

Senate Council Minutes
May 15, 2006

The Senate Council met on Monday, May 15, 2006 at 3:00 pm in 103 Main Building. Below is a record of what transpired.

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 pm.

Guests Kyle Dippery and Bill Rayens and Senate Council members introduced themselves.

1. [Minutes from May 8](#) and Announcements

The minutes from May 8 were approved as distributed. The Chair announced that the Senate Council Office was still waiting on the Student Government Association (SGA) to provide the student names for the Ombud Search Committee (OSC). He explained that Monica Hobson had indicated she could offer names, but then three weeks ago, at the Board of Trustees meeting, he requested names from then SGA president Rebecca Ellingsworth. Ellingsworth in turn introduced him to Jonah Brown, current SGA president. Two weeks had passed since the date on which Brown had promised to provide the names. The Chair shared that Brown had been in the hospital for some time, for reasons he was not privy to; he thought Brown was due to be leaving the hospital very soon, if not already. On Friday, May 12, the Chair walked to the SGA Office and asked for Brown. He was told that Brown might be away from campus at a leadership conference for a week.

The Chair said he was uncomfortable leaving the Senate Council Office with the OSC still not constituted. He asked Senate Council (SC) members for any suggestions as to how student names could be generated for the OSC. Grabau said that when he had chaired an OSC, he had suggested names of students who would serve. He acknowledged that the Senate Council had been placed in an awkward series of complications. The Chair said he thought that the method for generating student names had varied from year to year, since the *Senate Rules (SRs)* did not address that level of specificity. In response to Grabau, the Chair said that David Royse was chair. Grabau suggested that Royse be asked if he knows of any students that can serve. In response to Grabau, Tagavi stated that he would be Ombud until July 1. He indicated he would perform one of his administrative duties *gratis* if there were to be a procedural problem with him serving as both Senate Council Chair and Ombud during the month of June. Tagavi noted

that the work would be done during the summer, not during the nine-month academic year.

The Chair reminded SC members that May 15 was the last day on which nine-month faculty members were required to be on campus; efforts to secure appropriate names after that date would be difficult. The Chair shared that Kris Hobson had wondered if Tagavi would be willing to continue as Ombud until August, when it was hoped student membership could be named for the OSC. Tagavi supported Grabau's suggestion, adding that if the Provost were asked for assistance, the Provost could contact deans' offices, which would likely have access to students remaining on campus over the summer. Due to the extreme lengths made by the SC to get names from the SGA, Tagavi suggested that alternate attempts to gain student representation on the OSC would be acceptable.

Grabau **moved** to encourage Royse, with the assistance of the Provost, to locate students who could potentially serve on the OSC. Jones **seconded**. There being no further discussion on the motion, a **vote** was taken. The motion **passed** unanimously.

Jones, as chair of the Senate's Nominating Committee (SNC), shared that although the May 15th meeting might be the last SC meeting of the semester, faculty college councils would be meeting in the near future, at which potential names of faculty members who could serve as members of academic area advisory committees (AAAC) would be discussed. Jones suggested the SC listserv be utilized to vet the names. SC members indicated their assent by nodding.

2. External Review Committee Final Report

The Chair offered some [background information](#) on the efforts leading to the submission of the External Review Committee's (ERC) Final Report. As a part of the background information, the Chair hoped the Senate Council would officially receive the ERC's Final Report (FR), as a key player in USP review and reform. Additionally, he also hoped the SC would offer a blessing for the summer implementation-planning phase. The Chair also asked for support in allowing his continued involvement in the revision of the gen ed initiative.

Guest and External Review Committee chair Bill Rayens thanked SC members for inviting him to attend. He said that in summary, the FR differed from the original report in that it represented feedback gleaned from faculty members in the colleges. He said the original document had been intended

for a smaller audience. The FR had a larger discussion of assessment and more care was given to language to avoid misunderstandings.

In response to Tagavi, the Chair said that the Joint Provost-Senate Council Committee on Planning and Coordinating General Education Reform and Assessment (GERA) was appointed by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness. He said the comprehensive review process would be part of a program review in which certain administrative rules and responsibilities resided with the Vice President for Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness Connie Ray. Tagavi asked about the end date for the ERC – Rayens had indicated that ERC members already believed the committee's work to be ended – and the anticipated end date of GERA. The Chair (also GERA co-chair) replied that GERA was, in some aspects, itself looking for an end date. It was currently envisioned that when a joint Provost-Senate Council implementation oversight committee could be charged and formed, GERA would cease to exist.

