

Senate Council

Monday, April 24, 2023

The Senate Council met in regular session at 3:00 PM on Monday, April 24, 2023, in 103 Main Building, although a video conference link was also available for members. Below is a record of what transpired. All votes were taken electronically unless otherwise specified. Specific voting information can be requested from the Office of the Senate Council (SC).

Senate Council Chair DeShana Collett (HS) called the Senate Council (SC) meeting to order at 3:00 PM. The Chair welcomed those present. She informed everyone that the session was being recorded for notetaking purposes and noted that it was an open meeting. She asked that all attendees, online and in person, state their name and affiliation prior to speaking, to ensure everyone knew who was speaking. The Chair asked SC members to be ready to vote via Poll Everywhere. The Chair reminded SC members that regarding the ability to speak, members must raise their hand to be called upon. The Chair also reminded everyone that SC members would have priority speaking, noting that others may be called upon as needed and given a chance to speak only if there were no additional comments from SC members.

The Chair asked members and guests to introduce themselves, as there were many attendees today.

1. Minutes from April 17, 2023 and Announcements

The Chair informed SC members that the minutes from April 17 were not yet ready for review.

The Chair reminded SC members that they should have received an email about the SC retreat and should contact Katie Silver (SC office) if they had not yet received the email.

2. Degree Recipients

a. Late Additions to December 2022 Degree List (per Senate Rules 5.5.1.1.4 (“Late Addition to Degree List”))

i. *Graduate School Students MA-90, SMA-38, and SZ-80*

The Chair explained that all three cases involved paper applications that were inadvertently overlooked. Marilyn Duncan (ME) **moved** for the elected faculty members recommend the Senate amend the December 2022 degree list by adding these three students and their respective degrees and recommend through the President to the Board of Trustees that the degree be awarded effective December 2022. Bob Grossman (AS) **seconded**. There was no debate.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

The Chair informed SC members that a mistake was inadvertently made for one of the students approved last week for the May degree list. The Chair commented that the student needed to be added to the August 2023 degree list. The Chair asked if there were any objections to adding the student to the August 2023 degree and there were none. There being **no objections**, the student was added to the August 2023 degree list.

3. Committee Reports

The Chair informed SC members that Senate Organization and Academic Structure Committee Chair Gregg Rentfrow (AG) needed to leave the meeting early and asked if there were any objections to rearranging the agenda. There were **no objections**.

c. Senate Academic Organization and Structure Committee (SAOSC) - Gregg Rentfrow, Chair
The Chair invited SAOSC Chair Gregg Rentfrow (AG) to provide a report to SC members.

- i. *Proposed Suspension and Closure of BAEDU Special Education - Learning and Behavior Disorders*
The Chair informed SC members that Professor Amy Spriggs (ED) was the proposer. Rentfrow explained the proposed suspension and closure of BAEDU Special Education – Learning and Behavior Disorders. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation for the committee for the Senate to approve the suspension and closure of the BAEUD Special Education - Learning and Behavior Disorders. Because the motion comes from committee, no second is required. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate. There was no debate.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

- ii. *Proposed Name Change of College of Agriculture, Food and Environment to the Edith Martin and Harry W. Gatton, Sr. College of Agriculture, Food and Environment*
The Chair informed SC members that Dean Nancy Cox (AG) was the proposer. SAOSC member Elizabeth Salt (NU) explained the proposed name change of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment to the Edith Martin and Harry W. Gatton, Sr. College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation for the Senate to endorse the proposed name change College of Agriculture, Food and Environment to the Edith Martin and Harry W. Gatton, Sr. College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate.

SC members briefly discussed the proposal and asked questions about whether the name change would be confusing and if the name change was permanent. The Chair commented that the proposal was aligned with college naming for philanthropic purposes.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with one opposed and none abstained.

a. Senate Calendar Committee (SCC) - Richard Charnigo, Chair

The Chair invited SCC Chair Richard Charnigo (PbH) to provide a report to SC members.

