

Senate Council
November 30, 2015

The Senate Council met in regular session at 3 pm on Monday, November 2, 2015 in 103 Main Building. Below is a record of what transpired. All votes were taken via a show of hands unless indicated otherwise.

Senate Council Chair Andrew Hippisley called the Senate Council (SC) meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

1. Minutes from November 16 and November 23 and Announcements

The Chair reported there were a few minor changes to the minutes from November 16. There being **no objections**, the minutes from November 16 and November 23 were **approved** by unanimous consent.

The Chair reported that he was still trying to schedule a meeting of University Senate (Senate) committee chairs and the proposer for the new honors college proposal. He said that in the meantime, he had recently been asked to identify some nominees for a committee to discuss materials associated with a new honors college proposal. SC members expressed some concerns about an additional committee to review a proposal that has not yet been submitted. The Chair said SC could discuss the committee and associated nominees during "Other Business."

The annual Stakes Reception will take place on December 15 – the Chair said he would like as many SC members as possible to attend, in part to get to know the new chair of the Board of Trustees.

2. Title IX Language - Addition to Syllabus Template/Guidelines

The Chair noted that the proposer was called away to a University Appeals Board meeting. The item will be discussed at a future SC meeting.

3. Candidates for Degrees

a. Motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted (Second August 2015 Degree List): Bestow BS Biology and Rescind BA Biology for Student FM-47

Guest Ruth Beattie (AS/Biology, associate dean of advising) explained the situation and the circumstances surrounding the original BA degree having been granted and the student's desire to change to a BS. Brown **moved** that the SC recommend to the Senate that the elected faculty senators amend the second August 2015 degree list adopted by the SC on August 31, 2015, on behalf of the Senate, by adding the BS Biology and rescinding the BA Biology for Student FM-47. Mazur **seconded**.

There were a number of questions from SC members. Beattie confirmed that with transferred coursework, the student had completed all the requirements for the BS Biology. When there were no further questions, a **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed. The Chair asked Beattie to send a revised memo clearly stating that the requirements for a BS Biology have been met by Student FM-47 and Beattie agreed

4. Committee Reports

a. Senate's Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC) - Scott Yost, Chair

i. Proposed Changes to Senate Rules 5.2.1.1 ("Accelerated Programs") and Senate Rules 5.2.1.4 ("Maximums")

Guest Scott Yost (EN/Civil Engineering), chair of the Senate's Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC), explained the proposed changes. Although the original request was simply to

include International Baccalaureate (IB) exams in the list of maximums that could be counted towards an undergraduate degree, Yost said that the SAASC discovered an additional discrepancy – in a prior section, the *Senate Rules (SR)* mention giving credit for IB courses, although credit is only given for exams. There were a few questions from SC members.

The Chair said that the **motion** was to approve the proposed changes to *Senate Rules 5.2.1.1* and *Senate Rules 5.2.1.4*. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

ii. Proposed Changes to *Senate Rules 5.2.4.2* ("Excused Absences")

Yost explained the proposed changes to *Senate Rules 5.2.4.2*. Yost explained that the impetus for the change was a request from the Ombud to clarify the matter of excused and unexcused absences. Specifically, the *Senate Rules* say that a student shall not be penalized for excused absences, but there is seemingly contradictory language that requires a student to withdraw from a class if they miss more than 20% of the scheduled semester's classes, even if some of those absences are excused. Yost said the proposed language came with unanimous approval of SAASC.

The SAASC through revised language tried to clarify that students cannot be penalized for excused absences in any way, including handling situations in which a student has excused absences in excess of one-fifth of the class contact hours, or has any number of unexcused absences. The SAASC proposed that if a student had excused absences in excess of one-fifth of the class contact hours, the student could request a W, the instructor could ask the dean for approval to award a W to the student, or the student and instructor could agree that the instructor would assign an "I" grade. Regarding unexcused absences, the SAASC believed it would be best to give an instructor total autonomy on what to do with unexcused absences, provided the instructor documents it in the course syllabus. If the instructor does not define any absence policy in the course syllabus for unexcused absences, a student cannot be penalized for unexcused absences. Yost said that in general, there was overall confusion about what the rule entailed. The Chair said that the motion was to approve the proposed changes to *Senate Rules 5.2.4.2*. Because the motion came from committee, no **second** was required.