Liaison Greissman added that the general education initiative differed from the orderly procession of actions in an average program review; in the case of the gen ed initiative, the educational unit was amorphous and the faculty teaching in the University Studies Program (USP) were spread out across colleges. He said that the gen ed initiative would also go through the University Senate in a manner that program reviews do not usually proceed. The Chair noted that a variety of SC members had been involved in either GERA or a faculty forum.

Jones stated that the work of GERA was a huge undertaking and was overdue. He asked about the language in the FR and terminology such as “next phase,” “summer workshops,” “provide focused paralleled venue,” “major summer activity” and expressed concern that work would be jumping ahead in major leaps over the summer before the University Senate (Senate) had the opportunity to review the report. He also asked about the need to recreate summer conversations in the fall. The Chair said that to the extent that they were discussed in GERA, the summer workshop (perhaps a single workshop over the course of a week) was not suggested to run ahead of any groups involved in the process. Rather, it was to be used to prepare the ground for discussion in the fall and a successful effort to move into the implementation-planning phase. He said he hoped the Senate would be presented in the fall with the FR and any tentative recommendations relating to implementation. A summer workshop would be used to sift through the complicated issues of an implementation strategy. However, there was no intent to duplicate the same discussions in the fall. The feeling of GERA members was that it would be

useful to chart out possible curriculum models during the summer. The intent was not to constrain the freedom of faculty and faculty instrumentalities, but rather to offer curricular models that have been reviewed by a group of interested faculty who, over the summer, have done some basic homework.

Jones expressed concern that terms such as “implementation” made decisions a *fait accompli*, incongruous with the suggestion to bring the issue to the September Senate. He referred to descriptions of some of the forum discussions as very lively, and stated he wanted to avoid a possible misperception of the Senate that the gen ed initiative had whizzed past the Senate. The Chair acknowledged that the term “implementation” could be improved upon. An “implementation oversight committee” was the closest terminology the ERC developed in an attempt to avoid any erroneous perceptions. There was no sympathy within either GERA or the team members going to the American Association of Colleges & University’s Summer Institute on General Education (SI) for a process circumventing the Senate. Great concern was taken to ensure any preliminary work performed in a summer workshop would not be putting the cart ahead of the horse.

Rayens interjected that some confusion and concern could be due to the omission of the word “planning” in referring to the name/charge of the next committee involved. He emphasized that no one involved in the process thought the time was appropriate to begin implementing anything. The goal was to have some thought put into the planning for implementation before any actual implementation work would be done.

The Chair confirmed for Tagavi that the FR would be brought to the University Senate in September. Tagavi expressed concern that there was no specific mention of history in the list of outcomes. Rayens responded that a similar concern was voiced in forums about various curricular areas not being specifically mentioned. He said that an effort was made not to specify courses that would need to be fulfilled. He referenced a statement made by Greissman in a GERA meeting; Greissman had suggested GERA members consider what it was that students should know when they cross the stage to receive their diploma. The outcomes were very broadly stated, so there should not be any discipline excluded. Tagavi was still concerned that any work done over the summer would be moving too fast, especially since the Senate had yet to see the FR. Baxter opined that what was being looked at was a process by which a new gen ed program would be implemented, not the implementation itself.

Rayens said that Tagavi's concerns were fair. Those involved in the gen ed initiative thus far, however, recognized that there would be huge obstacles to overcome just to get to the point at which a curriculum design would be agreed upon, let alone implementing any new gen ed program. He spoke to concerns about losing momentum over the summer and reiterated that efforts in the summer would be toward narrowing the vast possibilities so that faculty can have a meaningful discussion of relevant options in the fall. The Chair added that the proposed summer workshop would involve those individuals going to the SI as well as others. Lou Swift, an integral individual in the creation of the current USP program had indicated a willingness to attend and speak about problems he encountered in the 1980s with gen ed. The hope was that faculty and administrators could have time to think through the issues to prepare more concise information about which faculty could discuss in the fall. The Chair noted that there would always be individuals who would be vocally opposed to any change. He stated that due to a coincidence of circumstances, the current time was likely the best opportunity for UK and faculty bodies to undertake a significant improvement to gen ed. The faculty would of course reserve the right to oppose the initiative in the fall – that was the right of faculty representatives. He added that the summer efforts could help avoid the situation some institutions found themselves in, where reform took upwards of nine years to complete.