- i. *Proposed Nonstandard Calendar for AES/PLS 320*
The Chair informed SC members that Professor David McNear (AG) was the proposer. Charnigo explained the proposed nonstandard calendar for AES/PLS 320. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation for the Senate Council to approve the proposed nonstandard calendar for AES/PLS 320, for the foreseeable future. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate. There was no debate.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

- ii. *Proposed Change to 2023-24 MD Calendar*
The Chair informed SC members that Associate Registrar Nathan Congleton was the proposer. Charnigo explained the proposed change to the 2023-2024 MD Calendar. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate Council to approve the proposed changes to the 2023-24 MD calendar, related to tuition refund dates. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate. There was no debate.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

b. Senate Academic Programs Committee (SAPC) - Sandra Bastin, Chair

The Chair invited SAPC Chair Sandra Bastin (AG) to provide a report to SC members.

i. *Proposed New BS Statistics and Data Science*

The Chair informed SC members that Professor Bill Rayens (AS) was the proposer. Bastin explained the proposed new BS Statistics and Data Science. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate to approve the proposed new BS Statistics and Data Science, in the Department of Statistics, in the College of Arts and Sciences. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate.

SC members briefly discussed the proposal. Faculty Trustee Hollie Swanson (ME) asked the proposer if they had considered entertaining the possibility of doing a joint program with surrounding universities that offered similar degrees. Rayens commented that they had contact with universities with similarly named degrees but had not discussed potential collaborations.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

ii. *Proposed New Graduate Certificate in Accounting Analytics*

The Chair informed SC members that Professor Hong Xie (BE) was the proposer. Bastin explained the proposed new Graduate Certificate in Accounting Analytics. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate to approve the proposed new Graduate Certificate in Accounting Analytics, in the Von Allmen School of Accountancy, in the Gatton College of Business and Economics. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate. There was no debate.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

iii. *Proposed Change to MSEDU Special Education*

The Chair informed SC members that Professor Amy Spriggs (ED) was the proposer. Bastin stated that SAPC did not take a final vote on the proposed change to the MSEDU Special Education and informed SC members that it would be considered at the next SC meeting.

d. Senate Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC) - Leslie Vincent, Chair

The Chair invited SAASC Chair Leslie Vincent (BE) to provide a report to SC members.

i. *Proposed Change to Pharm D (PHR 915)*

The Chair informed SC members that Kendra Harvey (PH) was the proposer. Vincent explained the proposed change to PharmD (PHR 915). The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate to approve this proposed change to the PharmD. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate. There was no debate.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

ii. *Proposed Change to Pharm D (PHR 961)*

The Chair informed SC members that Kendra Harvey (PH) was the proposer. Vincent explained the proposed change to PharmD (PHR 961). The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate to approve this other proposed change to the PharmD.

Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate. There was no debate.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

iii. Proposed Change to BSBME Biomedical Engineering

The Chair informed SC members that Director of Graduate Studies Sridhar Sunderam (EN) was the proposer. Vincent explained the proposed change to the BSBME Biomedical Engineering. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate to approve the proposed change to the BSBME Biomedical Engineering. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate. There was no debate.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

iv. Proposed Change to Undergraduate Certificate in Global Scholars

The Chair informed SC members that Associate Jennifer Siebenthaler (BE) was the proposer. Vincent explained the proposed change the Undergraduate Certificate in Global Scholars. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate to approve the proposed change to the Undergraduate Certificate in Global Scholars. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate. There was no debate.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

v. Proposed Change to MA History

The Chair informed SC members that Professor David Hamilton Vincent explained the proposed change the MA History. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate to approve the proposed change to the MA History. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate.

Bob Grossman (AS) asked if the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures and Cultures would be impacted by the change. Hamilton commented that the impact would be trivial, noting that the number students who satisfied the requirement through the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures and Cultures was relatively small.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

vi. Proposed Change to BFA Art Studio

The Chair informed SC members that Professor Hunter Stamps (FA) was the proposer. Vincent explained the proposed change to the BFA Art Studio. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate to approve the proposed change to the BFA Art Studio. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate.

Elizabeth Salt (NU) asked about the goal of the proposed change. Vincent commented that the proposed change was to incorporate student feedback and update the program to reflect current curriculum.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion **passed** with none opposed or abstained.

vii. *Proposed Changes to Senate Rules Regarding Excused Absences for Military Duties (SR 4.2.1.3.1, SR 5.1.7.4, SR 5.2.5.2.3.3, and SR 9)*

Vincent explained the proposed changes to the *Senate Rules* regarding Excused Absences for Military Duties (*SR 4.2.1.3.1, SR 5.1.7.4, SR 5.2.5.2.3.3, and SR 9*). The Chair stated **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate to approve the proposed change to the Senate Rules related to military duties. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate.

