formally until her senior seminar. Needless to say, the two components may be of little relevance to one another.

The Committee decided to recommend that the alternate routes be phased out over a period of three years. We knew that this proposal would require a reorganization of departmental resources in the College of Communications and Information Systems, and, indeed, we consulted with the chair of the Department of Communication about this very point. He indicated to us that he felt that over a period of time it would be possible to provide the necessary sections to cover all student needs. The Committee agreed that it is essential that this resource be in place before any of the alternate routes are phased out. We also knew that it would take some time for departments and colleges across campus to adjust, and we considered three years to be a reasonable transition phase.

Jan will describe for you the fate of the proposal as it was discussed by the Senate Council, which initially endorsed it, and, then, when certain issues were raised by a variety of departments on campus, the council reconsidered its view. I was not privy to those discussions although I did attend the initial session to explain where the Committee was coming from and what were the issues which it discussed in arriving at its recommendation.

Let me say a word, if I may, about the proposal which is in front of you. It resembles in many ways the minority view of the Committee which was voiced by individuals who felt that the original proposal was too draconian and that we should not, as it were, penalize departments which were doing a good job in order to correct ones which were less than adequate. I should reiterate, however, that the decision was not based primarily on whether some programs were good and some others not, but on the fact that the alternate routes were developing students skills in a particular area rather than along the broad lines which general education is supposed to promote.

In any event, it is clear to all of the Committee members, that we need to have more stringent guidelines in evaluating the alternate routes. Since the alternate routes are tied to majors or professions, we have, in

fact, 22 different programs designed for 22 different clientele with 22 different foci. If we are going to keep these alternatives, and if we choose not to endorse the proposal in front of you, I believe we will need twenty-two sets of objectives and twenty-two plans for determining whether individual units are achieving them. I am fully in favor of assessing performance by results, but we should have no illusions about the complexity of the task which lies ahead. It was partly for that reason, I believe, that the minority on the Committee were well disposed to the kind of criteria which are set forth in the proposal. These criteria, I gather, do not imply that instructors teaching oral communication in alternate routes need to have an academic degree in the subject but that they need to have some training or experience in the general field.

Finally, some individuals have expressed concern about the whole matter of recertification or the prospect of losing certification. Those of you who have been at the University for awhile will remember that when the University Studies Program was first approved, Loys Mather suggested that there be a sunset clause attached to all the courses in USP. I do not think that particular recommendation was adopted, but I know that the notion of periodically reviewing USP courses was part of the initial resolution. The Committee endorses that concept, and I think I speak for all the members in saying that we feel rather strongly that all of the courses in the University Studies Program ought to come up for periodic recertification. In short, there ought to be some sort of a sunset clause and that every five years or so each department which offers courses in the USP ought to be asked to indicate why the courses which were initially approved should be continued in the USP program. It is only in this way, I believe, that we will be able to keep track of developments, and such a system would give departments an opportunity to rethink what contributions they want to make to general education.

I turn the floor back now to Jan Schach who will undoubtedly talk a little bit about the discussions which took place within the Senate Council and which led to the proposal we are examining. We all have a common interest in providing the very best instruction for undergraduates that we can. If we keep this objective in mind - rather than hours, courses, and our own programmatic interests, I think all of us will benefit. Thank you.

Chairperson Schach stated that the Senate Council approved the original proposal from the USP Committee. That decision was communicated to all the alternative programs and after that point in time a letter to the Senate Council was received with multiple signatures containing a compromise proposal. It basically asked that programs be allowed to reapply as an alternative route under stated criteria and evaluated by the USP Committee. Due to the number of signatures on the letter it was taken to the Senate Council and they approved it for discussion. It was not put into the form of a motion, because according to parliamentary procedure the motion would have to be forwarded by someone who voted in favor of the prior proposal and no one was willing to do that. In the interim, Senate Council member Jim Applegate developed a compromise to the compromise that you have in your hand. Jim will describe the rationale behind that.

Professor Applegate said they tried to create a compromise that preserved the spirit of the proposal from the various alternative groups allowing for recertification while acknowledging the good work of the USP Committee and the causes they addressed. The USP Committee would try and layout some basic criteria they felt anyone would want to see adopted for any course meeting any University Studies criteria. That is, basically, that instructors have appropriate expertise, they use good resource material, they provide substantial opportunity to develop a skill and a good part of the final grade would be tied to that particular skill. The Senate Council considered the compromise to the compromise proposal and thought it was reasonable and allowed for the programs that were

developing efforts in good faith. The Council hopes out of this process would become better and stronger alternative routes. It was approved by the Senate Council for referral to the Senate.

