

Senate Council Minutes
February 20, 2006

The Senate Council met on Monday, February 20, 2006 at 3:00 pm in 103 Main Building. Below is a record of what transpired.

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 pm.

1. Minutes from February 6 and Announcements

There being no changes other than those incorporated, the minutes were approved as amended.

The Chair thanked Vice Chair Tagavi for standing as Chair at the February 13 University Senate meeting.

2. Completer Degrees

The Chair described the issue of completer degrees as an unwieldy one. He stated that a number of months previously, Interim Provost Scott Smith had introduced the troublesome educational policy issue to him. The Chair referred to the handout, indicating it was Interim Provost Smith's latest communication to the Council on Postsecondary Education's Vice President for Academic Affairs, James Applegate, regarding completer degrees. He explained further that Provost Smith was in attendance to present the views of the Office of the Provost and the views of a planning/work group assembled to assist the Provost in making recommendations regarding completer degrees.

Provost Smith handed out a sheet with guidelines from the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) for a completer degree. He explained that the expectation from the CPE was that any student transferring from the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) with an associate's degree in any subject could enroll in any four-year institution in the Commonwealth and receive a bachelor's degree in any subject for no more than the UK minimum (120 hours) for a bachelors degree, minus the 60 hours accumulated through work at KCTCS. In some subjects, the 60 additional hours required would be sufficient, but for other degree programs, a maximum of 60 hours of additional UK coursework could not allow for appropriate education.

Provost Smith stated he had received a letter from Applegate, requiring a response addressing UK's efforts toward implementing a completer degree and a plan or timeline for developing a completer degree. He also stated that there was some legislative support for these degrees. The workgroup was put together to analyze the issue and consider the options. Provost Smith expressed some discomfort at the potential situation in which he would bring educational policy to the faculty, instead educational policy originating with the faculty. He stated that a completer degree proposal was unlikely to germinate from any existing educational unit and asked for guidance as to how choose and develop a

curriculum. He spoke about broader legal issues, accreditation issues and University regulations (*Governing Regulations, Administrative Regulations, and University Senate Rules*) on the process of determining educational policy at this University. Provost Smith spoke to the importance of both faculty members and faculty bodies in control of degrees and curriculum. He said he would necessarily report to President Todd information regarding compliance on the issue of completer degrees. He welcomed the discussion of the Senate Council regarding the completer degree process and overall objectives.

Lesnaw referred to the section describing the University of Louisville's progress toward the development of a completer degree in the CPE's July 18, 2005 report entitled, "Status Report on Student Transfer" (Status Report). She thought the last sentence was at odds with the Guidelines for Completer Degree document (Guidelines). She interpreted it to mean that depending upon the student's two-year program, a student either might or might not be able to participate. Provost Smith opined that the sentence indicated the University of Louisville's honesty in stating that not many students would be involved in the program. He understood that all other four-year institutions in Kentucky had satisfied the essential components of a completer degree, and had taken a variety of miscellaneous approaches to satisfying the requirements. He did not think any of the other institutions' completer degree programs were particularly academically rigorous.

Lesnaw stated there was a problem with prerequisites for certain third-year classes, and said there would be no way to pass or even admit to a course a student without an adequate educational background. She wondered how that would be reconciled with the guidelines. The Chair said that Tagavi had requested information regarding the University of Louisville's (UofL) completer degree. The Senate Council Office had made an earnest effort to acquire that information from a variety of sources, but had been unable to do so. The Chair said the handout came from the CPE website.

Referring to the two pertinent documents, Duke said she thought there could be a couple of routes leading to compliance. With respect to what she believed to be a narrow response from UofL, Duke suggested that compliance with two-plus-two agreements could be the definition of the completer degree requirements. She wondered if creating a bachelors degree route to accept everyone would be a good idea. Duke said she was not sure if a bachelors degree in general studies had to be offered to everyone. Provost Smith referred to instruction from Applegate that a completer degree would not have to be tailored to particular students. It would necessarily be broad to accommodate all students. Duke asked if while accepting Associates in Arts (AA) degrees and Associates in Science (AS) degrees, UK could channel Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degrees elsewhere, since that particular degree had significantly less educational merit than either of the other two-year degrees. Provost Smith again stated he was unsure of the procedures involved regarding an Administrator proposing a degree program to the Senate.

