

University Senate
March 8, 2010

The University Senate met in regular session at 3 pm on Monday, March 8, 2010 in the Auditorium of W. T. Young Library. Below is a record of what transpired. All votes were taken via a voice vote unless indicated otherwise.

Chair Dave Randall called the University Senate (Senate) meeting to order at 3:01 pm.

1. Minutes and Announcements

The Chair drew senators' attention to the relatively short agenda, noting that since there was relatively little business to accomplish, there would be sufficient time for a discussion that the Senate Council (SC) believes to be of importance.

He noted that there were no minutes ready for approval. There were the following announcements:

- Lotsa Helping Hands is a new program from the Office of Work-Life, which offers web-based scheduling for caregivers. More information is available at the Work-Life website.
- A senator is needed to represent faculty for a group studying the use of online teacher and course evaluations. Senators are encouraged to self-nominate or contact colleagues. Volunteers should email Mrs. Brothers.
- Non-academic portions of the Student Code of Conduct are being revised. Please contact Assistant Provost for Program Support Richard Greissman with comments. The Student Code will be vetted around campus over the coming weeks.
- The SC charged the Chair with forming a small committee comprised of SC members, and representatives from the Student Government Association and the Staff Senate to work out a resolution all three bodies could support regarding UK's financial status, particularly with respect to the budget of the Athletic Association.
- The *Senate Rules* specify that final grades must be submitted to the Registrar 72 hours after administering the final exam. Many faculty members have unfortunately interpreted that language to mean that grades are due on the Monday following final exams. The Chair encouraged senators and faculty at large to get grades submitted as quickly as possible. Faculty should not wait until Monday to submit all final exam grades. That data has to be assembled and shared with students and advisors, in particular, who will counsel students on future academic endeavors.

2. Proposed Change to Admissions Requirements for MA/MS in Library and Information Science

The Chair invited Jeffrey Huber (Communications and Information Studies/Library and Information Science) to explain the proposal. Guest Huber, director of the School of Library and Information Science, said that the proposal requested a change to admission requirements for both the MA and MS in Library and Information Science. The current minimum undergraduate GPA requirement is 2.75, and the proposal will increase that to 3.0. He said that most applicants already apply with a 3.0, so changing the requirement would not create a hardship for students.

The Chair noted that all of the day's curricular items came from the SC with a positive recommendation.

Estus **moved** that the Senate approve the proposed change to the admissions requirements for the Masters of Science and Masters of Arts degrees in Library and Information Science, effective fall 2010 and Snow **seconded**. There being no discussion, a **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

3. Proposed New University Scholars Program: BS Merchandising, Apparel and Textiles and MS Merchandising, Apparel and Textiles

The Chair invited Kim Spillman (Agriculture/Merchandising, Apparel and Textiles), director of graduate studies, to present the proposal. Guest Spillman explained that the proposed new University Scholars Program would allow students to move into the master's degree program one semester early. There were no questions.

Hayes **moved** that the Senate approve the new University Scholars Program of BS Merchandising, Apparel and Textiles and MS Merchandising, Apparel and Textiles, effective fall 2010, and Wermeling **seconded**. There being no discussion, a **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

4. Open Discussion on Faculty Governance Options

The Chair explained that the discussion should center on thoughts of the role of the Senate and how the Senate can be improved. He explained that he invited past SC chair (and Guest) Kaveh Tagavi to attend as a resource. He noted that Vice Chair Swanson (VC Swanson) would lead this portion of the meeting.

VC Swanson offered a brief presentation on aspects of faculty governance. Afterwards, she opened up the floor for discussion. A wide variety of senators engaged in a lively discussion regarding the role of the Senate. Below are a variety of comments

- Faculty and department chairs, etc. need to value participation in faculty governance activities such as committee appointments.
- It is difficult to be a productive member of a Senate committee when there is no discernable charge, purpose, or guidelines on reviewing proposals.
- The Senate has a wide variety of committees, which deal with many aspects of campus life – Senate committees must be charged in order to expect committees to perform as intended.
- As opposed to merely reacting to top-down directives, faculty should play a role in developing policies themselves.
- All items on Senate agendas should pertain to Senate business, with no informational reports.
- There has not been a call to respond to action items or do work; meetings are made up of relatively mundane curricular items.
- The Senate should be smaller; too many individuals make the body ineffective.