Don Sands (Chemistry) said that Chemistry was very alarmed by the possibility that their oral communication program might be decertified. They feel they have a good program, they use Communication 199 for one credit and then the students take two semesters of Chemistry 572, a Chemistry Seminar. This is a very effective program, it works very well for Chemistry students. If this program were to be certified, probably would continue requiring the two semesters of Chemistry Seminar, which means the students would take two additional hours. At the same time they strongly support the concept of evaluation, they feel all components of University Studies should be evaluated and the oral communication requirement should be evaluated regularly. We would hope that the present proposal could be replaced by a proposal that would emphasize the outcomes rather than the process and that would attempt to determine whether or not student's communication skills are being developed adequately. We realize this is a very difficult type of evaluation. We think this is the kind of evaluation that is in keeping with the objectives of oral communication requirement. We would hope that a new proposal would provide mechanisms for cooperation between departments and the rest of the University. We would welcome the advice and help of the Department of Communications specifically on improving our program. We do not claim it is perfect but feel it is a good one and would like the opportunity to make it better. Finally they would like to see decertification used as a last resort, not as the principle thrust of the proposal.

Hans Gesund (Engineering) asked if the oral communications course that everyone would have to take would be taught by faculty or by TAs. If by TAs, then he does not feel it is as good as what is now being done where it is taught entirely by faculty in the various individual departments.

Jim Applegate said this is not a proposal to eliminate everything, but would go through a process of evaluation and recertification. Speaking to Professor Sands point of including outcomes, if you notice the second paragraph, these are just presented as minimal criteria and the USP Committee will develop their own criteria. There could be some outcome criteria that we would all help to develop. In that respect we are not talking about the elimination of every alternative, a number of alternatives seemed to be doing a good job and I expect the USP Committee will choose to leave those in place. In specific answer to the question, many of the sections are taught by teaching assistants, 90 percent of the courses are taught by people with masters degrees who are working on their doctorates or ABD in doctorates. There are people with good qualifications under direct faculty supervision.

George Blandford (Engineering) stated he had two problems with the proposal, one the moratorium on new programs over the next three years, and secondly, they are asked to vote on a proposal that is really not complete yet. The USP is going to come up with criteria for evaluation or recertification and they have no idea what that will be. He would like to see the motion tabled until at least they find out what the USP Committee plan is. The motion was seconded.

Dr. Swift asked if he was asking the committee to come up with one set of criteria which will apply across the board to all departments and would mean that the criteria would be generic in nature or if you asking for a set of criteria which will probably include outcomes and is tailored to the individual programs. The committee needs to know what is being requested. This can be approached two ways. It can be endorsed but it will not be put into place until they see the criteria, or you can ask to see the criteria first and if you are talking about 22 programs you are probably talking about 22 sets of criteria. If that is the case, he would ask the departments and colleges that have such programs to develop the

goals they have for their programs.

Professor Blandford said that he would be asking for generic criteria because if they are going to put in outcomes they can be defined by the individual departments.

Pamela Kidd (Nursing) said they could not endorse the proposal in its current form but would welcome input as a college into the debate surrounding this and the development of outcome criteria. She feels they are talking about core competencies and it is possible to develop outcome criteria in relation to core competencies. They already have outcome criteria for the specific competencies of communication within the 22 specialties. They would welcome the opportunity to serve in some capacity with the task force or the USP committee to give some wisdom of how they would like to see the core competencies evaluated, but definitely believe there is room for core and specific in the current format.

Chairperson Schach asked if Professor Blandford was open to amending his motion that there be consultation on the development of the general criteria, that the USP consult with programs. Professor Blandford answered yes.

Jim Applegate said that in the discussion of this that the Department of Communication would like to make clear it that there are core competencies in being a effective communicator in front of groups and making presentations and engaging in the type of civil public discourse that we see so lacking across the public sector today. When creating these there is nothing wrong with specific competency in relation to programs and this would be a wonderful idea. They are devoting faculty time to be a consultant to the Teaching and Learning Center to work with different programs to develop those. They have a consultant in the writing center to coach individual students and people to develop this. Last summer for these first time they put together an oral communication across the curriculums seminar model lab, so they are totally in support of that. If the USP Committees consideration of this is to hold onto the idea that there are core competencies that are about being able to present ideas effectively and civilly to various types of groups in the public sector that go beyond professional interest and as long as we can hold onto that then we have a meaningful requirement. I hope we will do that whatever the outcome of todays discussion.