Grossman suggested, and the Chair agreed, that a better phrase to describe the next committee would is "implementation process planning." Grossman expressed concern with the phrase "ambiguity of human knowledge," stating that some things are more, or less, ambiguous. He suggested substituting "reliability."

Jones asked about a reference in the FR to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education being the entity responsible for shepherding the process. He expressed concern about an administrative body being responsible for curriculum matters. The Chair confirmed that the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education would be in the role of a patron and not that of an approver. He reiterated that the court of last decision would lie with UK faculty, who hold the basic right and responsibility, through the University Senate, of dealing with academic policy.

Tagavi **moved** that the Senate Council receive the External Review Committee's Final Report in order to bring it to the University Senate in September for discussion. Lesnaw asked about the meaning of "receiving" the report. Grossman replied that it was a formal acknowledgment of receipt,

without necessarily approving. Jones **seconded**. The motion **passed** unanimously in a show of hands.

Lesnaw asked if the summer activity could also refine the proposed learning outcomes. The Chair stated that if it were to become an issue, it could be discussed at that time. He stated that the implications from Tagavi's motion were that the report would go to the Senate for review and consideration. Lesnaw stated she was puzzled by the term "received," expressing concern that it did not adequately communicate that the report had been received and reflected upon in the Senate Council. She also expressed concern with core learning outcome number one and two from the initial draft. Lesnaw stated that those outcomes seemed more theological than academic and would be impossible to assess. She also did not like the term "ambiguity."

Rayens explained that the outcomes Lesnaw referenced (in the handout) were from the initial draft, and were not in the FR. A substantial amount of effort went into revising language used in the first draft. As the ERC understood it originally, the initial draft would be going to a very small audience so it was written for that specific, small audience. That it was so widely disseminated created some misunderstandings of language, etc. He noted that the five core learning outcomes had been reduced to four learning outcomes, due to two core learning outcomes being combined into one learning outcome. He added that the term "ambiguity" was replaced with "different and at times incongruent" to modify "knowledge."

In response to Tagavi, the Chair said that it was anticipated that GERA, not the ERC, would continue through the summer. Tagavi stated he wanted to see, in writing, the description of the summer implementation-planning phase. Lesnaw expressed whole-hearted support for allowing colleagues to meet over the summer for however long they deemed necessary to continue the efforts of the ERC and GERA, to continue moving the gen ed initiative along. She said without summer work, faculty in the fall would have many, many more questions needing to be answered. She said the very nature of a workshop designed to work on planning defied a strict description and asserted the SC, including herself, had been overreacting to the summer processes, until they were more clearly explained.

Greissman suggested GERA prepare a report at summer's end to capture all the efforts put forth thus far, to include any summer discussions. The Chair then suggested both the GERA report and the FR be submitted to the Senate

in September for review and evaluation. Greissman suggested annotating the GERA report to the FR. Grabau stated that care must be taken to avoid GERA overreaching its charge; it was not a decision-making body.

Tagavi agreed with Grabau, stating that it would not be perceived positively if a list of specific recommendations were to be presented to the Senate in September, at the same time that the FR was presented. He stated that a GERA report should not render discussion of the FR meaningless. After additional discussion, the Chair indicated he was not comfortable setting forth specific plans for next steps. He said any summer workshop would offer clarity and open up various possibilities through which an oversight vehicle, legitimized by the SC and/or the Senate and the Office of the Provost, could take on what was reviewed. Jones asked for, and received confirmation from other SC members, that the action being considered was to endorse continued conversation.

In response to Lesnaw, the Chair indicated that the majority of GERA members would be able to continue to meet over the summer.

Grabau **moved** that the Senate Council authorize the Joint Provost-Senate Council Planning and Coordinating Committee on General Education Reform and Assessment to continue to meet over the summer to work toward implementation process planning. Lesnaw **seconded**. Greissman suggested the SC officially thank the ERC for its work and signal the appropriateness of the ERC being dissolved. The Chair stated that would require a motion. The motion **passed** unanimously in a show of hands.

There was further discussion on whether or not the SC should or could discharge the ERC. There was no motion made.

SC members began discussing the Chair's request that he be allowed to continue as a GERA co-chair after his position as Senate Council chair ended on May 31; (Yanarella) was involved with GERA as a consequence of his position on the SC. Jones asked about Tagavi also being involved with the gen ed initiative. Grabau mentioned, as a related issue, the rollover of the special fund account supporting GERA, which was managed in the Senate Council Office. Since Yanarella would no longer have signature authority for that account after May 31, Grabau supported Jones' suggestion to add Tagavi to GERA. It was presumed by all present that GERA would inherently be discharged after the GERA report and the FR was presented to the Senate in September.

