

# Senate Council

September 8, 2021

The Senate Council met in a special session at 3:00 PM on Wednesday, September 8, 2021 in 009F Main Building, although a video conference link was also available. 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. The Chair informed everyone that the session was being recorded for notetaking purposes and noted that it was an open meeting. He asked that the SC members participating via Zoom type their name and affiliation into the chat box and added that the chat function is generally used for attendance and not monitored. He asked that attendees online and attendees in the room state their name and affiliation prior to speaking, to ensure everyone knew who was speaking.

## 1. Minutes from August 30, 2021 and Announcements

The Chair reported that there were no changes to the minutes from August 30. There being **no objections**, the minutes from August 30 were **approved** as distributed by **unanimous consent**.

The Chair informed SC members that Clayton Thyne (AS) was willing to serve as parliamentarian for the University Senate (Senate) meetings in 2021-22. The Chair noted that he would ask the SC to officially appoint Clayton Thyne as parliamentarian on September 20.

The Chair reported that the SC met with President Capilouto earlier in the day.

## 2. Discussion on Strategic Plan Draft

The Chair opened the discussion on the drafted strategic plan by informing SC members that the discussion would be organized by order of principles with exploration of each objective listed for said principles. The Chair reported that he would discuss any feedback items previously provided by SC members that were not addressed by SC members during the discussion. The Chair commented that the term “principle” in the plan was used deliberately, distinct from a past usage of “pillar.”

### Principle I: Students First

- Objective 1: Create a focused, intentional, purpose driven curricular and co/extra-curricular experience with relevance.
- Objective 2: Develop student resilience through holistic student well-being.
- Objective 3: Develop a smart plan for the economic and societal growth of the Commonwealth and its citizens.
- Objective 4: Enhance and engage a student’s first culture.

The Chair went over Principle I: Students First and the associated objectives and asked the SC members for feedback.

SC members commented that language such as “create” and “establish” used throughout the principle and its associated objectives contradicted the existing strong foundation throughout the University’s programs. The Provost suggested edits to the language such as “create additional” and “enhance.” The SC expressed concern regarding the lack of clarity around “high stakes” language such as “reward” and “accountability” found in the

tactics for Objective 4. Hawse (SGA President) provided concerns expressed by students regarding difficulty in accessing research opportunities, noting that increasing research opportunities visibly would be beneficial. Hawse also mentioned the interest expressed by the student body in coursework related to life skills. SC members remarked that important elements like training may be missing that would be crucial to the success of Objective 2. The Provost suggested supportive infrastructure and training.

The Provost agreed to review the language with Jay Blanton (chief communications officer), adding that the SC's suggestions for revised language would offer strength for accreditation.

The Chair noted the Senate's responsibility for education policy of the institution and emphasized that Senate and faculty support would be crucial to the strategic plan's success. Blanton suggested more explicit language in the tactics to strengthen the plan. The Chair expressed the importance of building a shared vision.

The SC discussed the organization of the tactics and metrics throughout the objectives and expressed concern about the clarity of the metrics. Cantrell (ED) remarked the President had mentioned an effort in an earlier meeting to improve clarity of metrics. Blanton verified Institutional Research was evaluating this piece of the plan. The Chair noted that regarding the wording related to UK Core, the Senate needs to be asked if it was interested in the suggestions proposed in the draft strategic plan. There is an opportunity now for the administration to create buy-in before the final version of the strategic plan is presented to the Board for approval; the Senate oversees the structure, purpose, and design of UK Core. As discussion on this objective wrapped up, Hall (GS) commented on the challenge of identifying a metric that will demonstrate that a student feels a sense of belonging and resiliency.

## Principle II: Taking Care of Our People

- Objective 1: Create the highest levels of holistic wellness for faculty, staff and students by developing a unique and comprehensive integrated structure to support working and learning environments to flourish and thrive.
- Objective 2: Generate a transformational culture and environment where students, faculty, and staff are enabled and inspired to flourish and thrive by experiencing meaning and engagement in work and learning.
- Objective 3: Create a Better Prepared Workforce for Tomorrow.

The Chair went over Principle II: Taking Care of Our People and the associated objectives and asked the SC members for feedback.

The SC discussed concerns surrounding the objectives in Principle II. Collett (HS, vice chair) noted that the tactics associated with Objective 3 were very focused on health care and excluded the multidisciplinary piece of the workforce. The Provost noted possible alignment with the strategic plan for UK HealthCare and commented on a shortage of health care professionals across the state. Grossman (AS) suggested that if the language was more direct, which would accommodate other employment fields. The SC expressed concerns regarding a perceived heavy focus on undergraduate programs, noting that more attention could be provided to graduate and professional programs when composing principles and objectives in the plan. The SC discussed the structure of metrics and explored concerns about the success of some of the methods of measurement. Collett commented on the issue of "survey fatigue," noting that surveys were mentioned at least 10 times in the draft plan.

