

Senate Council
June 13, 2013

The Senate Council met for its annual summer retreat on Thursday, June 13, 2013 at 9:00 am in the Hilary J. Boone Center. Below is a record of what transpired. All votes were taken via a show of hands unless indicated otherwise.

Chair Lee X. Blonder called the Senate Council (SC) meeting to order at 9:04 am. She thanked SC members for attending, particularly those on nine-month assignment and those who had graduated.

1. Minutes from May 13, 2013 and Announcements

Christ **moved** to approve the SC minutes from May 13, 2013 as distributed and Brion **seconded**. There being no discussion, a **vote** was taken and the motion **passed**.

The Chair reported that she approved awarding a posthumous Bachelor of Science degree for a student who had earned over 120 credit hours; the Board of Trustees approved it at its most recent meeting.

Wood and the Chair met with President Capilouto and Bill Swinford, his chief of staff, regarding the faculty's responses to the survey on the evaluation of the President. The Chair said that she sent him the survey instrument and results the day prior, so he had a chance to review them prior to the meeting. There will be a second meeting to continue the discussion in a week or so. There was extensive discussion among SC members – the major themes are listed below.

- There were concerns about effective communication of relevant information from the President – his emails and presentations . do not promote engaged dialogue.
- It is critically important to involve faculty in committee work from the very beginning, instead of inviting faculty to participate only after faculty find out about the committee and ask to participate.
- The Chair should be prepared to offer suggestions for improvement to the President in the areas that faculty did not rate the President highly.
- SC must continue to appoint faculty to campus committees based on what the individual can bring to the committee, as well as if the faculty member is reasonably informed about the issues, as well as being politic.
- There is generalized confusion about why the Coursera contract was released to the Wall Street Journal but has not yet been explained to campus.
- Some administrative actions seem to imply that there is a lack of trust in the faculty. This becomes a negative feedback cycle when faculty are not consulted in important decisions, resulting in an uproar from the faculty.

The Chair also announced that the Undergraduate Council and UK Core Education Committee are having a joint retreat in June, which will include discussions about massively open online courses (MOOCs) and where UK is heading. Vice Chair Connie Wood will attend, along with other specially invited guests.

2. Old Business

a. Committee Nominees

SC members discussed nominees for the following committees: Senate Committee on the Faculty Code; Health Care Clinical Colleges Area Advisory Committee; Physical and Engineering Sciences Area Advisory Committee; and the Librarian Area Advisory Committee. A sufficient number of nominees were identified for the committees.

b. Discussion of Recommendations from Ad Hoc Committee on Senate Membership and Voting Status

The Chair led SC members in a discussion on possible membership and voting changes for the University Senate (Senate). The discussion primarily focused on the five recommendations from the Senate Council's Ad Hoc Committee on Senate Membership and Voting Status (CSMVS):

1. The name of the University Senate be changed to 'University Faculty Senate'.
2. The status of elected student senators and elected emeriti faculty be changed to non-voting.
3. The administrators and Deans who currently are ex officio voting member be moved to ex officio non-voting status.
4. The elected student members of the Senate Council be moved to non-voting status.
5. That in a spirit of increasing University communication among participants in shared governance, the charge to the University Assembly be expanded to include a function for the President to periodically meet in joint session with the executive bodies of the University Faculty Senate, Student Senate, and Staff Senate.

The Chair outlined the various additional documents at the SC's disposal to facilitate the discussion: recommendations from the Student Government Association (to change the name from "University Senate" to the "Faculty Senate" and change the voting rights of students); Senate attendance records from the past two academic years for ex officio members; possible changes to *Governing Regulations IV* ("The University Senate"); possible changes to *Governing Regulations VI* ("The University Assembly"); possible changes to *Senate Rules 1.3.1.2* ("University Senate Council" Composition); recommendations from the CSMVS; and the original documentation from the creation of the CSMVS.

The following comments were major topics of conversation.

- About 12% of ex officio members regularly attend Senate meetings. Therefore, leaving their voting rights as is, as well as changing their voting status, would have a negligible effect on the voice of faculty senators as a whole.
- Removing voting rights from all but elected members is only fair, considering the Senate is the only faculty representative body at the University level.
- Leaving voting rights as is for ex officio members is more inclusive and could be a mechanism for improved communication.
- Removing voting rights could be seen in a negative light by some.
- Low faculty morale could be attributed to a lack of effective communication with University administrators, or it could be attributed to the faculty's perception that faculty have do not have an effective, single voice that deals with more than curricular concerns.

- The University Assembly could be resurrected in such a way to represent the many different types and ranks of faculty, staff and students.
- The SC could create opportunities to meet and communicate with deans outside of formal meetings.
- If Senate membership was opened up to anyone with a faculty appointment, regardless of administrative appointment, both chairs and deans could be elected. This opens up the possibility of having chairs and deans on the SC.

