

Senate Council Minutes
February 2, 2004
DRAFT

The Senate Council met on Monday, February 2, 2004 in the Auditorium of the W.T. Young Library and took the following actions:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:07 pm and asked the Senate Council members to introduce themselves to the many visitors in attendance. The Chair then introduced Alice Sparks, Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees, and Barbara Young, Board Committee member. The Chair noted the presence of other distinguished guests and welcomed all of the visitors.

1. Approval of the Minutes:

Tagavi asked if the changes he circulated to the Minutes from January 12, 2004 could be incorporated despite the fact that the minutes had already been approved. The Chair asked the Senate Council members if they would accept the changes by general consensus since the changes were not substantive in nature. The Senate Council members agreed. The Minutes will be revised to reflect Tagavi's changes.

The minutes from the January 26, 2004 Senate Council meeting were approved without dissent.

2. LCC/SACS Accreditation Issue:

The Chair provided some background on this topic, including the evolution of accreditation as issue, the formation and subsequent recommendation of the Task Force and the various activities of the Academic Affairs Committee. The Chair also made note of the letter that was co-signed by himself and the Chair of the Staff Senate which had been forwarded to the AAC and mentioned the KCTCS Board of Regent's resolution. The Chair expressed his gratitude to the members of the AAC for being present and for taking the matter so seriously. He then opened the floor for discussion.

LCC President Jim Kerley added some additional background, indicating that he had open dialogue with LCC faculty, staff and students about the possible relocations of LCC. He expressed a high level of concern about a potential move, and reiterated LCC's wish to remain part of UK with separate accreditation. Kerley expressed his gratitude to the Board of Trustees for planning a specially called meeting in February to discuss the issue. Kerley then discussed items required for LCC to retain its independent accreditation and discussed the steps taken toward that end and the various problems faced in that process. He expressed his desire to present SACS with definitive evidence that change had occurred prior to their upcoming April site visit.

Trustee Davy Jones said the President had discussed with KCTCS President McCall his concern that LCC faculty, staff and students be afforded the same rights and privileges enjoyed by the Community Colleges when KCTCS was formed. Jones said the

President called this particular issue a “deal breaker”. Jones reported the President heard McCall say he wouldn’t “lie down in front of a train” on that issue.

Kerley agreed that this particular point was indeed a deal breaker. He also indicated the importance of ensuring the transfer of LCC’s buildings and grounds to LCC in the event of its relocation to KCTCS. He said this issue was equally important to the issue of benefits outlined above.

Cantrell, a professor from LCC, was concerned that President Todd and President McCall had been working together to remove LCC out of the campus they currently occupy.

Margaret Warner, LCC student body president, announced that a petition and resolution are being prepared by the students and will be forwarded on Tuesday. She expressed the desire of the students to continue living in the dorms, riding the buses, visiting the library and going to Student Health Services like other UK students.

Miller-Massey, a faculty member at LCC, spoke against moving LCC to KCTCS, noting the large number of Kentuckians who gain access to UK by attending LCC.

Sparks asked how long LCC had had separate accreditation. Taylor indicated his participation in the accreditation process since 1972. Kerley said that SACS has always had questions about autonomy issues and suggested those issues had surfaced recently due to LCC increased integration with UK.

Kennedy asked who the Board could contact if it wished to meet with SACS. Kerley suggested contacting VP Jack Allen or President Jim Rogers and said he did not know if President Todd had spoken directly with either gentleman.

Floyd, an LCC faculty member, asked the Board members if they were willing to work together to recognize that LCC is a vital part of UK and to ask President Todd to work towards solving the accreditation problem. Young said the Board and the President had no desire to separate LCC from UK, but instead were interested in seeking a “workable, good situation”. She suggested the Board was being forced by SACS to make a decision and noted that the issue of autonomy grew as time progressed rather than being the primary issue originally noted by SACS in their letters to LCC.

Kerley reiterated his contention that LCC should be allowed to keep its grounds and buildings. He expressed concern that President Todd indicated that at some point those buildings would be needed by UK. Sparks noted that the future was unpredictable but she did not see LCC being forced to relocate in the foreseeable future. She added that LCC would always be in Lexington, but might not always be in the same physical location, noting this was her personal opinion on the matter. Sparks asked Kerley what ties LCC would still have with UK if enough autonomy was granted to satisfy SACS and still keep LCC under UK’s umbrella. After a brief conversation about the transfer of credits from LCC to UK during which an unidentified LCC student spoke,

Kerley indicated that the issues previously outlined by Warner helped define the “special relationship” LCC wished to maintain with UK. Kerley expressed his belief that the rights of students, faculty, staff and the disposition of LCC’s facilities should be protected in writing.

