

Senate Council
January 29, 2018

The Senate Council met in regular session at 3 pm on Monday, January 29, 2018 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 Katherine M. McCormick called the Senate Council (SC) meeting to order at 3:01 pm.

The Chair noted that she had added an agenda item regarding committee nominees after the agenda had already been sent to SC members. She asked if there were any objections to the amended agenda and there were no objections.

1. Minutes from January 22, 2018 and Announcements

The Chair displayed the search committee information for dean searches on the screen, to show SC members that compositions, etc. were available online. There were a few comments from SC members.

The Chair said that no revisions were sent in for the minutes from January 22. There being **no objections**, the minutes from January 22 were **approved** as distributed by **unanimous consent**.

2. Update on New SACSCOC Principles – Assistant Provost for Strategic Planning Annie Weber

Guest Annie Davis Weber (assistant provost for strategic planning and institutional effectiveness) provided a presentation on new principles from UK's accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). SC members asked a variety of questions.

3. Nominees for Concept Committees

SC members discussed possible nominees for the five concept committees. When discussion wound down, the Chair suggested there be a motion to approve the nominees. Cross **moved** to approve the nominees and Schroeder **seconded**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

4. Committee Reports

a. Senate's Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC) – Herman Farrell, Chair

i. Proposed Change to BS Civil Engineering

Guest Herman Farrell (FA/Theatre), chair of Senate's Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC), explained the proposal. The **motion** from the SAASC was a recommendation that the SC approve the proposed changes to the BS Civil Engineering. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. There were no questions from SC members. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

5. Discussion on Financial Aid and Attendance – Registrar Kim Taylor and Student Services Director Nimmi Wiggins

The Chair thanked guests Kim Taylor, University registrar, and Nimmi Wiggins, student services director, for attending. The Chair added that a third colleague was unable to attend the day's meeting, but that if additional conversations were necessary, he could attend those SC discussions.

Wiggins explained that the issue pertained to a compliance issue in an area of financial aid. The federal student aid handbook states that before an institution disbursed any financial aid to students, the institution must confirm that the student has actually attended the classes for which the students is receiving financial aid. While it is not a formal rule, the federal government expects institutions to abide by the guidelines in the handbook. Wiggins explained that not all schools are as well intentioned as UK.

It was possible that some institutions falsely enrolled students who would be eligible for financial aid, received financial aid for the student, and then instead of disbursing the financial aid to a student, the institution would keep the financial aid monies for its own benefit. Wiggins said that there were legal and fiscal requirements and a need for institutions to ensure that a student has started classes before disbursing financial aid. She noted that the language in the handbook did not specify or dictate the mechanism to be used to confirm attendance, only that attendance be confirmed.

Taylor explained that a similar initiative to ask faculty to document student attendance for financial aid disbursement had not gone as smoothly as desired. This current initiative was fairly similar in intended outcome, but more efforts were being made to communicate the issue to faculty and seek solutions from faculty and administrators, such as associate deans so that the campus is well prepared. Taylor said that both she and Wiggins researched how benchmarks and other Southeastern Conference Schools complied with the handbook guidelines. Taylor said that she and Wiggins would return to SC once they had more details about the specifics of the process and had worked with Information Technology Services (ITS) to resolve some implementation challenges. She said that attendance reporting should take place after the last day to add a class – during the two weeks after that point there will be an opportunity for faculty to report students who had never attended class.

Brion asked a series of questions related to the proposed taking of attendance and how she currently deals with students who have never attended. She suggested this was a routinized procedure and provided an opportunity for students who were waiting to enroll in the class. It became apparent that the Senate Rules [SR 5.1.1] already have a mechanism that can be used to identify a student with a particular grade (“N”) if the student has never attended class. Other SC members suggested other ways that faculty could document attendance in class, such as using a Canvas poll. During discussion, Taylor commented that the federal student aid handbook offered a definition for attendance and that it involved participation in an academically related activity. Wiggins explained that there was no intent to dictate exactly how an instructor would take attendance for the one-time, federal student aid disbursement-related activity, but rather the intent was that faculty would be provided with guidance as to the various ways in which a faculty member could document attendance.

