Senate Council
December 16, 2013

The Senate Council met in regular session at 3 pm on Monday, December 16, 2013 in 103 Main Building. Below is a record of what transpired. All votes were taken via a show of hands unless indicated otherwise.

Senate Council Chair Lee X. Blonder called the Senate Council (SC) meeting to order at 3:10 pm.

1. Minutes from November 25 and December 2, 2013 and Announcements
The Chair said that no corrections were received for either set of minutes. There being no changes, the minutes from November 25, 2013 and December 2, 2013 were **approved** as distributed by **unanimous consent**. There were a couple of announcements.

The Stakes Reception will take place on Tuesday on the 18<sup>th</sup> floor of the Patterson Office Tower, starting around 2:30.

The Chair reported that via the new hardship petition process, she approved the inclusion of one student on the December 2013 degree list. In response to Brion, the Chair explained that the student's wife experienced serious medical issues which caused a mix-up in the application to graduate. There was a letter signed by the associate dean and the department chair, among others – it was a complete petition.

An SC member stepped out momentarily, so Guest Davy Jones, chair of the Senate's Rules and Elections Committee (SREC), suggested the election be postponed momentarily. There were no objections from SC members on reordering the agenda.

3. Committee Reports
a. Senate's Rules and Elections Committee (SREC) - Davy Jones, Chair
i. In Memoriam Posthumous Degree
Jones explained that the language came from the SREC and was endorsed the prior week by the Graduate Council.

President Capilouto asked that some attention be dedicated to the issue of something to offer a family when a student who dies has not completed the requirements for a degree. The SREC worked with UK's Legal Counsel and reviewed practices at other universities and state law to develop a mechanism that will safeguard the academic integrity of what a regular, earned degree means. The proposed new posthumous degree will be another category of honorary degree, which will automatically be conferred on any student regardless of how close the student was to completing degree requirements. There are three caveats: 1. the recipient must have been enrolled as a student at the time of their death; 2. the student must be in good academic standing; and 3. the student's death must not have been caused by the student while in the act of committing a felony. The process begins at the department or college level and works its way up through the Senate to the Board of Trustees, to preserve the faculty's role in the degree granting process even though the conferral will be automatic. The title of the degree will be "In Memoriam Posthumous Degree."

Pienkowski asked a question about what being in good standing entailed – he wondered if it included being registered in a degree program at the time of the student's death. Jones replied that it was

implicitly included, but it could be broken out specifically if desired. Christ wondered if the language should include a provision that the Senate actually had to approve the conferral. Jones replied that the President's office requested that the process be automatic at every level so the process is, particularly for the family, very simple when done immediately following a death.

There was extensive discussion about the caveat regarding not having been in the process of committing a felony versus giving the Senate (and SC Chair) the authority to formally approve a posthumous degree. In response to comments, Jones said the SREC would edit the proposal and remove language about automatic conferral, while adding a clause to give the SC chair authority to approve a posthumous degree. The Chair suggested that the language explicitly state that a student who has earned the required amount of credit hours is eligible to receive a BA or BS. In response to questions from the Chair, Jones said that formal language for the Senate Rules will be prepared and that *Administrative Regulation 11: 4* ("University Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees") did not need to be changed because that regulation only outlines how the joint committee is constituted.

b. Senate's Academic Programs Committee (SAPC) - Andrew Hippisley, Chair
i. Proposed New Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing
Hippisley explained the proposal for a new Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing. Guest Julia Johnson (AS/English) responded to questions and concerns from Christ. Johnson agreed to make two changes to question nine of the new program form: in the answer to section (1), remove "on top of this" and reword to clarify that the listed genres are all acceptable; and in the answer to section (4), remove "two graduate level courses."

Wood raised an issue regarding the degree type ("master of fine arts," or MFA); she thought an MFA degree was within the purview of the College of Arts and Sciences and did not know if the College of Arts and Sciences was allowed to offer an MFA. After much discussion, those offering an opinion thought it would be acceptable to request a letter from Fine Arts Dean Michael Tick expressing support for the proposed new degree.