Batin, an LCC faculty member, said he hoped the buildings would become LCC’s property because their location was of paramount importance to LCC students. He asked that the Board make a forthright effort to work with SACS to resolve the issue.

The Chair interjected at this point to remind the audience that the Board members were present to gather information help them make an informed decision. He noted that the AACR 1 resolution being circulated was merely a draft and that the issue had not yet been decided. He asked attendees to refrain from using accusatory tones.

A student asked what would happen to her benefits in the event of LCC’s transfer to KCTCS. Sparks reiterated the Board’s position that students would have the choice to either remain under UK’s benefits or to join KCTCS instead. She added that the presently enrolled LCC students should be able to stay in the dorms, have access to athletic events, use the library and its facilities and continue to utilize Student Health Services. When asked about future students, Sparks said she couldn’t speak for the future or make any predictions.

Wilkins, an LCC student, expressed her concern that the transfer would prove detrimental to the community, its future, and the future of jobs in the central Kentucky area.

Kennedy asked if Lexington Technical Institute predated the Community College System. Kerley replied that LTI had been created after the creation of the Community College system.

Holt, an LCC faculty member, provided a “thumbnail sketch” of the history of LCC., including the philosophy behind the creation of LCC, the creation of the LCC campus, changes in UK’s enrollment policies, the 1984 name change from LTI to LCC and the role LCC played as a gateway school for UK. He expressed concern that if LCC were transferred to KCTCS it would no longer be able to fulfill its mission to the community.

Kennedy reminded the audience that the accreditation issue and subsequent Task Force recommendation was not a situation the Board had sought out but rather that it had been thrust upon the Board. He hoped the audience would trust in the Board’s good faith effort to find a solution. He suggested the Board meet with SACS to hear from them directly “why they aren’t thinking out of the box”.

Abell, a faculty member at LCC and University Senator, expressed two of her constituents’ concerns. First, removing LCC from UK would have a negative impact on the student body in that the students would no longer attend UK. The second pertained to the differences in course requirements between KCTCS and LCC. Abell reported the

faculty's concern that quality of their programs would suffer if forced to conform to the KCTCS requirements.

Yanarella suggested the Board approach SACS to explore the possibility of a time extension and to gain greater clarity of the specific changes that must be implemented. Yanarella said he did not know where President Todd stood on this issue. He had no intention to criticize the President and suspected that if the President had decided last year, when time was more plentiful, then the issue before the Board would have been less complex. He thanked the members of the AAC for attending the meeting and added that if other options exist, they ought to be explored.

Sparks said the Board values its relationship with LCC and said that they would attempt to contact SACS in the evening to arrange a meeting. She added that the special called meeting of the Board could be delayed if necessary.

Young asked Kerley if the most pressing issue at the moment was the possible total loss of accreditation. Kerley replied it was, and noted that SACS was not interested in assurances but rather in real action.

Several LCC students expressed their concern about an LCC move to KCTCS. These concerns pertained to their inability to go to UK without having first gone to LCC, the role LCC played for students from small communities for whom UK was intimidating, the reliance of LCC's student's on UK Student Health Services, and the perception that LCC was being "devalued" since it did not fit UK's orientation toward research.

Humble, a faculty member from LCC, asked if this was a "done deal". Sparks replied that no decision had been made and that the AAC would have to pass a resolution in order to complete the decision-making process. Sparks noted a recent conversation with a legislator where they discussed why the issue required internal decision-making before going to Frankfort.

Cantrell, a faculty member at LCC, asked if the issue would go to the legislature if the Board decided to move LCC to KCTCS. Sparks responded that such a move would require legislative action. Kennedy suggested it might require changes to House Bill 1.

Jones suggested that LCC's mission might be better preserved if it were no longer associated with UK. He suggested that LCC's unique mission might be de-emphasized in UK's research-oriented environment.

White, a faculty member at LCC, followed up by suggesting that same logic would require all undergraduate colleges to be removed from UK.

Other LCC faculty members voiced concerns about issues such as teaching missions versus research missions, devaluation of teaching, the possibility of LCC becoming a top twenty community college, and the implication that LCC was somehow "an

embarrassment” to UK and the message that would send to the students and the community.

The Chair asked what would happen if the items that were considered “deal breakers” were not met. Taylor replied that LCC would lose its accreditation if no change occurs, leaving LCC no options.