- Faculty have regained increased control over courses, curricular programs, educational units, educational policy, etc. since Charles Wethington stepped down. There remains a lack of “input symmetry,” though, in that while deans, chairs, etc. have a chance to offer input into faculty educational policy, faculty are not asked for input into managerial decisions.
- The Senate size is acceptable, given its representative nature. It is, however, somewhat difficult to effectively communicate with a senator’s own unit, resulting in failure at the most basic level of engaging the faculty community.
- Provost Subbaswamy regularly contacts the Chair or the SC about a variety of issues, which are vetted back and forth.
- There needs to be input from the Senate floor into the issues that are brought by administrators for consideration.
- The Senate should not serve as a rubber stamp for the SC, even though the SC does most of the work. Committees that don’t meet are problematic, and there should be more faculty members who volunteer for University service.
- There is a perception that senators are merely asked to vote on items for which decisions had already been made. Most issues on campus really come down to money, and that is something in which the Senate must be involved.
- The timing of the annual evaluation of the President is not conducive to meaningful faculty input. There is no external or independent data on which to make any judgment – the only accompanying supporting documentation is the President’s self-evaluation.
- There was no guarantee of anonymity to faculty responding to the questionnaire for the President’s evaluation. The criteria for the evaluation are not appropriate. However, the criteria are set by the Board of Trustees (BoT).
- Committee meetings should be posted on the Senate website, in part so faculty members may hold one another accountable.
- Senators recognize the need to respond to solicitations for volunteers from the Office of the Senate Council, yet other responsibilities often hinder such desires.
- In the same way that the Provost sends a liaison to SC meetings, the Chair should be a regularly invited guest to meetings of the Provost’s Deans’ Council.
- Faculty should have some say in the criteria by which the President is evaluated.
- Kentucky statutes prevent meaningful faculty input into the criteria by which the President is evaluated.
- The SC holds a special meeting every year to deliberate over the faculty input into the President’s evaluation. SC members also have a very short turnaround time. For the past few years, SC

members have refused to offer a rating for what was perceived as irrelevant criteria, specifically the NCAA violations item.

- The input sent by the SC is counted as one vote toward the President's evaluation. It seems as though the BoT has read SC comments in the past, since phraseology similar to that used by the SC has made its way into the final evaluation by the BoT.
- The Senate should have more of a role in the budget process.
- There is a culture of distrust between faculty and administrators at UK, and a corresponding lack of strong faculty input. There are areas at UK where there is a strong faculty culture, yet perhaps it is not reflected in the Senate, but rather in the department or college.
- The Chair should request that he be included in meetings of the Provost's Deans' Council meetings.
- Committees should be more active, and regular reports by committee chairs during Senate meetings would be helpful.
- Admissions standards have been lowered at UK, and there was a question as to whether or not the appropriate Senate committee, let alone the Senate itself, was consulted prior to making the decisions.
- The Senate is too large and should be much smaller, with just one to two representatives from colleges.
- The SC will charge committees with specific tasks. This, in turn, may result in action and increased consultation with the Senate in the future.
- When faculty members are not connected, they tend to be less engaged. There is more of a culture of engagement at the level of the SC.
- Maybe there needs to be a basic understanding of what the role of the Senate should be, and how to speak as one voice.
- Faculty members are not asked by the administration to provide input. Having the Chair attend meetings of the Provost's Deans' Council would be a good way to share information with the Senate from the beginning, instead of after the fact. Faculty need more information about current issues in order to better participate.
- Although faculty may be outflanked at times, the SC tends to be very aware of situations around campus. The authority of the faculty only reaches so far, and such powers are often reactive.
- Until the late 1970's, it was routine for the April and May meetings of the Senate to concentrate on committee reports from committee chairs. If committees can be given clearer charges during orientation activities, many subsequent faculty-led activities can occur more easily.

