

Senate Council
October 6, 2014

The Senate Council met in regular session at 3 pm on Monday, October 6, 2014 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 Andrew Hippisley called the Senate Council (SC) meeting to order at 3:06.

1. Minutes from September 29, 2014 and Announcements

The Chair offered a handful of announcements to SC members.

- In his recent meeting with Provost Christine Riordan, the Chair brought up the issue of multiple registrars and the recent breach of *Senate Rules* regarding grade changes. The Chair reported that the issue is on the Provost's agenda for the year; he thought it was likely the multiple college-level registrars would remain, but they would start reporting to the University Registrar (instead of to the college dean). The Chair and Provost also talked about the Provost's academic initiatives, some of which will be discussed later in the meeting as they relate to intersections with Senate committee charges.
- The Senate's Retroactive Withdrawal Appeals Committee (SRWAC) has decided it will no longer hear cases from students who tried to drop all their classes electronically. (UK's system does not allow a student to completely withdraw from UK online, so one class has to be withdrawn from separately. This policy is not obvious to departing students, many of whom have thought they withdrew, only to find out months or years later that they received an "E" in the class for not having dropped it.)

There was discussion among SC members and Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Ben Withers, who was present as an invited guest. Guest Withers commented that a relatively simple programming change in SAP would fix the problem, but that this was but one of many "relatively simple" necessary programming changes. In addition to comments about UK's retention efforts, Withers said that one college now had the ability to receive reports on students who have tried to withdraw completely from UK online, but the report was only available when run manually every 48 hours. In other words, a solution was on the way, but it was not currently available to all colleges nor was it an efficient solution.

There was some concern among SC members that the decision by the SRWAC could leave some students in the lurch with an E on their transcripts with no mechanism to remove it. After discussion, the Chair said that SC seemed to want SRWAC to continue hearing such cases until a permanent fix can be implemented; SC members concurred, so the Chair said he would bring up the issue with SRWAC. Because the SAP programming change involves financial resources, SC members were comfortable with the Chair mentioning it to the Provost in his next meeting with her.

- The Senate's Rules and Elections Committee (SREC) reviewed the recent College of Social Work process for identifying a Social Work faculty member to serve as senator. SREC voted unanimously to certify the election and seat the new SC senator. The SREC also identified a few areas of the *Senate Rules (SR)* regarding college elections for senators that could be ambiguous, so the SREC will work on editing those passages and will present revised language to the SC in the future. Further, the SREC charged the SREC chair with speaking to the Social Work dean about future election activities and compliance with the *SR*.
- The Chair reported that the issue of the Health Care Colleges Council (HCCC) chair was resolved. An associate dean in the College of Health Sciences will serve as chair *pro tem* for about the next six months or so, while the new associate dean in the College of Dentistry (who is

the appropriate person to serve as HCCC chair) will spend the six months becoming acclimated to the HCCC and its processes. The first HCCC meeting will be later in October.

- The Chair reminded SC members that they were invited to attend a reception for student senators and student members on the Undergraduate Council, on Wednesday, October 8 in the Main Building. He said he planned to welcome students and say a few words about the importance of student participation in the Senate and in Senate committees.

2. Old Business

a. Update from Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Disciplinary Action

The Chair said he hoped to have a weekly update from this committee and turned to Watt, chair of the ad hoc Committee on Faculty Disciplinary Action (CFDA) for an update. Watt explained that CFDA now has a member of Legal Counsel as an ex officio member, but that person is travelling and may not be able to attend the first CFDA meeting later in the week.

3. Employee Benefits Committee Update - Senate Representatives Armando Prats and Shelly Steiner

Guest Shelly Steiner (AS/Biology), who is one of the University Senate's representatives on the Employee Benefits Committee (EBC), gave a presentation on EBC activities during his time on the committee, as well as an update on retirement plan changes, apparently already in progress. There were a number of questions from SC members.

4. Request for Waiver of *Senate Rules* Due to Administrative Error

The Chair explained to SC members that there was a request to waive *Senate Rules 5.4.1.3* on behalf of a student involved with the College of Arts and Sciences (AS). The Senate Council office often receives petitions from colleges regarding administrative errors. The issue usually pertains to a student who has been left off a degree list, but while this was similar, it was not similar enough for the Chair to be comfortable granting it without SC input. The student in question fell short of the requirements for a BA in Math; the student documented multiple instances of checking with AS about the BA in Math and was consistently told that everything was okay. A formal memo from AS asks the SC to consider granting a waiver of *SR 5.4.1.3* which states that in cases of multiple degrees, a student must complete 24 additional hours for each degree. The petition asks for a waiver of scope so that the student could complete the degree with 21 additional credits instead of 24 additional credits. The Chair said that if the SC granted the waiver, he would inform the President's office and request the Board of Trustees grant the student's BA in Math at the Board's next meeting. The Chair opened the floor for discussion and cautioned SC members against identifying the student by name.

Pienkowski said that he was generally opposed to waiving rules regarding degrees. In this particular situation, due to the student's repeated attempts at communication and his academic accomplishments, Pienkowski said he could support such a waiver. Pienkowski **moved** to waive the requirement for three credits in *Senate Rules 5.4.1.3* for the particular student, for the particular occasion. Anderson **seconded**. Discussion followed in which SC members voiced their support for the rule waiver. The arguments in favor of the waiver were largely based on the student's diligence in attempting to sort out the matter and the college's lack of action, as well as the fact that the student was missing only three credits for one of his multiple degrees that fall outside the major's core requirements. The Chair invited Guest Connie Wood (AS/Statistics), chair of the Senate's Rules and Elections Committee (SREC), to offer her opinion about the matter.