In response to a request by the Chair, Liaison Greissman shared that in years past, a General Studies Program had been housed in the College of Arts & Sciences (A&S). The program was discontinued, and Greissman opined that A&S faculty would not be likely to support any similar programs. Thelin wondered if the Independent Study Program (ISP) could house a completer degree program. Greissman replied that ISP was not an academic unit, and would therefore also be unable to present a proposal for a completer degree.

Tagavi stated that due in part to UK's few available technology degrees, it would be more difficult for UK to create a completer degree that would mesh neatly with existing programs. He noted Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) required 128 hours of credit for a completer degree. Grossman asked about admissions standards—i.e., if students would automatically be accepted in a completer degree program. Baxter stated that transfer students with more than 24 or 28 credit hours are currently accepted at UK, as long as the student carried a GPA of 2.0 or better, and was in good standing at their originating institution. Grossman asked about a transfer student following all UK regulations, including those of the University Studies Program (USP). Greissman replied that the transfer agreement states that if the general education component is completed at the originating institution, the transfer student does not have to enroll in UK's USP courses. He said that A&S defined a foreign language as a graduation requirement, and not a general education requirement. Grossman asked if the Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) had a general studies requirement. Provost Smith stated that there are specific courses which satisfy the general education requirements.

Grossman stated that the Senate could accept a program from an administrator, so long as the program was approved by faculty, and suggested Provost Smith could find a faculty group to sponsor a completer degree proposal. He said that Provost Smith could originate the idea, and request the faculty body move it forward. Hobson said that unless changes had been introduced recently, a student could be enrolled at a community college to receive an AAS with a very low ACT score, since remedial courses could allow the student entrance to the program.

In response to Greissman, Provost Smith stated UK's completer program would need to accommodate all three KCTCS degree programs. Randall asked if the CPE would accept provisions on the acceptance of a transferring student's 60 credit hours. Provost Smith stated that one option would be to petition the CPE for an exemption to the requirement, which would require considerable justification and might or might not be granted. He indicated it would not likely be supported by the CPE. Randall said it would be logical to ask that the transferred credits be at least somewhat relevant to UK's programs, to maintain UK's standards. Provost Smith replied that the CPE was flat, and that in seeking uniformity treated all four-year institutions in Kentucky the same.

Duke stated that the same legislature that put pressure on the CPE to enact this completer degree program was also the same legislature that desired Top 20 status for UK, and that those two goals seem to be at odds. She suggested UK indicate a desire to admit every qualified individual, and express global acceptance of the concept while stating that only those who qualified and were in compatible programs at their originating institutions would be admitted. Lesnaw agreed with Duke's positive-attitude approach and said it was one issue to allow admission to anyone and truly strive for uniformity in education, but another issue altogether to ensure students were able to complete the work. She was concerned that some transfer students in a completer degree program would not be able to succeed.

Tagavi suggested Provost Smith inquire of A&S if that college's faculty would agree to support a completer degree, so long as the required hours totaled 68, and not 60. Provost Smith indicated he had already made a similar request, but could do so again. Grossman reiterated that as long as the faculty of a unit at least minimally supported the proposal, Provost Smith could be the originator. Baxter expressed unease with admissions to the completer degree requiring UK to accept any course offered by KCTCS as part of the 60 hours transferring to UK. He was concerned that the courses offered through KCTCS might not adhere to the same educational standards as UK's courses. He wondered about utilizing Evening and Weekend Programs (EWP). Jones stated EWP was not an educational unit. Discussion regarding other four-year institutions' completer degrees took place. In response to Duke, Provost Smith stated that UK's two-plus-two degrees would not qualify as completer degrees. He spoke to the importance of UK's many efforts to increase access for transfer students, but said the completer degree was an entirely separate issue.