Hippisley noted that the **motion** from the SAPC was to recommend that the that the University Senate approve, for submission to the Board of Trustees, the establishment of a new MFA program: Creative Writing, in the Department of English, within the College of Arts and Sciences. Because it came from committee, no **second** was needed. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

2. Vice Chair Election
Jones explained the process for election of the vice chair. He emailed SC members and solicited nominations for the position of vice chair. Four individuals were nominated: Debra Anderson, Alice Christ, Liz Debski, and David Pienkowski. Anderson and Pienkowski removed themselves from the pool, leaving Christ and Debski. Jones ended by saying that the minutes must include the final tally of votes. The Chair added that the *Senate Rules* state that an election has to be held even if there is just one candidate. Both Debski and Christ expressed their willingness to serve, and spoke positively of each other's abilities.

Jones explained the formal requirements for the position. The vice chair serves in the place of the chair when the chair cannot be present. Under Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised), the chair may also pass presiding rights to the vice chair if the chair wants to vote on something. If the chair officially leaves office, the vice chair serves out the remainder of the term. The vice chair is also the secretary of the Senate and works with Ms. Brothers on Senate minutes.

The Chair handed out blank paper ballots to SC members and instructed that each voting member to write down the name of the nominee they wanted to serve as vice chair. The ballots were collected by the Chair and by Jones. Ms. Brothers read out the votes as she counted them; Jones watched and announced that Debski received four votes, while Christ received five votes. Therefore, Christ was elected SC vice chair for the period June 1, 2014 – May 30, 2015.

Those present congratulated Christ with a round of applause.

The Chair asked for an update on the SC election. Jones said that about half of the voting members had cast votes thus far. He will send out a reminder prompt Thursday morning, to remind senators that voting will end at noon that day.

4. Expedited Program Changes for Graduation Communication and Composition Requirement
The Chair introduced three guests in attendance for the discussion – Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Ben Withers and the co-chairs of the Graduation Communication and Composition Requirement Advisory Committee (GCCRAC) Matthew Giancarlo (AS/English) and Deanna Sellnow (CI/Communication). Sellnow and Giancarlo offered a brief report on activities of the GCCRAC thus far. Withers explained the proposed expedited approval process to SC members. A department will use a special expedited program change form  (will only allow changes related to GCCR) to submit the proposal for normal internal college review, after which it will go directly from the college to the Senate Council office, then on a 10-day web transmittal. There was extensive discussion among SC members.

The Chair suggested that GCCR efforts for a specialized form include Ms. Brothers, after which a draft form can be brought to the SC for approval. The process will need to finish by late April or early May to give the Registrar time to incorporate the changes into the 2014-2015 Bulletin. It was decided that a draft form will come back to the SC in January.

5. Other Business
The Chair noted that there are three SC members whose term will end as of December 31, 2013 – Gail Brion, Greg Wasilkowski and Connie Wood. Wood will remain a non-voting member of the SC through May 30, 2014, however, due to her status as vice chair of the SC. The Chair thanked the outgoing members for their service.

6. Provost Christine Riordan
The Chair welcomed Provost Riordan, who chatted with SC members about a variety of topics, including:

- The new executive director for university strategic planning.

- Ongoing discussions around the new financial budget model.

- The planning process for the 2014 – 2020 strategic plan, including the upcoming (beginning January 2014) speaker series.

There was extensive discussion between SC members and Provost Riordan about the new financial budget model. The Provost also talked about a number of other initiatives coming out of the Provost's office.

The Provost departed around 4:50. There being no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 4:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lee X. Blonder,
Senate Council Chair

SC members present: Blonder, Brion, Christ, Debski, Hippisley, Pienkowski, Wasilkowski, Watt and Wood.

Invited guests present: Jeffrey Clymer, Matthew Giancarlo, Julia Johnson, Davy Jones, Deanna Sellnow, Christine Riordan and Ben Withers.

Prepared by Sheila Brothers on Thursday, January 9, 2014.