Tom Blues (English) wanted to point out that they were asking the USP Committee to generate criteria for special interest when what they originally did was to try to restore the communication requirement to the general liberal education component. There is an interesting irony in these requests since we are not yet discussing a really important principle, whether we are talking about oral communication as part of a liberal education or whether it should fit into the particular curricula of individual disciplines. It goes back to the USP Committee to figure out ways in which a group of biologists, mathematicians, English professors, socialists, and others can figure out whether an ag economist can effectively teach oral communications.

Horst Schach (Landscape Architecture) asked if they were starting to look at outcomes measurement. Were there ever students who tested out of communication courses. Is there a need and the mechanism to do that? Professor Applegate said there was a bypass exam that was taken regularly and passed.

Virginia Davis-Nordin (Education) felt that the motion should not be returned to the USP Committee. She said there were people there who were ready to discuss whether this should be a specific or a general program and would like to hear the discussion and if it is referred back to the committee they will not hear the discussion.

Gretchen LaGodna opposed sending it back to the USP Committee, she would prefer that they endorse or not endorse the idea of the compromise and if it is endorsed then the USP Committee can be asked to submit those

criteria back for Senate consideration.

Heath Lovel (Engineering) hated to see everyone made to take the communication class and some departments still require more classes.

Mike Friedman (Theater) said that the recertification proposal is a good one. No one can oppose the idea of examining on a periodic basis any USP requirement. He felt that the department courses that fulfill the requirement need reexamination. This proposal does not contain quite enough details for support or condemnation. The criteria that are presented are somewhat general, he supports an approach whereby any course that meets this certification will meet general requirements and will be discipline specific. He would like to know more about who will make the decisions as to whether or not recertification will be forthcoming. He would support an interdisciplinary advisory committee on this. As the proposal is currently configured it is the department of Communication that has an interest and advises the USP Committee. He supports the decision to return to the USP and ask for more details.

Chairperson Schach clarified that the proposal states that the USP Committee would make the final decision and it is about as cross disciplinary as it is going to get. Professor Friedman stated it also said that the Department of Communication would be the key advisors in the decision. He knows from discussion with individuals involved that will weigh heavily with the USP. He is asking that an interdisciplinary approach be taken to the advisement as well as to the decision.

Professor Gesund said it specifically stated that the Department of Communications will provide an evaluation of recertification proposals to the USP Committee.

Professor Schach asked if they were ready to vote on the motion to send the proposal back to the USP Committee to generate general criteria for evaluation with consultation with interested parties.

The motion to send the proposal back to the USP failed in a show of hands, 29 for, 35 opposed.

Joe Davis (Agriculture) said he would like to go back to 1988 when USP was brought into existence. It was mentioned that they did not have the resources at that time to be able to meet the demand for the communication courses that had been approved to meet the USP oral communication requirement. If you evaluate today where we stand, you will find at this point that most of the classes are closed; that it is very difficult to get into these classes. He does not want to return to 1988 when their college was requiring Communication 181 as a college requirement before USP started. At that point they could not get their students into that class; they were not able to get them in until they were juniors and seniors. Some of the same concept exists today. His evaluation indicates that 27% of the students in Communications 181 are juniors and seniors. Also in Communications 251 and 252 there are even a higher proportion of juniors and seniors. If we are going to have this requirement Communications must meet this requirement and have the resources committed now that will say an appropriate number of sections will be added to cover the students that will be coming into those courses as a result of decertification. It has already been indicated that some of those programs are going to be decertified. He would argue they should have already been decertified if they are not meeting the requirements USP designed for oral communications. He is not arguing that if they are not meeting the requirement they should continue. Are the resources committed to the Department of Communications to add the multiple sections that are going to be required? They have a relatively small college, with about 200 freshmen coming. With 25 students to a section that is ten new sections just for their college. How many sections would be required with the other 21 programs? He has not heard any discussion about the source availability to be able to meet this. The other issue has to do with timing. The reason they left Communications 181 is because they could not