SC members discussed the proposal. Kaveh Tagavi (EN) provided a number of comments, including the following:

- The sections mentioning credit being granted for students that were called to active duty after 12 weeks needed clarification
- Ambiguity about waiving comprehensive exams should be fixed
- Whether a waiver should be allowed for comprehensive exams that were required by a program
- Whether it was appropriate to award earned degrees if a student had not fully completed coursework

Vincent responded that some of Tagavi's concerns were not related to what the committee had been tasked with. The Chair commented that some of the concerns could be sent to the Senate Rules and Elections Committee (SREC). Tagavi asked what the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) would think about awarding credit to someone who did not complete a course. Acting Associate Provost for Planning and Assessment Katherine McCormick commented that SACSCOC would not make such a judgement and was only concerned with the University following its own rules.

Bob Grossman (AS) **moved** to table the proposal and send it back the committee to rework the proposal with consideration given to feedback provided. Tagavi **seconded**. The Chair commented that the feedback provided would be more appropriate to send to SREC for interpretation. Grossman noted that he believed SAASC was the appropriate committee as the committee brought forward the proposal. Faculty Trustee Aaron Cramer (EN) commented that it may not be necessary to move forward with the proposal at all as there was identifiable interest from other University areas.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion to table the proposal and send it back to the committee **passed** with seven in favor.

viii. *Proposed Change to Senate Rules 3.2.2.2.2 ("Course Numbering System," "Exceptions")*

The Chair stated that Associate Professor Roger Brown (AG) was the proposer. Vincent explained the proposed change to *SR 3.2.2.2.2 ("Course Number System," "Exceptions")*. The Chair stated the **motion** was a recommendation from the committee for the Senate to approve the proposed change to *SR 3.2.2.2.2 ("Course Numbering System," "Exceptions")*. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate.

SC members briefly discussed he proposal. Grossman commented that he found the proposal to be overly cumbersome and difficult to understand. Grossman **moved** to table the proposal to the SREC. Marilyn Duncan **seconded**. Tagavi commented that if the concern was about cumbersome language and not the content of the proposal, then the proposal should just be

sent to SREC for cleanup and not return to SC for final approval. Molly Blasing (AS) noted that the procedural order outlined in the proposed change was difficult to follow.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion to send the proposal to SREC for review **passed** with two opposed and one abstained.

ix. Proposed Extension of Test-Optional Admissions Pilot

The Chair informed SC members that Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management Christine Harper was the proposer. The Chair provided background information about the proposed extension of the Test-Optional Admissions Pilot. The Chair reminded SC members that according to *SR 1.4.1.3*, if a standing committee brought forth a negative recommendation, the SC had three choices regarding the proposal:

- Forward the proposal to the next prescribed procedural level as described in *SR 3.1* and *SR 3.2*
- Return the proposal to the committee with particular instructions
- Decide based on the merits of the proposal that the proposal is not appropriate for Senate action and report the same to Senate at the next Senate meeting

The Chair added there was an additional option for SC to amend the proposal and send the revised report forward to Senate for final action. Vincent provided background to SC members about the proposed extension of the Test-Optional Admissions Pilot and explained the proposal. Vincent noted that the committee was generally very supportive of the proposal but felt strongly that it needed to be explicitly stated in the proposal that colleges could opt-out if faculty desired. The Chair stated the **motion** was a negative recommendation from the committee to reject the original proposal and report that to Senate. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate.

A robust discussion took place. SC members and guests provided the following questions and comments:

- There were many University-wide standards that colleges and departments could not opt-in or out of
- What the rationale was for colleges to be allowed to opt-out and not departments
- Whether colleges could opt-out in the first iteration of the pilot (Vincent clarified that the first iteration asked colleges to opt-in, as this was a waiver of the *SRs*)
- There have been national trends in institutions making test-optional permanent
- Using GPA as an indicator for student success and allowing students to fail a course multiple times should be carefully considered by faculty to avoid disservice to students
- Whether GPA was a more efficient method across colleges and departments for gauging success than test scores

Harper responded to some of the comments from SC members and noted that her preference was for all colleges to continue the pilot but recognized this was a college-based decision. Harper also stated that in her conversations with Vincent, she asked if the committee had any updates on revisions. Vincent added that it was her understanding that the committee could provide feedback but was not permitted to revise the proposal. Vincent commented that the SAASC discussed and gave consideration to data, noting that the *SRs* were currently silent on

what requirements were needed to make changes to admissions requirements, which were housed in the colleges.