Senate Council member Cibull said the loss of LCC would be disastrous for UK. He suggested the Board address, and possibly serve as mediators for, the various items listed in SACS’ letter to LCC.

Kennedy asked Kerley to provide the Board with research pertaining to the LSU community college model, in which LSU and the community college maintain separate accreditation. Kerley agreed to do so. Sparks requested to be provided with the information as soon as possible given the time constraints.

Tagavi asked if UK retained ownership of the other community college properties when they became part of KCTCS or if those properties had transferred into KCTCS at that time. Kennedy indicated that UK still held the bonds and titles to those buildings. Kerley said the bonds were transferred from UK to the KCTCS Board of Regents along with the colleges. Tagavi suggested those properties might still be part of the Community College System. Sparks indicated that the matter was currently under research. Tagavi noted that the other community colleges had not been removed from their campuses over the years and wondered why LCC was worried that they might be removed from theirs. Floyd replied that LCC’s location on UK’s campus provided the additional cause for concern.

The Chair noted that the President has yet to accept the Task Force’s recommendation. He wondered if the President would “accept thinking outside the box” if Kennedy and the Board were successful in their conversation with SACS. Kerley replied that the President was only willing to go so far and no further. He noted some changes the President had authorized that addressed some of the autonomy issues, but added that the President’s reluctance to go further “has stopped this progress a little bit”.

Jones reported having discussed the LCC/SACS issue with President Todd a week ago, who confirmed that he has not yet reached a decision. Jones noted the President’s interest in hearing the AAC’s decision before making his formal recommendation.

Chard suggested the students should include in their resolution wording that expressed the sentiments expressed during the meeting and should underscore such issues as the decrease in enrollment, and the reduction of out-of-county students moving to Lexington. They should also reinforce the other ways in which relocating LCC to KCTCS would be detrimental to UK.

Warner asked whether lost enrollment and decreased class size would therefore, cause a loss of faculty positions. Floyd expressed her belief that faculty positions would be cut.

Tagavi asked about the percentage of LCC students from outside Fayette County and the surrounding counties. Kerley replied that about 40% of LCC's students were from outside the area.

Jones asked Kerley how many LCC faculty also teach at UK. Kerley said he will provide that information.

Cibull pointed out the University has a responsibility to engage the people of Kentucky. He noted the strength of UK is its representation throughout the state. He added many high schools do not adequately prepare students to enter UK, while LCC does provide that service.

Edgerton asked if the students of LCC had a preference as to whether their institution had separate accreditation or if accreditation as part of UK would suffice. After discussion about the difference between the two options, Warner replied that separate accreditation was very important to LCC students because it would help preserve LCC's mission.

Yanarella addressed the members of the AAC, indicating that President Todd has impressed him as a person who is very committed to his ideal of management and leadership and is someone with a big heart. As examples Yanarella discussed the President's willingness to take on the responsibility of moving UK toward top-twenty status and his emphasis on the importance of public outreach. Yanarella suggested the Board should ask "what do we owe to the commonwealth?" and appeal to this "very humane leader", who has traditionally emphasized outreach.

Sparks replied that the Board members were present at the meeting because of their deep concern for this issue. She indicated the Board's awareness of the emotional, practical and financial aspects of the issue. Sparks noted President Todd's creation of the AAC and applauded his efforts to change the lives of all Kentuckians. Sparks thanked the audience for its kind words and said the AAC will meet with SACS, will continue to work through this issue, and will continue to listen.

Kennedy suggested the Board pursue two courses of action: to talk to SACS about the LSU example while simultaneously working to ensure that any transfer of LCC to KCTCS results in the best deal possible for LCC's students, faculty and staff.

Young expressed her thought that meeting with SACS was extremely important and wondered how SACS could seem so unreasonable.

An unidentified faculty member from LCC expressed concern for the impact on healthcare in central Kentucky if the number of graduates from LCC's health profession programs decreases. She noted the potential "domino effect on the community".

The Chair thanked all the visitors for attending and thanked the members of the Board for agreeing to listen to the various concerns of the LCC constituents and of the Senate Council members.

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Jeffrey Dembo, Chair

Members present: Bailey, Chard, Cibull, Debski, Dembo, Edgerton, Grabau, Jones, Kaalund, Kennedy, Saunier, Tagavi.

Guests present: mentioned in the body of the Minutes, along with many others who did not speak.

Prepared by Rebecca Scott on February 2, 2004.