

Senate Council
August 17, 2009

The Senate Council met for its annual retreat on Monday, August 17, 2009 in the Lexmark Public Room (room 209) of the Main Building. Below is a record of what transpired.

After an informal breakfast with President Todd, Chair Randall called the Senate Council (SC) meeting to order around 10:50.

Steiner asked the Chair to clarify the goal(s) for the day. The Chair began by saying that he thought there might be a need for a special August University Senate (Senate) meeting. There was also the issue of how courses would be vetted for inclusion in a new gen ed. The Senate had approved an initial trial of gen ed in spring 2010, which was four short months away. The Chair acknowledged the speed at which things would have to move in order to accommodate the Senate-approved spring trial – for example, if courses have to be ready by January, then the courses must be approved during the fall semester. He said that part of the discussion involved getting to know the new Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, who will play a major role in how gen ed rolls out.

Non-traditional Faculty and the Undergraduate Education Experience – Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Mike Mullen

The Chair asked Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Mike Mullen to introduce himself to SC members. Guest Mullen gave information about his career prior to coming to UK, as well as detailed information about what programs/offices were under the umbrella of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.

The Chair said that one of the changes as a result of a new gen ed will be depending more heavily on non-traditional faculty (NTF) to teach some of the gen ed courses. He opined that those individuals have not been well served by the University Senate in the past. They are faculty members, but not often granted membership and voting rights in a college's faculty and are appointed on a year-to-year basis. The Chair asked Mullen for information on the needs of NTF and how the SC/Senate could help.

Mullen began by saying that NTF refer to full-time lecturers. He said that in conversations with Provost Subbaswamy, the Provost was interested in a discussion about professional-track lecturers. Mullen offered an example of a faculty member in the College of Arts and Sciences who teaches full time as a lecturer for about \$32,000 annually, but supplements that with other income, such as summer school teaching, to raise his salary to about \$50,000 annually. Mullen stated that the workload required for a reasonable wage for this particular individual was not a sustainable level in the long run. . Mullen stated that, based on his conversations with the Provost, the University's goal was to raise the base salary of lecturers. Mullen went on to talk about the use of teaching assistants (TAs) and the difficulties in monitoring a large cadre of TAs, as well as other issues pertaining to lecturers. He said that if lecturers were given a standard duty of three courses in fall plus three courses in spring plus overload, it might alleviate some of the load on tenure-track faculty, which normally consists of four classes in fall and four

classes in spring. Mullen said NTF could also take a larger role in advising, coordinating internships, serving as directors of undergraduate studies, etc., which many lecturers already do.

SC members and Mullen touched on a variety of matters, some of which are listed below.

- NTF contract duration;
- NTF contract renewal;
- NTF Promotion;
- Possible positive effect of a new gen on poorer colleges in terms of faculty loads and TAs;
- Coordinating large numbers of TAs;
- Appropriate org chart placement of a modified Teaching and Academic Support Center; and
- Professional advisors and their help in the war on attrition, their training, effectiveness and embedded locations and other matters.

The Chair thanked Mullen for his time, and said he was welcome to remain during the few during “housekeeping” items.

Minutes and Announcements

The Chair asked McCorvey to give an update on the rationale behind the change in timing for the evaluation of the University president. McCorvey explained that in the past, the Board of Trustees (BoT) chair would send out the list of goals in September, and then solicit input in May, for deliberation at the June BoT meeting. The timing of that, however, meant that President Todd would only be evaluated for the nine-month period of September – May, instead of an entire year. By moving the review process to September, President Todd could be evaluated for the period September to September.

McCorvey also stated that the June BoT agenda was typically very full; the BoT felt that perhaps in September there would be an opportunity for BoT members and others involved in the evaluation process to reflect more effectively on the evaluation. Thus, the evaluation process was changed so that the BoT reviewed President Todd in September. McCorvey then passed around the packet of information he received for the evaluation process and answered a variety of questions from other SC members.

In response to the Chair, McCorvey was unequivocal in stating that it was very important for faculty to be involved in the presidential review process. He said that it was fairly common knowledge that major discussions about faculty-related events did not typically during the afternoon BoT meeting itself, but rather during the morning committee meetings. McCorvey encouraged those who were interested in attending to come and listen and comment and fully participate in those committee meetings. There was also brief discussion about the concerns surrounding the continued vacancy in Student Affairs’ leadership position.

SC members spent a considerable amount of time discussing how to conduct the faculty's portion of the evaluation of the president. It was ultimately decided that the evaluation paperwork should be sent to senators and faculty councils as quickly as possible, with a request that input be submitted by Friday, August 21, so that the SC could deliberate on Monday, August 24. Wood stated that voluntary solicitations of data from a group as large as the Senate alone would be statistically invalid. It was ultimately decided that SC members would not send scores received from senators and faculty councils forward to BoT Chair Ball, but rather use the information to inform the SC's final numerical ratings. Chappell reminded SC members that during the previous evaluation process, the SC tried to capture the range of comments from other faculty in the SC's comments, and do it in such a way that it gave voice to a larger group.