Jones objected to text in the letter to Applegate that referred to the faculty's right to set educational policy as a hurdle to overcome. Provost Smith stated that the responsibility of faculty to determine educational policy was certainly a challenge in attempting to create a completer degree, but apologized for the unfortunate interpretation.

Grossman suggested Applegate be invited to speak to the Senate Council on the issue, since the completer degree would necessarily have to be approved by the faculty, represented through the Senate Council and the University Senate.

The Chair stated that the types of issues Baxter raised with regard to approving coursework were best articulated by faculty, and not a member of the Administration. He believed it would be a challenging exercise for a faculty body to design a course of study for the many completer degree students who would not have fulfilled UK's basic skills requirements, and felt no educational unit would want to approve such a degree. Referring to Applegate's previous employment at UK and his service as Senate Council Chair, he said it would be

an appropriate forum in which to request Applegate's attendance to address the issues surrounding completer degrees.

Greissman stated that the A&S General Studies Program had been ended due to a lack of integrity. He said that a degree without true educational substance would not serve a student well; it would be incumbent upon Applegate to show its academic integrity and marketability. The A&S General Studies Program had not been marketable, nor did it have degree integrity.

The Chair wondered what Applegate thought would be the minimum UK need to offer, in light of the diversity among regional universities and UofL. He confessed he was unsure of which issue subsumed the other. UK had approached transferability in very good faith, which was obvious. The Chair believed the completer degrees to be a separate issue from transferability, but still thought the issues raised were all very legitimate questions.

There followed a brief discussion regarding the organizational structure of the CPE. Duke said that there could be a lack of knowledge on the part of the Board of CPE, and that it could be a legitimate attempt at educating the population. Referring to UK being at least a year behind the other public universities in developing completer degrees, Randall asked what penalties UK could expect. Provost Smith said the CPE could not take away funding, but it could remove its approval of curricular programs.

Provost Smith suggested the first step could be to meet with Applegate and a few of the CPE staff members working with academic officers. He mentioned that the student representative to the CPE, Ryan Quarles, was a UK student. He thought a meeting with Applegate could offer insight into how UK could reasonably meet the requirements for a completer degree. Lesnaw stated that student success was the magic phrase and was the paramount concern. She wondered to what extent the CPE was requiring the community colleges to work with UK [regarding coursework standards] to ensure students would receive a foundation, which would promote success and a seamless transition. She stated that was more important than lowering the degree requirements to allow for integration with a two-year degree. Lesnaw ended by saying that no one was opposed to a seamless transition or to Kentucky students receiving a four-year degree, but she wondered what the value of a completer degree would be.

Provost Smith agreed with Lesnaw about student success, and said it was not in the interest of students to be misled about the educational requirements for a four-year degree at UK. He stated he believed he could defend the University's position against immediate implementation of completer degrees, yet agreed with Duke's argument of embracing the overall goal and being positive. He said the current two-plus-two agreements with KCTCS were positive but required compromises and wondered to what extent UK was willing to compromise on the issue of completer degrees.

Grossman **moved** that President Todd, as Chair of the University Senate, be asked to invite Applegate to discuss the issue with the Senate Council. Tagavi did not think UK would be allowed to insinuate that it was better than other public institutions. Provost Smith replied that UK was different from other institutions, partially due to UK's different education population, and that population's different career goals. Grossman added that another difference was that at UK, faculty members were responsible for deciding curriculum. Jones **seconded**. Duke asked if it might be seen as a summons and make individuals more defensive, instead of a friendly discussion.