After extensive discussion, the Chair asked each SC member present to offer their thoughts on the recommendations. Opinions generally reflected support for converting the Senate to a purely faculty senator body, or support for opening up the pool of those eligible to be elected to department chairs and college deans, or support for changing the voting membership in the future, but tabling the discussion for now. Edwards commented that the language in the recommendations should be changed from “elected student members” to “student members.” There were no objections to this change.

Brion **moved** that the SC accept the report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Senate Membership and Voting Status (with the removal of “elected” when modifying “student” in the recommendations), and place it on the October Senate meeting agenda for discussion, as amended. Christ **seconded**. Wood **offered an amendment** to change the Senate October discussion date to a “later date.” Hippisley **seconded** the amendment.

A **vote** was taken on the motion that the SC accept the report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Senate Membership and Voting Status (with the removal of “elected” when modifying “student” in the recommendations), and place it (as amended) on an agenda for Senate discussion at a later date. The motion **passed** with none opposed.

Hippisley **moved** that what has just been recommended be presented to the Senate for discussion as a first reading in the Senate prior to January 2014. Brion **seconded**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

3. Academic Council New Program Review Criteria

SC members reviewed the criteria sent in from the three academic councils. It was agreed that Ms. Brothers should create a form that encompasses the different criteria. SC members offered thoughts on particular aspects of new program creation that should be included.

There was brief discussion about the Undergraduate Council’s request that the SC clarify the UC’s role in reviewing administrative feasibility of courses, as well as what entity should receive those comments. SC members discussed whether such feasibility involves evaluation of a letter of support, or if it merely involves having a letter of support on hand. The SC discussed customer service and time for completion of review of courses and programs.

4. Review of Committees of the Senate

The Chair explained that she put this particular item on the agenda as a result of a conversation involving Interim Provost Tim Tracy, in which he asked about the activity and productivity of the

Senate's committees. There was a general sense that the committees were not sufficiently consulted by the administration, and that faculty input comes after decisions have already been made.

SC members expressed concerns about funding for graduate education, past, present and future. There was extensive discussion about how the new values-based budget model will affect research and graduate education funding.

Hippisley **moved** that the SC rename and recharge the Senate's Research Committee to involve graduate education and policy making. Edwards **seconded**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed and one abstaining.

Hippisley **moved** to add "it shall also be responsible for reviewing graduate education policies and their implementation" between the first and second sentences of the Senate Research Committee's charge in the *Senate Rules*. The revised charge would read, "The Senate's Research Committee (SRC) shall be responsible for reviewing University research policies and their implementation. It shall also be responsible for reviewing graduate education policies and their implementation. In addition, it shall make recommendations to the University Senate regarding those policies and the priorities for them." Wood **seconded**.

A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

There was general discussion about a variety of committees. At the Chair's suggestion for a motion, Christ **moved** that the SC change the name of SC's ad hoc Committee on Best Practices for Distance Learning to "Distance Learning and e-Learning" and make it a standing committee of the Senate. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed. There were no objections to asking the proposed new standing Senate Committee on Distance Learning and e-Learning to create its own charge.

5. UK Tenure and Faculty Contract Assignment Period

The Chair noted that the discussion would not likely finish prior to lunch, but she did have time to offer background information. A faculty member in a basic science department in the College of Medicine was told by the dean, most recently, that the dean had changed his contract from a 12-month contract to a nine-month contract. Interim Provost Tim Tracy has determined that the Dean was within his rights to modify the contract in that way. The Chair said that there might not be much the SC could do about this particular case, but that awareness should be raised about a rising number of similar actions. This is driven in part by a reduction in funds that came from the healthcare enterprise in the past, but will now be used to fit out another floor at the patient care pavilion.

SC members began discussion of the agenda item. The Chair noted that *Administrative Regulations 3:7* is the policy under which the faculty member's contract was changed. Watt explained that in the past, the request for a change in appointment period was typically done for a short-term period of time, as well as that it had always been voluntary.

At 12:33 pm, SC members broke for lunch; Wilson and Edwards departed. The meeting reconvened at 1:35 pm.

There was extensive discussion about the involuntary change in a faculty member's contract assignment period. The SC suggested that the Chair mention this particular issue to the President as one reason for low faculty morale. The Chair asked Christ to investigate recommendations from the American

Association of University Professors on changing a faculty member's contract period and Christ agreed to do so. A majority of SC members expressed concern that such changes were happening on an individual, private level so that faculty do not know that this is happening to other faculty members, and how to respond to similar reports in the future.

6. Discussion of Distance Learning and Intellectual Property Regulations

The topics of distance learning and associated intellectual property (IP) considerations, as well as IP in general, were discussed at length by SC members. There were very divergent opinions about what types of regulation are fair to faculty member and to the University, as well as to the community at large.