Due to the need to adjourn for lunch and welcome the invited guests (various faculty and administrator representatives from undergraduate colleges), the Chair directed that the announcements be entered into the minutes, and they are listed below.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- MS Epidemiology – was not posted for CPE prior to Senate approval (May 4); thus, the PhD went forward to the BoT, but the MS was delayed until the CPE posting finished.
- Date of first regular SC meeting will be August 24 (one week from retreat).
- Results of RWA waivers from late spring SC meeting – RWA Cmte approved one waiver, rejected other two.

ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE CHAIR:

- Approved degree for student on behalf of SC and Senate (for August graduation and job in Japan).
- Approved revision to March 30 and April 6 SC minutes to include Davy Jones as invited guest.
- Waived *SR 6.2.3* to allow for abbreviated ombud search.
- Approved codification of required communication courses for BA in Interior Design.
- For APEX purposes, approved clarification for BA Education, Middle School Education, Science that two content courses are required, not one content course plus lab. The department has been instructed to complete program change in fall 09 to codify this requirement.
- Approved use of repeat option for graduated student.

- Chair approved revision to spring 2010 calendar so that last day to withdraw falls during 12th week of classes, or the 11th instructional week.

The SC retreat reconvened around 1:30, with Provost's Liaison Richard Greissman, Professor Davy Jones, and Marsha Watson, director of Assessment in attendance; Yanarella also arrived.

Gen Ed Discussion (Course Vetting and Assessment and Vetting Committees)

The Chair invited Greissman to offer a little background and update of summer activities. Greissman noted that Susan Carvalho sent her regrets, but was unable to attend due to a family issue. Greissman recalled that the SC and Senate wanted to leave implementation dependent upon the Provost demonstrating that there were sufficient fiscal resources to mount a successful gen ed, and that there needed to be evidence that courses could be developed and successfully taught.

Greissman said that Provost Subbaswamy set aside \$150,000 for 30 faculty to spend time this summer preparing proposals for gen ed, and was delighted to discover that over 60 faculty applied. There were some proposals that were not strong, and some proposals were too specialized, etc., and at the end, the Provost funded summer course development work for 60 faculty working on gen ed courses for Learning Outcomes one (LO1) and LO4, mostly. Seven faculty from the College of Fine Arts submitted course proposals, along with faculty from the Colleges of Engineering, Communications and Information Studies, Arts and Sciences, and Agriculture.

Greissman said that it was a daunting task to make good on the promise of showing by fall 2010 that faculty can develop and teach courses that follow the new GenEd curriculum, and have an idea of their efficacy in time for late fall 2010 discussions. If gen ed, as an implementable concept, is not ready by fall 2010, then a fall 2011 implementation date will fall by the wayside, which would be just short of tragic. On the other hand, it would be inadvisable to implement something that would not succeed. Greissman explained that he created a [backwards timeline](#), beginning (so to speak) with the understanding that some new, experimental gen ed courses would be offered to students in spring 2010. He answered a variety of questions from SC members during his explanation of the timeline.

Since gen ed courses will be offered in spring 2010, they will need to be approved during fall 2009. Although students register for classes in November, they will be advised in October and the classes need to be communicated to advisors shortly before that time. Greissman said he wanted to be careful not to imply that the Senate should hurry up to comply with an administrative imperative, but the fact remained that if courses were not "on the books" by October, the 60 developing courses will just sit for a year. Greissman said that the timeline was intended to do justice to the Senate approval process, as well as remain confident that a body of courses will be in place by October, which will have to meet Senate muster.

Greissman said that the faculty developing the courses will take part in an assessment workshop this fall. He added that if college councils vet the courses in early fall, the dean's office could send the approved courses to the Registrar, with the understanding that the courses would receive final approval from the Senate in December. If not tentatively approved somehow by October, the courses would not be put in the schedule book. Subsequent to the October posting (but long before December), courses would be reviewed by the gen ed vetting teams and can be revised, etc. if necessary. Greissman opined that not all 60 courses would be ready for delivery in spring 2010, but he had a sense that about 20 – 30 courses would be ready. He said that various deans' offices had been researching faculty who were tapped to teach USP in the spring, to see about them teaching an approved gen ed course, instead. He

acknowledged that one issue still to be worked out pertained to equivalencies – students would understandably not sign up for gen ed courses if there were no way to have it count toward the USP requirement.

Regarding the faculty vetting teams, Greissman said that the Provost did not believe those teams to be an administrative matter, so he assumed that the Senate would be responsible for the composition of those teams in their entirety. The only concern about the vetting teams pertained to if they could be composed in time for October/November deliberations, if the composition were to involve elections.

Greissman finished introductory comments by saying that the proposed plan would give the Senate sufficient information for a late fall discussion on courses to be taught during spring 2010, a report from the vetting teams in late fall on how the vetting process was going as it pertained to the experimental spring courses, and input from the vetting teams on how the composition process worked.

SC members engaged in a lengthy and lively discussion with Mullen and Greissman about the approval process of the courses, the method of composition of the vetting teams, and the process of vetting the courses by the teams. Guests Jones and Watson also participated, and McCorvey left during the discussion. Below are just a few of the topics discussed.