Grossman suggested adding “, unless the student agrees to it in writing” at the end of the sentence about a student having an excused absence on a day when graded work is required. Yost said he could accept that on behalf of the SAASC as a friendly amendment. There was lengthy discussion about the proposed changes, particularly regarding the one-fifth rule. In the current rule for cases where excused absences comprise some portion of the one-fifth of the class contact hours, a student was able to ask for a W, or the instructor could require the student request a W, or the instructor could require the student to receive an I grade for the course. The proposed language was similar to the existing text, but did not oblige a student to request a W if their excused absences were in excess of one-fifth of the class contact hours, although the student could request it. The proposed language also allowed an instructor to give the student a W if the dean also agreed, and if both the instructor and student agreed, the instructor could award an I grade. Some SC members saw the current language about missing one-fifth of the class contact hours as more student friendly than the proposed new language, while others believed the proposed language was less student friendly.

Other issues that arose during the discussion were the difficulty in determining if an absence is excused or not and the meaning of “absence” in the world of distance learning and lectures recorded via Echo 360. Yost clarified that the language about unexcused absences was written to stop the practice of students purposely missing one-fifth of the class contact hours (excused or unexcused) to get a W if they

want to get out of the class after the last day to drop. Also, including a dean in the decision to force a student to take a W if they have excused absences in excess of one-fifth of the class contact hours (assuming a policy on absences is in the syllabus) was done to ensure that someone beyond the instructor and student is made aware that a student's course load would drop, which could also affect scholarships or financial aid. Discussion on the ability (or lack thereof) of an instructor to force a student to get a W if their excused absences exceeded one-fifth of the class contact hours continued. Yost and others pointed out that an I grade automatically converts to an E after 12 months, casting an I as indirect penalty. Yost opined that the current language appeared to view a W as not being a penalty, but that failing the class was a penalty. Mazur commented that the section being discussed was entitled, "Excused Absences" but the proposed language included a reference to unexcused absences at the end of the section. She also suggested that the Senate Committee on Distance Learning and eLearning (SCDLeL) review the portion of the proposal pertaining to contact hours.

The Chair commented that it appeared there was disagreement among SC members, but no unanimous disagreement. Webb **called the question**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed. A **vote** was taken on the motion to approve the proposed changes to *Senate Rules 5.2.4.2*. The motion **failed** with four in favor and five opposed. Wilson commented that the extensive discussion in the SC implied the proposal was not yet ready for discussion by the Senate. The Chair noted that given the lack of any other motion, the proposal will return to the SAASC. Yost asked for guidance about whether or not "one-fifth of the class contact hours" was appropriate terminology to use for all teaching modes. Grossman opined that the primary reason the proposal was defeated was the proposed language that would allow an instructor to force a student to take a W for the course. He acknowledged that while the SAASC kept that language in there to preserve the sentiment of the original language [from the mid-01980s] to give a student the option of a W, SC did not seem to want to preserve that. Grossman suggested a revised proposal that dropped the language allowing an instructor to impose a W. Watt said the Chair should decide where the proposal would go, next. The Chair said he would return the proposal to the SAASC and give Yost a copy of the meeting's minutes to outline SC's concerns.