get their students in until they were seniors; they did not feel that was early enough in the program. They were not able to use the materials, the concepts, and the skills that are in communications in any of their courses. So they instituted two new courses, one at the freshman level and one at the sophomore level that in fact interfaces with the communication requirement. Most of the programs would like to have the oral communication requirement satisfied first semester or second semester at the absolute latest so those skills and that knowledge could be used in other courses as they go through the programs. So the issue is not only enough sections but enough sections to get the students in the first semester they are here. Their programs would require that, the alternate route that they have is second semester at the latest. Transfers are another issue. Do we have the resources? Have they been committed now, not after decertification but before? He also has an issue with the USP advocating their responsibility on deciding which programs meet the requirements and which programs do not. If every program was evaluated there must be a list of the ones they think do not meet the requirements, and a list of the ones who do but needs some improvement. He would like to see that come forth as part of the recommendation. In terms of supporting the concept of sending it back to USP, he would like to put it into USP hands so they are the ones that make the decision.

Monica Kerns (Psychology) said the criteria that she has the most confusion about is what is meant by appropriate expertise in communications. She wonders is the communications department will decide that only communications faculty have an appropriate expertise.

Professor Applegate said that was left intentionally vague because that is for the USP Committee to decide. Currently among the alternative routes there are people with degrees, people without degrees with a lot of professional experience, and people with a lot of training in the external community. It was more specific before and the compliant from that draft was it was too specific and we made it more general. It is curious that we have alternate routes for communications and we do not for others. If there were alternate routes for the sciences, if the USP Committee were going to decide which nonscience courses counted as science than they would want to consult with the people who teach science. Communications only saw themselves as a resource; not an arbitrator. In looking at the alternatives now, across the various units there are some very good people teaching professionally oriented oral communications courses, with a variety of backgrounds. There is no reason to believe since the USP Committee approved them along the way that they will not again, as long as there is some element as the appropriate expertise.

Professor Swift stated the Professor Davis point was well taken, especially about the business of resources. All he can do is to assure that the USP Committee is not going to decertify programs when they know that the resources are not there. There are problems now with freshman not being able to get into the communications. The discussion in the USP Committee was if the resources are not there, this proposal is off. The other point about the criteria for determining which programs are good and which ones are not, the reason they went back to the Senate Council was that initially they approved all the 22 alternate routes on three basic criteria. They discovered, in looking at the programs, that those criteria were not sufficient to guarantee quality over the long run. There are a couple of issues floating around, should the USP courses be tied to a discipline and the issue quality. That is why they have come back and said they do not feel it is appropriate for someone who doesn't know about oral communications at all to teach a course.

Brad Canon (Political Science) said he was chair of the Senate Council when University Studies was put into place in 1988. They had long conversations with Administration about resources after development of the program and one of the reasons for the alternate routes was that there was

not sufficient resources in the Department of Communications to teach the communications courses necessary if students were going to get them in their freshman and sophomore years. He asked if there had been any new discussion with Administration for funds?

Professor Swift said the answer to the question is to decide what is academically desirable and on the basis of that go and talk about resources, not the reverse.

Dan Fulks (Business and Economics) felt that the University has a long history of making academic decisions based upon resources. It troubles him to hear them say that they would pass judgment on what is a piece of an academic program because there are not enough resources available somewhere else. If a program is unworthy of being certified, they it should be decertified. He has a problem basing the decision on the question of whether or not resources are available.

Hans Gesund said he was somewhat disturbed by the fact that they are being told oral communications now is being taught by people not qualified to teach. He wonders that a faculty member who has been teaching for years is not more qualified than a TA. Something that is being missed here is that the budget is a closed system. Any additional resources that are going to go to oral communications are going to come from other departments.

The question was moved and seconded. The motion to stop debate passed in show of hands 39 for, 18 against.

The proposal failed to pass in a show of hands; 25 for, 39 against.

AGENDA ITEM 2: Proposal to amend University Senate Rules, Section V - Grades and Marking systems - to establish a plus/minus grading system for the College of Social Work

Background

In the debate regarding instituting the plus/minus system for all University undergraduate students, as well as solely in the College of A&S, the College of Social Work supported enactment of the University-wide plus/minus grading system. Following the Senate action in March 1996, supporting the A&S proposal, and the Senate action in April 1996, supporting the College of Communication and Information Studies College Advisory Council request that their College be added to the list of those wishing to have plus/minus grading, the College of Social Work faculty formally requested that their College be added to the list.

Their proposal was accepted by the Chair of Admissions and Academic Standards as an extension of the earlier debate. The Senate Council recommends the proposal to the Senate.