Towards the end of the discussion, SC members suggested the Chair invite the Chief Information Technology Officer, Vince Kellen, to give a presentation to the SC, and subsequently to the Senate. Wood asked the Chair to be sure to invite the pertinent University administrators working on various aspects of distance learning and IP.

7. Discussion of Criteria for Adding Students to the Degree List

The Chair explained that the standard for adding a student to a degree list was established via motion and vote at the SC meeting on April 26, 2010; the omission must have been due to a University error for the student to be added, and the Chair may approve the inclusion of the student if the action cannot wait until the next SC or University Senate (Senate) meeting. The Chair reported that in cases of clear administrative error, students are regularly added to the degrees list. For the May 2013 degree list, there were a slew of emails from the College of Nursing requesting the Chair add a student after the deadline because the student did not file the appropriate paperwork, but not being on the degree list would have prevented the student from being able to take licensing exams. In addition, there was a case of a student who was supposed to be inducted as an officer into the military, but the student had not filed the appropriate paperwork to be on the degree list and would not have been able to be inducted. The Chair recalled that she asked SC for their opinions about these two students; although it was not in accord with past precedent, a majority of SC members supported adding the students to the May 2013 degree list, so the Chair approved them both.

Anderson asked about the number of students who were eligible to graduate on an annual basis, but who were not added to the degree list due to not having filed the appropriate paperwork. Ms. Brothers reported that there are approximately 15 students per year who do not file the necessary paperwork and are not added to the degree list.

There was very lengthy discussion among SC members about the appropriate circumstances under which a student should be added to the degree list if the error was not University error. Opinions ranged from keeping the system as is (students added only in the case of University error), to allowing any student to be added, even if the error was on the part of the student.

After extensive discussion, Brion **moved** that the standards be left as they currently are, with discretion left up to the SC for exceptions. Pienkowski **seconded**. After additional discussion, Watt **called the question**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **failed** with two in favor and four opposed.

Wood **moved** that the SC adopt the following policy:

In cases where the student can show that the failure to be on the degree list is entirely due to administrative error, the SC will add the student to the degree list, though the SC

Chair can act on behalf of the SC regarding degree lists if the matter cannot wait until the next Senate Council meeting.

In cases where failure to graduate creates extreme hardship on the student, the following petition must be completed and submitted to the Senate Council Chair for consideration and final decision.

1. A one-page statement specifying the exact nature of the ramifications of failure to graduate at the requested time.
2. Documentation, including contact information, for verification of the facts presented in number one, above.
3. Letter of support from the director of undergraduate studies or the director of graduate studies.

The hardship petition must be submitted no later than one business day prior to the approval of the degree list for the semester in question by the Board of Trustees. Submission of this petition does not guarantee that a request for exception will be granted.

Debski **seconded**. There was additional discussion. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with seven in favor and one opposed. SC members asked Ms. Brothers to communicate the new policy with directors of graduate studies, directors of undergraduate studies, and advisors (via the Advising Network Listserv).

8. Identification of Issues Likely to be of Faculty Concern in the Coming Year

SC members identified (below) and in some cases discussed issues that may be of concern to faculty during the next academic year.

- Competition between departments and programs for funding as a result of the new values-based budget model.
- Post-tenure review of faculty members.
- Possibility of asking President Capilouto to pursue membership in the American Association of Universities.
- A faculty-staff employee ombud.
- Pay equity.
- Survey mechanisms to further ensure representative samples of faculty opinion.

SC members also spent a considerable amount of time discussing the results of the faculty's survey of President Capilouto and details of disseminating that information appropriately. The SC instructed the Chair to share the results of the survey with Board of Trustees Chair E. Britt Brockman, after the second

and last meeting with the President about the results. The Chair is to work with Board Chair Brockman to ensure the information is shared with appropriate individuals in such a way that the Chair has an opportunity to share the information with faculty at approximately the same time as when Board Chair Brockman shares the information with the Board of Trustees.

Moving to other matters, the Chair asked SC members for their thoughts about creating social events with deans and department chairs. There were no objections.

There was also discussion about marketing the positive things for which the SC and Senate are responsible. Comments were made about streamlining Senate meetings. If less time is spent on routine academic matters and more spent on deliberate discussions about campus issues affecting faculty, more faculty may want to become involved in the Senate.

There being no more business to attend to, the Chair noted the time of 4:30 pm. Anderson **moved** to adjourn and Brion **seconded**. Blonder noted that the first SC meeting of the fall will be on August 26.

A vote was taken on the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 4:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lee X. Blonder,
Senate Council Chair

SC members present: Anderson, Blonder, Brion, Christ, Debski, Edwards, Hippisley, Pienkowski, Watt, Wilson and Wood.

There were no invited guests.

Prepared by Sheila Brothers on Tuesday, July 9, 2013.