5. Proposed Changes to *Senate Rules 5.4.2.3* ("Conditions of Circumstance for Honorary Degrees," "Titles of Honorary Degrees")

Guest Susan Carvalho (AS/Hispanic Studies, interim dean of the Graduate School) said she had two issues to discuss with SC members. The first pertained to the titles of honorary degrees, adding that SC had requested that the University Joint Committee on Honorary Degrees (UJCHD) propose definitions for the different honorary degree titles. Carvalho explained the proposed definitions to be added to *Senate Rules 5.4.2.3*. Grossman **moved** to approve the proposed changes to *Senate Rules 5.4.2.3* and Mazur **seconded**. There were a few questions from SC members. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

Carvalho then asked SC members to deliberate on the matter of whether or not UK should have any policies regarding rescinding an honorary degree. Carvalho explained there were three options: have a policy that explicitly allows the institution to rescind an honorary degree; have a policy that explicitly prohibits the institution from rescinding an honorary degree; and have no official policy but deal with any concerns on a case-by-case basis. SC members discussed the matter for about five minutes and ultimately took no action.

6. University Calendars

Grossman **moved** to approve the University Calendars, as presented (2016 - 2017 Calendar; 2018 - 2019 Calendar, Tentative; 2016 - 2017 Dentistry; 2018 - 2019 Dentistry, Tentative; 2016 - 2017 Law; 2017

Summer (four-week) Law; 2017 Summer (eight-week) Law; 2018 - 2019 Law, Tentative; 2019 Summer (four-week) Law, Tentative; 2019 Summer (eight-week) Law, Tentative; 2016 - 2017 Medicine; 2018 - 2019 Medicine, Tentative; 2016 - 2017 Pharmacy; 2018 - 2019 Pharmacy, Tentative; 2016 - 2017 Winter Intersession; 2018 - 2019 Winter Intersession, Tentative) and Brown **seconded**. There was no discussion. The Chair noted that the calendars would not be approved at the Senate meeting, but rather would be placed on a 10-day web transmittal. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed.

7. Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) Fee Cap Proposal - Joey Payne, Chief Benefits Officer

Guest Joey Payne, chief benefits officer, offered SC members a presentation on the proposal to cap fees charged through UK's retirement accounts for registered investment advisors. Guest Paul Childs (BE/Finance), one of the faculty members on the retirement oversight committee, was also present and participated in the discussion. There were a variety of questions from SC members. SC members asked Payne to give the presentation to the Senate in the spring, perhaps February, and Payne and Childs were amenable.

8. Constitution Day (Time Permitting)

The Chair noted that the campus holds an annual Constitution Day event, but most of the activities are centered on students. He explained that at the most recent Constitution Day celebration, there was a seminar from a College of Law faculty member on the first amendment and its relation to academic freedom. The Chair lamented that the seminar was not well attended and suggested that Senate host a Constitution Day event, in which the Law professor could be invited to give the same talk. If the event were held during the time of a normal SC meeting, which is also the normal time of a Senate meeting, senators should be free to attend. There were no objections from SC members and the Chair said he would follow up with details.

9. Other Business (Time Permitting)

There was extensive discussion among SC members about a request to supply names of nominees to serve on a committee that would discuss the proposed new honors college. Those SC members expressing an opinion were unsure of the purpose of such a committee, given that the Senate apparatus has a number of faculty-led committees that will be reviewing the proposal when it is submitted. Wilson suggested inviting Senior Vice Provost for Academic Excellence Charles Carlson to come and discuss the matter; that suggestion was met with widespread agreement among the SC members present. When discussion wound down, the Chair said he would extend an invitation to Carlson .

There being no additional business to attend to, Mazur **moved** to adjourn and Bailey **seconded**. A **vote** was taken and the motion **passed** with none opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 5:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Andrew Hippisley,
Senate Council Chair

SC members present: Biery, Brown, Gower, Grossman, Hippisley, Kraemer, Mazur, Porter, Watt, Webb, and Wilson.

Invited guests present: Ruth Beattie, Paul Childs, and Joey Payne.

Prepared by Sheila Brothers on Tuesday, December 1, 2015.