Proposal: [Add to Section V - 5. 1.0 the bold sections below]

5.1.0 Grades and Marking Systems

College of Social Work

The following grades are given with the respective point value indicated

B+	3.3	C+	2.3	D+	1.3	E=O
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A	4.0	B	3.0	C	2.0	D	1.0
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A-	3.7	B-	2.7	C-	1.7	D-	0.7
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The use of the plus-minus system does not change any college or university grade point average requirements, nor the method by which grade point averages are computed, nor the interpretations of other grades awarded, such as F, I, P, W, & S. (US: 9/20/93)

For all studio work in the College of Architecture, the minimum passing grade from level to level in the studio sequence shall be a grade of "C". (US:5/2/78; US: 9/20/93)

All students enrolled in courses using the plus/minus grading system will have the appropriate point value calculated into their grade point average regardless of their College of origin.

Rationale:

A +/- grading system will provide more precise and accurate evaluation of student performance. The distinctions are seen as especially helpful in

courses that carry a large number of credit hours. Other units which have +/- grading systems have been satisfied with the process.

Implementation Date: Fall, 1997

Note: If approved, the proposal will be sent to the Rules Committee for codification.

Chairperson Schach recognized Professor Jim Applegate for introduction of the item. Professor Applegate reviewed the background and recommended approval of the item.

Mandy Lewis (Social Work - Student) stated she was not in favor of the proposal and neither are most the students in her college that she has spoken with. Most Social Work majors require classes that are in Arts and Sciences that are already on the plus/minus grading system.

Heather Burris (Allied Health - Student) stated she was against the plus/minus system for any college, not just Social Work, because of inconsistencies between universities when applying to different selected programs. The students who last year might have taken a very hard course and got a 90% received a 4.0, but a student in the same situation this year will get a 3.7. This makes a big difference when applying to graduate schools. She believes it is just more stress on the students; she does not believe you should be punished for making a 95 instead of a 96. She also feels the faculty should ask the students, not just the student senators, and maybe poll the entire college (not just something in the Kernel.) She believes many students are against plus/minus.

Michael Thomlin (Graduate School - Student) was concerned about the way the Senate was embarrassing itself in front of the colleges and universities across the state. He had talked to about 280 students and less than 3% of the students are in favor of plus/minus. Plus/minus grading hurts graduate students who are TAs, it hurts undergraduate students, especially the excellent students, it hurts in admissions to graduate and professional schools, it hurts as far as obtaining and retaining merit based scholarships, and it hurts in awards and honors. The first proposal that came was one for university-wide and that was defeated which means that the Senate is not particularly interested in plus/minus grading system for the university as a whole.

The proposal failed in a show of hands; 33 for, 40 opposed.

AGENDA ITEM 3: Proposal to amend University Senate Rules, Section V - Grades and Marking systems - to establish a plus/minus grading system for the College of Human Environment Sciences

Background

In the debate regarding instituting the plus/minus system for all University undergraduate students, as well as solely in the College of A&S, the College of Human Environmental Sciences supported enactment of the University-wide plus/minus grading system. Following the Senate action in March, 1996, supporting the A&S proposal, and the Senate action in April, 1996, supporting the College of Communication and Information Studies College Advisory Council request that their College be added to the list of those wishing to have plus/minus grading, the College of Human Environmental Sciences faculty formally requested that their College be added to the list.

Their proposal was accepted by the Chair of Admissions and Academic Standards as an extension of the earlier debate. The Senate Council recommends the proposal to the Senate.

Proposal: [Add to Section V - 5.1.0 the bold sections below]

5.1.0 Grades and Marking Systems

College of Human Environmental Sciences

The following grades are given with the respective point value indicated

B+	3.3	C+	2.3	D+	1.3	E=O
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A	4.0	B	3.0	C	2.0	D	1.0
---	-----	---	-----	---	-----	---	-----

A-	3.7	B-	2.7	C-	1.7	D-	0.7
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The use of the plus-minus system does not change any college or

university grade point average requirements, nor the method by which grade point averages are computed, nor the interpretations of other grades awarded, such as F, I, P, W, & S. (US: 9/20/93)

For all studio work in the College of Architecture, the minimum passing grade from level to level in the studio sequence shall be a grade of "C." (US:5/2/78; US: 9/20/93)

All students enrolled in courses using the plus/minus grading system will have the appropriate point value calculated into their grade point average regardless of their College of origin.

