Senate Council
October 26, 2020

The Senate Council met in regular session at 3:00 pm on Monday, October 26, 2020 via video conference. Below is a record of what transpired. All votes were taken via a show of hands unless indicated otherwise.

Senate Council Chair Aaron Cramer (EN) called the Senate Council (SC) meeting to order at 3:00 pm. The Chair welcomed those present. He informed everyone that the session was being recorded and noted that it was an open meeting. He asked everyone to use the chat box to sign in for attendance and provided guidance on how to participate in the discussion.

1. Minutes from September 21, September 28, and October 5, 2020 and Announcements
The Chair reported that no edits were received for the sets of minutes from September 21, September 28, and October 5, 2020. There being **no objections**, the minutes for September 21, September 28, and October 5, 2020 were **approved** by **unanimous consent**.

The Chair reported that he had a conversation with the Provost and Vice Provost about the recent administrative reorganization and the nature of Senate's relationships with administration.

The Chair reported that due to structural changes, the Provost's Council meetings have been rearranged. This resulted in no opportunities for the Chair to participate in Provost's Council meetings until February 2021. Because of this, additional one-on-one meetings with Provost Blackwell have been scheduled in order to maintain good communication.

The Chair reported that he and several other Senate-related individuals (Corrine Williams (HS), Leslie Vincent (BE), Alan Brown (AS), and Alberto Corso (AS)) participated in the first of two, day-long workshops with Gray Associates. Gray Associates is a consulting firm engaged by the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) to evaluate the academic inventories of public institutions. During the first part of training, they went over how programs are quantified and then went over the numbers. During the second part of the day they focused on possible opportunities related to building new programs. The Chair and others will be attending the second training session later in the week and he will report back to SC in their next meeting. Assistant Provost for Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Annie Davis Weber commented on the general metrics that Gray Associates uses to evaluate programs. Vice Provost Larry Holloway added that the metrics being used were proposed by the University of Kentucky and University of Louisville to CPE in order to be more appropriate for research universities.

2. Old Business
a. Senate's Rules and Elections Committee (SREC): Excused/Unexcused Absences and W & I Grades
i. Minutes from February 3, 2020 SC Meeting
The Chair reminded SC of their conversation in the spring regarding excused absences and what a "penalty" means in terms of excused absences as per *SR 5.2.4.2*. Brion (EN) and Soult (AS) were asked to investigate the issue further and report back to SC. Soult explained that there are no penalties related to financial assistance for a student who has completed at least 60% of a class. However, if the student does not have satisfactory academic progress in both the fall and spring semesters, it could impact their aid/scholarships for the following academic year Soult also shared a flowchart mapping the pathway for a student with more than 20% excused absences. Brion noted that there was an implication during their meeting about academic penalties being different than financial penalties and that faculty are free to create their own policies for excused absences in excess of 20% of required interactions.

There was extensive discussion about the differing opinions of what a penalty meant from different members of the Senate's Rules and Elections Committee (SREC). Due to the lack of consensus among those present, the Chair asked SREC to take another look at *SR 5.2.4.2* and to come back to SC with a more specific question.

3. Results of 2019-20 Faculty Evaluation of the President
The Chair reported that he presented the findings of the 2019-20 evaluation of the President to the Board of Trustees (BOT) on Friday, October 16th. He noted that participation was higher than the past several years and shared the survey findings with SC.

4. Discussion on New Academic Holiday (Juneteenth)
The Chair reminded SC that President Capilouto announced the addition of Juneteenth as a holiday during the June Board of Trustees meeting. The Chair asked SC if they would like to add Juneteenth as an academic holiday and codify it in the *Senate Rules* (*SRs*). He also asked SC if they needed more information before charging the SREC with incorporating Juneteenth into the *SRs*. There was much discussion including:

- Are University holidays always academic holidays? It may not be possible to have a University holiday that is not also an academic holiday.
- Upcoming winter and summer calendars that include University and academic holidays have already been approved.
- Clarification that assignments cannot be due on University or academic holidays.

Brion (EN) **moved** to update the *SRs* to include Juneteenth in the list of holidays and send to Senate for a vote, effective immediately. Collet (HS) **seconded**. The Chair asked if there was any debate. There was much discussion about whether the *SRs* should list individual holidays or if the *SRs* should declare that University holidays are always academic holidays. Bird-Pollan (LA) made a **substitute motion** to ask the SREC to resolve the issue of University holidays versus academic holidays. Brion (EN) **seconded**. The Chair asked if there was any debate and there was none. A **vote** was taken on the substitute motion and it **passed** with none opposed. A **vote** was then taken to substitute the second motion for the first and it **passed** with none opposed.

