

Senate Council  
September 7, 2020

The Senate Council met in regular session at 3:00 pm on Monday, September 7, 2020 via video conference. Below is a record of what transpired. All votes were taken via a show of hands unless indicated otherwise. Below is a record of what transpired.

Senate Council Chair Aaron Cramer (EN) called the Senate Council (SC) meeting to order at 3:01 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. He announced that Zoom Webinar was being used for the meeting in order to test it, in preparation for the upcoming University Senate (Senate) meeting.

1. Minutes from August 31, 2020 and Announcements

The Chair reported that the minutes for August 31<sup>st</sup> were not ready for review.

The Chair reminded SC that the next Senate meeting will be held the following Monday. He commented that there will be many announcements to report since so much has been done since the last Senate meeting. He also explained that voting and nonvoting members will be designated as “panelists” and “attendees” in order to help with conducting votes.

2. Update on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan - Provost David Blackwell and Interim Vice President for Institutional Diversity George Wright

The Chair reminded SC of the discussion at their last meeting about the DEI implementation plan. He welcomed Provost David Blackwell and Interim Vice President for Institutional Diversity George Wright.

Provost Blackwell thanked SC for their input over the weekend on the spring calendar. He gave background information about the DEI initiative and invited Interim Vice President George Wright to speak about the initiative moving forward.

As both a faculty member and administrator, Interim Vice President Wright conveyed his appreciation for SC’s work and expressed his willingness to assist in any way. He shared that he has been meeting with a range of University stakeholders to learn more about their plans and goals. He’s also been reviewing what other universities are doing nationally. He gave examples of how administration is prioritizing and supporting DEI efforts on campus and explained how his background as a faculty member and administrator are beneficial. He also explained how his history helps him understand the varying timelines for change.

The Chair thanked Vice President Wright and opened the floor for questions. Discussion included:

- Deployment plans for DEI training.
- The ongoing nature of DEI training.
- Free speech vs. hate speech.
- Vice President Wright noted that he would send the link for the DEI implementation plan website to the Chair.
- Clarification of who will undergo DEI training and when they will have an opportunity to do so.
- Clarification about the prioritization of projects on the University’s timeline.

Provost Blackwell was asked if he was aware of a nationally organized scholar strike and if he was supportive. He responded that he was aware, and he views it as an expression of academic freedom.

### 3. Degree Recipients

#### a. Late Addition to August 2020 Degree List

The Chair noted that the approvals would be done on behalf of the Senate, because the Board of Trustees was meeting the following day. He also reminded student SC members that they cannot vote on degree lists.

##### i. College of Engineering BI-74

The Chair reported that student BI-74 was not on the August 2020 degree list due to a clerical error. Bird-Pollan (LA) made a **motion** on behalf of the Senate that the elected faculty members of SC amend the August 2020 degree list by adding the MS in Mechanical Engineering for student BI-74 and recommend through the President to the Board of Trustees that the degree be awarded effective August 2020. Brion (EN) **seconded**. The Chair asked if there was any debate and there was none. He then walked SC members through how votes would be taken when using Zoom webinar. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

##### ii. Gatton College of Business and Economics Student TA-93

##### iii. Gatton College of Business and Economics Student TD-01

##### iv. Gatton College of Business and Economics Student WK-30

The Chair reported that students TA-93, TD-01, and WK-30 were not on the August 2020 degree list due to the same clerical error. Brion (EN) made a **motion** on behalf of the Senate that the elected faculty members of SC amend the August 2020 degree list by adding the Bachelor of Business Administration – Management for student TA-93, the Bachelor of Business Administration – Management for student TD-01, and the Bachelor of Business Administration – Marketing for student WK-30, and recommend through the President to the Board of Trustees that the degrees be awarded effective August 2020. Andrade (ME) **seconded**. The Chair asked if there was any debate and there was none. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

##### v. College of Education Student ML-18

The Chair reported that student ML-18 was not on the August 2020 degree list due to a clerical error. Charnigo (PbH) made a **motion** on behalf of the Senate that the elected faculty members of SC amend the August 2020 degree list by adding the BA in Secondary Social Studies Education for student ML-18 and recommend through the President to the Board of Trustees that the degree be awarded effective August 2020. Soult (AS) **seconded**. The Chair asked if there was any debate and there was none. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

#### b. Motion to Amend Previously Adopted Degree List

##### i. May 2019 Degree List: Rescind MEd Educational Leadership and Confer EdS Educational Leadership for Student WT-79

The Chair reported that student WT-79 inadvertently enrolled for the MEd Educational Leadership Program instead of the EdS Educational Leadership. Cantrell (ED) made a **motion** on behalf of the Senate that the elected faculty members of SC amend the May 2019 degree list for College of Education student WT-79 by rescinding the MEd Educational Leadership and conferring the EdS Educational Leadership. Vincent (BE) **seconded**. The Chair asked if there was any debate and there was none. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

### 4. Tentative Senate Agenda for September 14, 2020

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The Chair asked there was any discussion about the tentative agenda for September 14, 2020 and there was none. Collett (HS) **moved** to approve the agenda for September 14, 2020. Brion (EN) **seconded**. The Chair asked if there was any debate. There was some discussion, included a suggestion about an announcement regarding the recent appointment of an interim dean in the College of Arts and Sciences. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

5. COVID Ongoing Discussion

a. Soliciting Opinions from University Community

The Chair asked if there were objections to adding the agenda item, "Soliciting Opinions from University Community" to the agenda. There were none.

The Chair reminded SC of the survey draft that had been distributed to them earlier, to solicit input from senators regarding how they feel about the campus reopening and asked for feedback. There was discussion of how to best facilitate discussions among senators. There was also discussion about the proposed survey questions for faculty and student senators, the survey structure, and how to best distribute the survey. After discussion ended, the SC concurred with the Chair's summary that after suggested revisions are made, the Chair will send the survey back out to SC for review again before moving forward.

The Chair asked SC for feedback about the spring 2021 calendar proposal so he can make an informed decision if asked to approve the calendar on behalf of SC. Comments included:

- It is difficult for faculty teaching on holidays to find childcare.
- A 15-week calendar with no breaks will be difficult for students.
- Anecdotally, it seems that many students took the Labor Day holiday, anyway.
- A calendar with sporadic days off could allow students to have a break but avoid leaving campus and potentially contracting COVID.
- Course lab schedules could be negatively affected if sporadic days off were not scheduled carefully.
- The Chair was asked to not approve a calendar that does not include at least one break and there were a lot of suggestions about how to create a one-day holiday that did not provide students with the possibility of extended time away from campus, possibly spreading COVID.
- Discussion of the addition of mid-semester Dead Week.

A question from the floor was raised about reported incidences on campus of noncompliance. There was only one report of chairs being moved closer together.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm with no objections.

Respectfully submitted by Aaron Cramer,  
Senate Council Chair

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

Guests present: David Blackwell, Anna Bosch, Sheila Brothers, Roger Brown, Bob Grossman, Larry Holloway, Davy Jones, Douglas Michael, Kim Taylor, and George Wright.

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Prepared by Stephanie Woolery on September 22, 2020.