Taylor and Wiggins thanked SC members for the discussion. Taylor added that they would return to SC with more information about the project in the future.

Brion initiated a discussion about her concern that using attendance as part of a student’s grade was causing more and more of the awarded grade to be contingent upon attendance. She said she wondered how much of a grade was too much to count towards the final grade. She said that she was aware of some faculty who included attendance as much as 40% of the final grade, while others included attendance as 2% of the final grade. Grossman noted that some accreditors require some programs to take attendance, such as the College of Law. Childress commented that in his experience, lower-level classes were more likely than upper-level classes to include attendance as part of the student’s grade. Brion said that it was not her intent to force faculty to take attendance, but rather she thought a guideline would be useful. Brion **moved** to ask the Senate’s Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC) to investigate developing guidelines for course attendance, in keeping with federal guidelines. Grossman asked if the intent was to have a new rule. Brion responded that guidelines would be more useful, particularly for those programs that had accreditation-based requirements for attendance. Cross **seconded**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

6. Proposed New Senate Rule 1.4.4.4 (“Senate Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (SACDI)”)
The Chair asked for SC input on the language for the proposed new advisory committee. There were a variety of comments.

Cross **moved** to add “and other underrepresented groups” to the second phrase of the charge. Brion **seconded**. There was additional discussion. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

SC members then discussed the individual who would recommend ex officio members. Grossman **moved** to change the reference to the Provost (as the individual to recommend the two ex officio members) to the Vice President for Institutional Diversity. Brion **seconded**. There being no further comments about this aspect of the language, a **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

SC members also identified the need for three editorial changes.

Cross **moved** to approve the proposed language as amended and Grossman **seconded**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

7. Senate Forms

At Brion’s request, Ms. Brothers explained the changes to the forms. Schroeder noted that the newly added field for letters of administrative feasibility from the college dean and Provost was something that had not been enforced by Senate for eleven years, but would be required moving forward. She explained that a department chair from the College of Education asked the Senate’s Rules and Elections Committee (SREC) about letters of administrative feasibility. The SREC determined that letters of administrative feasibility should be required in compliance with the *Senate Rules* and also for substantive reasons as well. Efforts to ensure compliance led to a discovery that the Senate Rules not only required a letter of administrative feasibility for new degree programs, but also for program changes.

The Chair commented that having a letter of administrative feasibility from the dean and Provost early on in the process would ensure the Provost was aware of the proposed new program. Due to this requirement suddenly being enforced, Schroeder suggested that the SC needed to approve a waiver for new degree programs that were already in the works. Specifically, she suggested that if a new degree program had passed the stage where the Notification of Intent (NOI) had already been submitted to the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE), the new degree program proposal would not need to include the letters of administrative feasibility. For program changes and new and changes certificates, letters of administrative feasibility from the Provost and dean would only be required if the proposal had not left the college. Ms. Brothers noted that letters of administrative feasibility had never been required for program change proposals, so implementing that should be done carefully. There were a few comments and questions about the letters of administrative feasibility. Osterhage noted that there was a typo on one of the forms in that a question number was duplicated.

Schroeder **moved** to approve the use of the revised forms (New Undergraduate Degree Program Form, New Master’s Degree Program Form, New Doctoral Degree Program Form, New Undergraduate Certificate Form, New Graduate Certificate Form, Suspension of Admissions) and Osterhage **seconded**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

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8. Items from the Floor (Time Permitting)

SC members discussed the new liaison from Provost David Blackwell's office, including details of how the arrangement should work. There was also brief discussion about language in the Governor's proposed budget, pertaining to financial exigency and removal of a tenured faculty member.

There being no additional discussion, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous departure at 5:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Katherine M. McCormick,
Senate Council Chair

SC members present: Blonder, Brion, Childress, Cross, Grossman, Marr, McCormick, Osterhage, Schroeder, Spear, and Tagavi.

Invited guests present: Annie Davis Weber, Herman Farrell, Kim Taylor, and Nimmi Wiggins.

Prepared by Sheila Brothers on Wednesday, January 31, 2018.