5. COVID Ongoing Discussion
a. Soliciting Opinions from University Community
The Chair thanked Leslie Vincent (BE) for her work to pull main thematic areas from the free responses on the survey that was sent to senators regarding their experiences in Fall 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. She agreed to present the report to Senate at their next meeting.

The Chair reported that he shared the draft report with President Capilouto and Provost Blackwell the previous Friday. He noted that the Provost's Office sent out performance review memos on the previous Friday as well. Vice Provost Larry Holloway added that the Provost's Office also sent out other memos including research, salary, promotion and tenure, and consulting work. He noted that the memos ordinarily go out during the beginning of the semester and the performance evaluation memo urged compassion and consideration during the unique times due to COVID.

The Chair reported that SC members were tasked to consider and report back on a thematic area from the survey. He asked SC members to share their summaries and to think about possible things that SC can do about specific concerns. Summaries included the items below.

- Soult (AS) reported on the reporting of COVID-19 statistics. She noted that the online dashboard should be kept more up to date and could be clearer by providing more specific data. There are enough cases so that reporting these numbers should not violate any privacy.
- Wheeler (SGA) reported on COVID-19 testing. She shared that there was a delay in reporting earlier in the semester due to the backlog of a third-party testing vendor. She expressed her concern that mandating testing and flu shots may decrease student compliance. The Chair added that administration is planning to be as aggressive with testing in the spring as they were in the fall. Wheeler added that it would be helpful to know the capacity of the current vendor and why the backlog in testing is occurring.
- Andrade (ME) reported on faculty workload. He recommended that negotiation of teaching modalities for the next semester should be done as soon as possible. Instructors should have the final say on course delivery mode. He noted that teaching modality will impact performance evaluations for the next year and will reflect how the pandemic has affected workload for individuals. He also addressed three concerns for specific groups of faculty and offered possible solutions.
  - Faculty with school-aged children doing online learning could be matched up with UK students for tutoring. This could be beneficial for the University's students who need experiential credit, for school-aged children in need of tutoring, and faculty who are under extra pressure to teach their children at home.
  - Providing faculty who are struggling with technological challenges with more help from the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) and other faculty who are more experienced.
  - Setting up more mentoring programs to support junior faculty.
  - Setting up a shared leave pool for faculty that is like the staff's shared leave pool.
- Cantrell (ED) reported on faculty evaluation. She explained that many faculty evaluations have already been completed and it is unlikely that they will be suspended. She noted that colleges can make decisions around what the evaluations will look like and encouraged the Provost to provide guidance to them. She noted that faculty have had varying circumstances around managing the pandemic so they could be given the opportunity to document what their circumstances have been. She also suggested pairing down what is required for performance review to lessen the burden on faculty.
- Kuhnlein (SGA) reported on compliance with COVID-19 safety protocols. He explained that through anecdotal research, compliance on campus has been good, but off campus compliance has had issues. He suggested that students and all members of the campus community should be encouraged to stay safe, continue wearing mask, and maintain safe distances while on break. He also suggested that instructors publish their Canvas pages one week before classes start.
- Williams (SGA) reported on course modality. She encouraged more transparency in course modality before the semester begins. There was also a suggestion that the attendance policy should be clarified.
- The Chair summarized the report on compliance with COVID-19 safety protocols from Hall (GS) who was unable to attend the SC meeting. He expressed concern about mass compliance, especially with mask use in libraries. Hall's input also addressed concerns surrounding PPE stocking/replenishing, and contact tracing.
- Brion (EN) reported on personal exposure to COVID-19. She reported that faculty were concerned with the lack of notification if a student in their class had tested positive or had been contact traced. She explained that this information would help faculty to make more informed

decisions about teaching plans. She emphasized the importance of faculty being able to manage their own classroom modality. She also expressed concern about replenishment of PPE in the classrooms.

Due to the time, the Chair asked SC members to think about the issues that are most important and what can be done about them. He asked for more discussion about this to be continued on the SC listserv.

6. Impact of Administrative Reorganization on Senate Activities
The Chair explained that the recent administrative reorganizations affect the SRs, particularly regarding ex officio members of Senate committees. He asked SREC to evaluate the ex officios for Senate committees in the *SRs* and come back to SC for discussion on the larger issue of how Senate engages with administration after such a big reorganization.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm with no objections.

Respectfully submitted by Aaron Cramer,
Senate Council Chair

SC members present: Andrade, Bird-Pollan, Blonder, Brion, Cantrell, Collett, Cramer, Kuhnlein, Soult, Swanson, Vincent, Wheeler, and Williams.

Guests present: Sheila Brothers, Roger Brown, Bob Grossman, Larry Holloway, Kim Taylor, and Annie Davis Weber.

Prepared by Stephanie Woolery on November 11, 2020.