SC members and guests continued to discuss the proposal and offered comments and thoughts about the following:

- How admissions requirements and pre-requisites were determined
- Whether it would be best to rely on expertise from the Office Enrollment Management for making decisions in admissions for the University as a whole
- Whether it was more appropriate for the proposal to come from a Senate committee rather than an administrative unit
- The pressure for instructors to give students good grades
- The importance of the decision and the statement about test-optional that the decision would make

Faculty Trustee Aaron Cramer (EN) **moved** to amend the proposal with the recommended language from the committee to explicitly state that colleges could opt-out of the Test-Optional Pilot. Bob Grossman (AS) **seconded**. The Chair opened the floor to members for questions of fact and debate.

Vice President for Student Success Kirsten Turner commented on the admissions process from a student perspective, noting that this process started early for many students like those who took the ACT in their junior year of high school. Vincent stated that her understanding was that the process stayed the same whether the option for colleges to opt-out was explicitly stated or not, but explicitly stating this demonstrated a commitment to shared governance that the committee desired. Dean Rudy Buchheit commented that College of Engineering was strongly in favor of extending the Test-Optional Pilot and continuing to assess the test-optional landscape. Vincent noted that the faculty within each college were permitted to opt-out, based on accordance with their college rules. Vincent added that colleges would report to Senate if they ended their participation in the Test-Optional Pilot. Harper expressed concerns that colleges that opted-out did not have sufficient data to support their decision to opt-out. Vincent commented that the current proposal did not address such concerns, noting that faculty could still utilize their college processes.

A **vote** was taken, and the motion to add language recommended by SAASC to the proposal and amend the motion from committee to recommend that Senate approve the amended proposal **passed** with one opposed and two abstained.

The Chair stated that the amended motion was now on the floor to recommend Senate approval the amended proposal.

Bob Grossman (AS) **moved** to return the proposal to the committee. Elizabeth Salt (NU) **seconded**. A **vote** was taken, the motion to return the proposal to the committee **failed** with three in favor, five opposed, and two abstained.

The Chair stated that the amended motion was now on the floor to recommend Senate approve the amended proposal.

A **vote** was taken, and the amended motion to recommend Senate approve the amended proposal **passed** with one opposed and two abstained.

e. Senate Rules and Elections Committee (SREC) - Roger Brown, Chair

In the interest of time, the Chair asked SREC Chair Roger Brown (AG) if his items could be considered at a future SC meeting. Brown agreed, noting that the items were not urgent.

i. SR 5.2.5.2.3.1 (Twenty Percent Rule)

ii. Recommendation for SC Related to Summer Session Courses and Prep Days

iii. Recommendation for SC Related to Name, Recognized Accrediting Associations

4. Tentative Senate Agenda for May 1, 2023

The Chair explained the tentative Senate Agenda for May 1, 2023. SC made suggestions for which items to place on the consent agenda. There being **no objections**, the revised Senate Agenda for May 1, 2023 as an ordered list, unless it needed to be rearranged to accommodate a guest's schedule, was **approved**.

5. Items from the Floor

Time did not permit for items from the floor.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:24 PM with **no objections**.

Respectfully submitted by,
DeShana Collett

Prepared by Katie Silver on Wednesday, April 26, 2023

SC Members Present: Bastin, Blasing, Collett, Cramer, Davis, Duncan, Grossman, Laws, Raglin, Salt, Swanson, Tagavi, Takenaka, Vincent

Invited Guests Present: Roger Brown, Rudy Buchheit, Nathan Congleton, Nancy Cox, Robert DiPaola, David Hamilton, Christine Harper, Kendra Harvey, David McNear, Jessica Ripley, Gregg Rentfrow, Jennifer Siebenthaler, Amy Spriggs, Sridhar Sunderam, Hong Xie