Wood opined that such a waiver would be an illegal act. Further, in emails to various college employees, the student never indicated that he was seeking more than one degree; additional degrees have different requirements than the first degree. The student's claim that the lack of a BA in Math affected his ability to apply to graduate schools was faulty – graduate schools typically review the entirety of a student's transcript, not just grant admission based on a related undergraduate degree. Wood urged SC members not to grant the waiver.

There was extensive discussion among SC members. SC members were highly sympathetic to the student's plight. SC members offered a variety of suggestions regarding alternate solutions that would allow the student to earn the BA in Math during the fall 2014 semester, which are listed below.

- The student could take a competency-based course that could be completed by virtue of a qualification exam.
- An obscure *SR* allows a student above the level of freshman in the Honors Program to take elective courses on a Pass/Fail basis if the student petitions the Director of the Honors Program in advance.
- The student could enroll in an undergraduate math research course and with the assistance of an appropriate faculty member, the student could be given an applied math problem.
- Some AS classes begin mid-semester, so the student could enroll in one of those courses.
- The student could take a class in the Winter Intersession to complete the three remaining credits.

Those SC members voicing an opinion did not see sufficient urgency in the student's claim to warrant waiving the rule; there was a sense that while Arts and Sciences did not communicate well with the student, the problem can be resolved appropriately with due diligence, not haste. SC members were very sympathetic to the student's repeated (yet ultimately failed) attempts to find out the status of his BA in Math from AS.

There was additional discussion, with participation of the Senate's parliamentarian, J. S. Butler, regarding the correct parliamentary action to take. SC members believed it was the responsibility of AS to pay for the relevant tuition and fees that would normally be charged for the student to take the remaining three credit hours.

After additional brief discussion, Pienkowski **moved** to withdraw his motion regarding a rule waiver for the student and Debski **seconded**. There being no further discussion, a **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed. The Chair said he would communicate with the student to let him know of SC's refusal to grant his rule waiver request, but would also convey the full extent of the SC's sympathy for his situation and offer the list of suggestions of what the student can do to complete the remaining three credit hours needed for his BA in Math.

7. Standardized Course Meeting Patterns - Associate Registrar David Timoney

The Chair introduced Associate Registrar David Timoney and said that the proposed standardized course meeting patterns intersect with educational policy. The Chair said standardization would allow students to have maximum access to class offerings and give students a greater opportunity to complete their coursework in a timely manner.

Guest Timoney explained the proposal for standardized meeting patterns. He said there was no formal *Senate Rule* to rely on, which made it difficult to enforce any standardization in meeting patterns. He said the first suggestion was for standardized 50-minute classes on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from the hour to 50 minutes past the hour (8 AM to 8:50 AM, 9 AM to 9:50 AM, 10 AM to 10:50 AM, etc.), from 8 am to 5 pm. The next suggestion was for standardized 75-minute classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays from the hour to fifteen minutes past the next hour (8 AM to 8:50 AM, 9 AM to 9:50 AM, 10 AM to 10:50 AM, etc.), also from 8 am to 5 pm. The proposal included a handful of exceptions as well as urged department-scheduled rooms to comply with the proposed standardized meeting pattern. The overall goal is increased utilization for centrally-scheduled (i.e. Registrar-scheduled) classrooms. Departmentally scheduled rooms, such as laboratory space and computer labs, would not be affected other than by the suggestion that departmental-scheduled rooms comply with the standard for centrally-scheduled rooms. There were a few comments by SC members along with ideas that might go along with the standardized meeting pattern, most of which are listed below.

- The Registrar's office, not departments, should schedule computer labs.
- Permanent or semi-permanent exceptions should be made for courses that have a non-standard meeting pattern for pedagogical reasons.
- The standardized course meeting patterns should also reach into the evening hours and not end (as the proposal indicates) around 5 pm.

Timoney clarified that the Registrar's office only schedules the classrooms that are maintained centrally. If a department is responsible for maintaining lab or computer equipment in a space, the space was most likely controlled by the department and not controlled by the Registrar's office.

Grossman **moved** to send the proposal to the Senate's Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (SAPPC) for review and Christ **seconded**. There being no further discussion, a **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

Because Provost Riordan arrived, the Chair moved to the agenda item related to her; there were no objections from SC members. There was not time for the SC to do any pre-work, as suggested by agenda item number six ("Preliminary Discussion on Provost Task Forces and Senate Committees")

8. Provost Task Forces and Senate Committees - Provost Christine Riordan

The Chair introduced Provost Christine Riordan, who went over various campus statistics and some of the areas her office will concentrate on this year, including undergraduate class size and retention, faculty development, the new budget model, academic alerts, online learning, and internationalization. Guests Withers and Butler also participated in the SC's discussion of how various Senate committees can be involved in initiatives from the Provost's office.

9. Tentative Senate Agenda for October 13, 2014

SC members discussed the tentative agenda for October 13 and made no changes. SC members asked for a representative from Human Resources to explain the upcoming retirement changes. Grossman **moved** to approve the tentative agenda for October 13, 2014, with the understanding that agenda items may be rearranged to accommodate guests' schedules. Wilson **seconded**. There being no further discussion, a **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

Grossman suggested that the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Disciplinary Action also explore possible penalties for administrators who commit gross violations of the *SR*.

5. Student Committee Preferences

The Chair asked SC members to authorize him to place student senators on committees as per their preferences. There were no objections.

The meeting was adjourned about 5:17.

Respectfully submitted by Andrew Hippisley,
Senate Council Chair

SC members present: Anderson, Christ, Debski, Grossman, Hippisley, McCormick, Pienkowski, Watt, and Wilson.

Invited guests present: J. S. Butler, Shelly Steiner, Ben Withers, and Connie Wood.

Invited guests absent: Ruth Beattie (College of Arts and Sciences, associate dean for advising)

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