Rationale:

A +/- grading system will provide more precise and accurate evaluation of student performance. The distinctions are seen as especially helpful in courses that carry a large number of credit hours. Other units which have +/- grading systems have been satisfied with the process.

Implementation Date: Fall, 1997

Note: If approved, the proposal will be sent to the Rules Committee for codification.

Chairperson Schach recognized Professor Applegate for introduction of the item. Professor Applegate reviewed the background of the proposal and recommended approval.

Dean Retia Walker (Human Environment Sciences) said the proposal was supported by the faculty.

Carolyn Brock (Arts & Sciences) said this was their first semester with plus/minus grading and she is not looking forward to her class of 200 CHE 107 students because now there will be three times as many borderlines to defend as she did before. The difference between an A and a B is always a borderline decision, now there will be three times as many. In Chemistry they were always opposed to plus/minus. It seems insane having different systems in different colleges and that voting on things and what passes and what doesn't depends on whom has already left to go home.

Chairperson Schach stated that the discussion on the university-wide system was taken up in the Senate Council. The discussion was along the lines that why should the Senate make decisions for colleges, that colleges should make such decisions for themselves. That is why we see individual colleges coming forth with proposals.

Laura Keith (Human Environmental Sciences - Student) said she believed the faculty in that college did support plus/minus system, but as far as the students she has spoken to none of them have supported it, including the Student Advisory Council.

Kaveh Tagavi (Mechanical Engineering) was surprised that there was no supporting evidence from those who are proposing plus/minus. He has seen reports from schools that went to plus/minus and after so many years they went back and counted all the pluss and minuss and they canceled each other, meaning that this really has no effect. Regarding defending borderline, under plus/minus there are smaller stakes, so it is easier to defend.

Gretchen LaGodna said that when the original proposal was made to the Senate, they did at that time present some evidence from other schools that overall the pluss and minuss balanced out and it did not hurt students grade point average. Anecdotally, faculty reported having fewer kinds of issues over grade disputes.

The question was moved and seconded. The motion to stop debate passed in a show of hands.

The proposal was defeated in a show of hands; 26 for, 33 opposed, 4 abstentions.

A motion was made for the Senate Council to reconsider the issue of plus/minus proposals, whether passed or not passed by all departments that want to do it and have a written vote on that principle.

Tom Blues proposed an amendment to authorize the Senate Council to consider, discuss, and bring a recommendation back to the Senate on the

question of plus/minus.

The Chair said that the Senate Council had already discussed the subject and asked under what circumstances would they rereview what they had already discussed. Professor Blues said the circumstances had just been expressed, there is one system in Arts and Sciences, and other systems in various colleges. There are wide areas of dissatisfaction.

Pam Kidd (Nursing) said she believed from last year they would look at some data based evaluation of the system. There are some colleges that are trying to survive it for the first time. She asked if there was a mechanism in place for consistent evaluative criteria to be applied across the colleges that are trying out the system, so an informed decision could be made.

The Chair said she was not aware of any.

Loys Mather (Agriculture) said if he understood the motion, it was being asked for the Senate to revote on separate actions that had been taken in the past and he thought the only way that can be done is to move to reconsider on a case by case basis.

The Chair asked for the amendment to be restated. Professor Blues said the amendment was to bring the question of plus/minus to the Senate Council for discussion and then to bring to the Senate whatever recommendations or advice that might be deemed appropriate by the Senate Council. The amendment was seconded.

Dan Fulks said that as a past and present member of the Senate Council, the Council had discussed this more than once and brought a proposal to the Senate for university-wide plus/minus grading system that was not approved at the time. After which, separate colleges have come forward. The Senate rules say that the Senators present will vote and transact business, if senators are not present that is a problem for the colleges to deal with. The system is those who show up vote. The Senate Council will take back the issue to discuss and will probably come back with the same thing they did last time. It is a very important matter that should be addressed at least by the full Senate and probably by the full faculty.

Chairperson Schach said the amendment was to send the discussion of plus/minus grading system back to the Senate Council to consider the recent actions of defeating motions and to look at what is in the best interest of the entire University with respect to plus/minus grading.

The amendment passed in an unanimous voice vote.

The question was called. The motion to stop debate passed in a voice vote.

The motion passed in an unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Betty J. Huff
Secretary, University Senate

* Mary K. Kelly * University of Kentucky Registrar's Office *
* 12 Funkhouser Bldg., Lexington, KY 40506-0054 *
* mkell101@ukcc.uky.edu * (606)257-7169 *