### Principle III: Inspiring Ingenuity

- Objective 1: Pursue research that addresses national and global challenges and that enhances the well-being and economy of Kentuckians.
- Objective 2: Advance a culture that inspires innovation in research, creativity and academic excellence across the university.
- Objective 3: Create an agile ecosystem that is responsive to opportunities of all types and at all scales across the national and global research challenge space.
- Objective 4: Expand the university's academic impact by creating new training programs and new modes of professional preparation to better serve workforce needs.

The Chair went over Principle III: Inspiring Ingenuity and the associated objectives and asked the SC members for feedback.

Discussion pertaining to accessible research opportunities for students took place, including Hawse's comment that non-STEM majors find it particularly difficult to find research opportunities. The connection to research discussion in Principle I was mentioned as well as ways to gather data to inform possible metrics. Hawse emphasized the benefit of specifically mentioning "student research opportunities" in Objective 2. The Chair commented that programming mentioned in Objective 4 may be misplaced in Principle III, noting that this was perceived as a research focused Principle. Vincent (BE) suggested incorporating this objective into the curriculum objective outlined in Principle I. SC members noted that there was not a specific principle related to the educational mission of the institution and that this resulted in a lack of clarity with some teaching-related activities appearing throughout the principles. The SC recommended the coherency of the strategic plan with respect to academic programs be improved.

### Principle IV: Ensuring Greater Trust, Transparency and Accountability

- Objective 1: Modernize and re-envision University guidance and policies to more clearly and succinctly express values, clarify terms and define roles with respect to shared governance among faculty, students, staff and administrators. University personnel must adhere to these policies while maintaining flexibility in the competitive modern environment of knowledge delivery.
- Objective 2: Empower effective decision-making at unit, departmental and college levels by developing more responsibility centered management approaches in budgets and the allocation of resources so that colleges and units have greater flexibility – and can be held more accountable – for generating revenues and managing expenses in a transparent fashion necessary to support the university's mission in alignment with the Strategic Plan.
- Objective 3: Strengthen and expand training across all levels to promote compliance with university standards and processes through programs grounded in UK's institutional values, goals and objectives.
- Objective 4: Develop programs and approaches to engaging communication with both internal and external audiences. Resonant communication today isn't top-down, or one-way, but is rather two-way and allows for stakeholders to be listened to and heard.

The Chair went over Principle IV: Ensuring Greater Trust and Accountability the associated objectives and asked the SC members for feedback.

SC members discussed the language involved in Objective 1. Cantrell requested clarity for the word “modernize” in this context. SC members objected to the perceived premise that UK’s regulations were outdated. The Chair commented that it was the application of the regulations that needed more attention; there are deans and chairs who do not know that there are explicit expectations outlined for those positions in the *Governing Regulations*. The Provost agreed clarity would be beneficial. The Chair commented on the institution’s existing documents pertaining to shared governance, citing their excellent quality developed by many bodies over time. The Provost suggested an opportunity to re-work the objective to better depict the interpretation and implementation of University guidance and policy as it pertains to decision making. The Chair mentioned previous comments pertaining to responsibility center management, the allocation of funds, and budget transparency. Discussion surrounding balance and specific terms like “responsibility center management” took place. Echoing Cantrell (ED), Hawse (SGA) commented on some of the outdated language in the University’s ARs that could be updated to fit the modern mission of the university.

### Principle V: Many People, One Community

- Objective 1: To expand diversity efforts of the UK campus to the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the global community to create more interaction and involvement with campus on DEI matters.
- Objective 2: To recruit and retain more diverse populations (students, faculty, staff) within all units on campus.
- Objective 3: To create greater and direct partnerships between the University and communities throughout the Commonwealth on DEI-related matters.
- Objective 4: To model and provide a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment that creates opportunities for the free and open exchange of ideas to all people of the Commonwealth, the United States, and the world.

The Chair went over Principle V: Many People, One Community and the associated objectives and asked the SC members for feedback.

The Provost remarked on the initiative and investment that built Principle V, noting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and the participation of Acting Vice President for Institutional Diversity George Wright’s participation on that team specifically. The Chair opened the discussion with questions regarding the auditing metric associated with Objective 2. Further discussion took place pertaining to the various tactics mentioned intended to align with DEI, as well as best practices for the University. The Chair commented on the lack of the discussion about the University’s global education enterprise, noting an opportunity to highlight it. SC members revisited the perceived notion of strong undergraduate focus to the detriment of efforts for graduate and professional programs, noting that graduate programs often impact research.

The Chair inquired about the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The Provost noted the anticipated time frame for the QEP would be longer than the timeline for the campus’s review of the draft strategic plan and mentioned efforts that would provide more clarity on the matter.

The Provost thanked SC members for their time. The Provost noted that the strategic plan draft would go to the President next week and spend a week before returning to the campus community for further feedback.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:18 PM with no objections.

Respectfully submitted by Aaron Cramer,  
Senate Council Chair

SC members present: Blonder, Cantrell, Collett, Cramer, DeCorte, Duncan, Hall, Hawse, Grossman, Vincent

Invited guests present: Jay Blanton, Anna Chalfant, Robert DiPaola, Davy Jones

Prepared by Katie Silver on Thursday, September 9, 2021