- Many courses will need to be developed for a robust gen ed, but it is important to work out first the details of the vetting teams' composition and vetting process. Because the tentative plan is to roll out a new gen ed with a first year cohort, not all courses will need to be ready at once.
- Asking faculty councils to review proposed gen ed courses quickly will likely (and rightfully) upset the members of those councils. There needs to be a mechanism to withhold final approval until faculty councils are satisfied that the courses pass muster, perhaps having all fall gen ed course approvals be provisional, with full reviews by college councils, etc. in the spring.
- Even though the term "experimental" has been used to describe potential gen ed courses, if a course is approved by the Senate in December for gen ed and then offered in spring 2010 (or summer 2010 or fall 2010), students enrolled in the experimental courses will receive credit, including (where appropriate) equivalent USP credit.
- Gen ed courses that are developed should be owned by the department and be sustainable, not owned and modified by individual faculty members.
- If the pedagogical nature of an existing (USP or not) course changes but the content and learning outcomes do not, there will not be a need to submit a formal course change form. Regardless of the type of modifications a course receives, the vetting teams will review all courses that are intended for inclusion in a new gen ed curriculum.
- It is critical that advisors have specific information about which new gen ed courses will satisfy USP course requirements. Additionally, some courses will have one particular section that is the experimental gen ed course, and if that information is not easily ascertained, students will not be enrolled in the course they think they are signing up for. This information will need to be available online through the course registration system, as well as on paper for advisors.

- A final decision about what the University-level approval for the gen ed courses will be made by the University Senate after it considers reports from the faculty GenEd vetting teams on how well the review process worked.
- It would be beneficial to have an overarching group that is responsible for ensuring that the individual courses approved by vetting teams come together as a coherent general education experience.

In the midst of discussion, it was clear that there was still concern about how to compose the vetting teams. The Chair suggested that three to four SC members form a small group and return to the SC quickly with a proposal on how many vetting teams there should be, how many members should be on each team, how membership should be apportioned, how membership should be composed, etc. Greissman noted that Susan Carvalho had suggested seven teams – one team for each of the areas in Intellectual Inquiry (Humanities, Natural/Physical/Mathematical Sciences, Social Sciences and Creativity and the Arts), and one team for the remaining three areas (Composition and Communication, Quantitative Reasoning, and Citizenship). Guest Marsha Watson asked to be part of the small group – she said she could help avoid pitfalls that were encountered at other institutions. SC members Ford, Jensen, Steiner and Wood agreed to comprise the subcommittee, with Greissman and Watson as resource individuals.

There was a discussion on whether or not the charge of the vetting teams would include assessment of approved courses, along with review of courses for inclusion in gen ed. There were relatively strong opinions about this matter, but it was ultimately decided that at least to begin with, the vetting teams would concentrate on reviewing courses for gen ed inclusion.

SC members also discussed the pros and cons of ensuring continuity by inviting past gen ed “participants” to be members. Everyone agreed that this type of consideration should be addressed by the small group.

There was a brief discussion about whether or not there was a need for a special Senate meeting in August. There were concerns about ensuring the Senate approved the details about vetting teams and courses to teach under gen ed in spring, but also about having enough time to put together sufficient information for the Senate to make an informed decision. After some time, SC members determined that no special meeting would be necessary. The idea was for the small group to have a proposal regarding the faculty vetting teams ready for the SC meeting on August 31, which would be discussed at length and then voted upon. Any SC approval of details regarding the vetting teams will be provisional in nature only, so as to allow the vetting teams themselves an opportunity to be composed, review courses, and identify the problems they encounter. The information gleaned from [fall activities](#) of the vetting teams will be gathered and shared with the Senate on a regular basis and aid the Senate in making an informed decision in December when it will be asked to formally approve the vetting teams and associated details.

SC members were clear in their intent to approve on August 31 only a provisional plan for vetting teams. The Senate is the only body with the authority to officially approve or reject details about the vetting teams, which will likely take place in December. Wood commented that nothing was chiseled in stone,

but rather that the SC's intent was to allow a pilot period to see what worked and what did not. SC members were very concerned that senators understand that nothing was being done without appropriate Senate approval, but rather that the SC wanted to create a situation in which the Senate would have sufficient information by December to make an informed decision.

The Chair added that there were other issues to be discussed at some point, such as how to handle AP students, program issues in the College of Engineering, etc. Greissman added that transfer equivalencies would also be a thorny issue. SC members directed the Chair to communicate the day's ideas to senators as quickly as possible. Yanarella stated that it would be critical to be clear that no concrete plan had been determined, and that the overriding intent of the pilot program is to provide the Senate a basis for informed judgment.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Dave Randall,
Senate Council Chair

SC members present: Anderson, Chappell, Ford, Steiner, Jensen, Kelly, Kirk, McCorvey, Randall, Swanson, Steiner, Swanson, Wood and Yanarella.

Provost's Liaison present: Greissman.

Invited guests present during the meeting: Davy Jones, Mike Mullen, Marsha Watson.

Prepared by Sheila Brothers on Thursday, August 20, 2009.