- Although the Senate is not privy to proceedings of the Deans' Council, there are a variety of administrators on the Senate's committees. Said committees are not necessarily specifically aligned with administrative committees.
- Senators should take their collective role as quality control for degree programs seriously, and apply that responsibility when reviewing degree programs.
- The curricular review process is cumbersome and paper-heavy. The Senate's reviews of degree programs should take the form of questions regarding how such a program will affect other programs across campus, not the minutiae of whether or not a unit has a sufficient number of instructors for a program.
- There should be better guidelines for Senate committees that review curricular proposals. Currently, unless there is an egregious problem, most proposals just go on through.
- Even if a proposal receives approvals from a variety of different reviewing bodies, proposals do not seem to be scrutinized in the review process.
- Not every reviewing body considers all aspects of a proposal. Part of representative governance is that there are pieces that are not seen by everyone.
- Senators should be told the value of programs to undergraduate students, not just presented with a distribution of courses to review.
- The lengthy review process offers a variety of opportunities for faculty to speak up if something about a proposal is objectionable.
- The opportunity to stop a course proposal was utilized within the past few months, so that type of action is available to faculty.
- A lot of work is done behind the scenes, often by Mrs. Brothers, to ensure that senators see quality products. This includes revising forms for new degree programs, etc. Fewer problems with proposals are the result of iterations and experiences that certain information is and is not needed for various proposals. Curricular forms are the guidelines and instructions for proposals.
- With a group as large as the Senate, committees should function properly. When proposals come to the Senate, they Senate should be voting to approve it, showing trust in the review given by a Senate committee. The Senate should not spend time doing what committees can do well.

As discussion wound down, VC Swanson asked senators to continue thinking about the subject. As ideas occur, senators should please send those ideas to Mrs. Brothers via email, with "Improve Senate" as the subject line.

Estus asked about committee reports. VC Swanson replied that the bulk of revitalizing Senate committees and creating specific charges would likely take place during the summer. The SC will gather information now, look over the committees during the summer, and return to the Senate with recommendations in the fall. It was clarified that the SC is taking responsibility for working on

committee charges, and will be doing so over the summer. Although there are nine-month faculty members on the SC, the majority of SC members with those appointments do attend meetings and participate over the summer.

Dean Scot Smith (College of Agriculture) said that the SC should also look into how the University Committee on Academic Planning and Priorities (UCAPP) functions. That committee and its subcommittees are reasonably representative through the inclusion of nominations from the Senate. Although UCAPP does not run the University by any means, it does have influence on strategic planning, etc. Dean Smith said that the influence of those committees exceeded that of the Senate committees Dean Smith served on. Jeannine Blackwell, dean of the Graduate School, added that Gen Ed was a good example of where shared governance worked, with jointly appointed committees and step-by-step approvals and interactions to ensure faculty buy-in at various stages. In addition, administrative realities of what can and cannot be accomplished have been made very clear.

VC Swanson said that it was important to have volunteers for academic area advisory committees with appropriate areas of expertise.

Jones asked Dean Smith about how Dean Smith expresses to College of Agriculture (Agriculture) faculty that their time spent at the Senate or in committee meetings is valued as much as instead of writing grants or papers. Dean Smith said that he probably did not specifically express such sentiment. He noted that he resisted a dichotomy of one or the other – in Agriculture there are several senators who are very successful in grant writing, teaching, and scholarship, and are members of the Senate. When faculty members are successful and committed to the institution, they are top-rated faculty in Agriculture.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Hollie Swanson,
University Senate Secretary

Absences: Adams; Almasi; Anderson*; Arents; Back; Barnes*; Birdwhistell; Bishop*; Brennen; Culver; Denison; Dyer; Ederington; Edgerton; English; Ettensohn*; Gonzalez*; Griffith*; Grossman; Hall; Hardesty*; Hazard*; Heller; Jackson; Januzzi; J. Jensen; R. Jensen; Kelly*; Kidwell; Kim; Kirschling*; Kornbluh*; Kwon; Lester; Maglinger; Martin*; McCormick*; McCorvey; McMahan; McNamara; Mehra; Mendiondo; Mobley; Montgomery; Mountford; Mullen; Nardolillo; Nieman; D. O’Hair; M. O’Hair; Perman; Ray*; Richey; Ritchie; Robinson; Roorda; Rouse; Santhanam*; Schoenberg*; Sellnow; Shay; R. Smith; Sottile; Speaks; Subbaswamy; Sudharshan; Sutphen*; Telling*; Thacker; Todd; Tracy; Travis; Troske; Turner; Watt*; Wells; Wiseman; Witt; Wood; Wyatt*; Yanarella.

Prepared by Sheila Brothers on Tuesday April 6, 2010.

* Denotes an absence explained prior to the meeting.