Tagavi **moved** that Ernie Yanarella continue as co-chair of the Joint Provost-Senate Council Planning and Coordinating Committee on General Education Reform and Assessment; that the Senate Council chair be named as an *ex officio* of that committee; and that the same committee prepare a report for the Senate Council and finish its tasks by the end of August. Grabau **seconded**. Lesnaw began a discussion about the logic of requiring GERA to end before the GERA report could be shared with the Senate. She offered a **friendly amendment** that GERA continue to function until its report was given at the September Senate meeting, but that the report be submitted by the end of August. Tagavi **accepted**.

A **vote** was taken on the motion that Ernie Yanarella continue as co-chair of the Joint Provost-Senate Council Planning and Coordinating Committee on General Education Reform and Assessment; that the Senate Council chair be named as an *ex officio* of that committee; and that the same committee have a report to the Senate Council by the end of August but continue to function until that report and the External Review Committee's Final Report were presented to the University Senate in September. The motion **passed** unanimously in a show of hands.

Upon suggestion by Grossman, the Chair used his prerogative to rearrange the agenda to consider item number four next.

4. Joint Senate Council/Staff Senate Committee Nominees

The Chair expressed a desire that three to four names be presented to the SC to serve on the joint Senate Council/Staff Senate committee. Nominating Committee chair Jones stated that he was under the impression that a charge for the joint committee would be established before nominees were sought. The Chair stated that the charge was intentionally broad.

There was extensive discussion on the following topics:

- The issues that would be addressed by the joint committee and if the charge to “examine issues of mutual concern of faculty and staff and explore areas in which collaboration can improve the working conditions for all” should stand as is or be modified, and if modified, by whom;
- Whether the joint committee would be a standing or ad hoc committee of the Senate Council and concerns about the ability of the Senate Council to create a standing committee;

- Whether such a committee required administrative-level approval; and
- If the charge should regulate the faculty members nominated.

The Chair suggested the joint committee's charge be constrained to address only salaries, benefits and work conditions. Michael suggested the SC charge the joint committee with a very first task of creating its own charge. Guest Dippery shared that the Staff Senate had already named its members, although due to one person resigning from the Staff Senate and others running for re-election, the composition could change over the next few days.

After additional discussion, Grossman **moved** to ask the Nominating Committee to come up with names for discussion and appointment to the joint Senate Council-Staff Senate committee. Grabau **seconded**. Tagavi offered a **friendly amendment** that the committee be formally designated as *ad hoc* and that the name of the committee be added to the motion. Grossman **accepted**. A **vote** was taken on the motion to ask the Nominating Committee to come up with names for discussion and appointment to the ad hoc Joint Senate Council-Staff Senate Committee on Mutual Concerns. The motion **carried** unanimously.

3. Review of Senate Rules Section VI with Edits from April 17 Meeting

Grossman **moved** to accept the changes as outlined by the [handout](#) from the Senate's Rules and Elections Committee chair Jones. Thelin **seconded**.

There were editorial and grammatical corrections offered. A **vote** was taken on the motion to approve inclusion of the following paragraph in the *Senate Rules*:

"Students have the right to expect the course to correspond generally to the description in the official Bulletin of the University of Kentucky and the right to be informed in writing at the first class meeting about the nature of the course-
-the content, the activities to be evaluated, and the grading practice to be followed. Whenever factors such as absences or late papers will be weighed in determining grades, a student shall be informed. All students must be informed in writing of the course content and other matter listed in this rule at no cost to the student. Syllabi may be posted electronically: this must be done by the first class meeting of the semester and the syllabus must remain available there for the entire semester. Any students officially enrolled in a course shall, upon request, be provided a paper copy of the course syllabus free of charge."

The motion **passed** unanimously.

Due to the time, a decision was made to postpone discussion on agenda item number five until a meeting on May 22.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ernie Yanarella,
Senate Council

Chair

Members present: Dembo, Grabau, Grossman, Jones, Lesnaw, Michael, Randall, Tagavi, Thelin, and Yanarella.

Liaison present: Greissman.

Guests present: Kyle Dippery and Bill Rayens.

Prepared by Sheila Brothers on May 17, 2006.