The Chair opined that the Senate Council Chair should issue the request. He said he had gathered enough sentiment from Council members to frame the invitation. He said the completer degree was a matter of academic policy and the Senate Council was an appropriate place for such discussions. Provost Smith agreed with the Chair. Grossman accepted as a **friendly amendment** the suggestion to request the Chair invite Applegate. A **vote** was taken on the **motion** to request the Chair invite the Council on Postsecondary Education's Vice President for Academic Affairs, James Applegate to a future Senate Council meeting to discuss completer degrees. The motion **passed** unanimously.

Randall requested basic information about completer degrees be available for the meeting at which Applegate attended.

3. Academic Calendars

The Chair said the calendars under consideration were the most updated ones received. He said the latest version responded to the spirit of concerns raised at the previous review. He asked if Council members had noted any continuing or new problems. Tagavi noted the version date on the calendars was the same as the previous version. The Chair said it was likely an oversight and that the 2006 – 2007 Academic Calendar in the handout was revised. Tagavi **moved** to approve: the 2006 – 2007 Calendar; the 2008 – 2009 Tentative Calendar; the 2006 – 2007 Law Calendar; the 2008 – 2009 Law Calendar, Tentative; the 2006 – 2007 Medicine Calendar; the 2007 – 2008 Medicine Calendar, Tentative; and the 2006 – 2009 Dentistry Calendar. Lesnaw **seconded**. In response to Hobson, the Chair explained that the agenda item was separate from the Ad Hoc Calendar Committee. The motion **passed** unanimously.

4. Education of University Community About New Academic Offenses Policy

The Chair said he was open to suggestions regarding the next phase, that of educating the University community on the changes to the academic offenses policy.

In response to a request from Grossman regarding the process by which the Academic Offenses Ad Hoc Committee would be dissolved, University Senate Rules and Elections Committee Chair Jones said that *Senate Rules* currently in

effect address the end of an ad hoc committee, so no motion was necessary to dissolve.

Tagavi offered a handout (“A Campus-Wide Education Campaign: *The new academic offenses policy*”) which consisted of a timeline on the first page, and a memo to academic deans on the second page. He said he was on the agenda for the Provost’s Council meeting in March, but that Grossman would be unable to attend. He reported that he had asked University Appeals Board Hearing Officer Joe Fink to help him and Grossman in the process of educating individuals about the new policy, which would be coordinated by Tagavi as the Academic Ombud, through the Academic Ombud’s Office. Tagavi requested input from Senate Council members, and stated he would also request input from deans at the Provosts’ Council meeting. Grossman expressed concern that much of the educational process would be taking place over the summer, when many faculty would be away. Tagavi said he would ask the deans if there would be sufficient faculty personnel available during the summer to continue the educational process at that time. Both he and Grossman agreed it was most important for department chairs to be well educated on the new policy. Grossman suggested the deans be urged to have the education process done prior to the summer break, stating many faculty would be gone over the summer.

Baxter asked if there was a deadline to having the new policy incorporated into the Code of Student Conduct. In response to Greissman’s statement that the policy was available online, Baxter said there was still likely a deadline for submission of new materials. Tagavi said he would check into any deadline dates for that student document. He also said he would send out information regarding the new policy in his regular end-of-semester mass email. Both Grossman and the Chair suggested leaving out the academic offenses policy of that email, and sending out an email that was separate and dedicated to the changed policy. Duke urged Tagavi to not try to explain all the differences, but merely state that there were significant changes, and direct individuals to a pertinent web site for all the information. Grossman stated all the documents were available through the Academic Offenses web page, and at least the first four documents there should be available to the University community, via the Ombud’s page.

Duke wondered about the best way to alert students to the changes. Tagavi said he had received a call from the Kentucky Kernel about the issue, and had done one interview. He said he asked them to do another article very early in the Fall 2006 semester, too. Hobson suggested making the Academic Integrity session of UK 101 mandatory, and make use of departmental open houses in which new and returning students are present. She also suggested using Kentucky Welcome. To minimize the amount of time Tagavi would spend offering instruction in UK 101, Hobson suggested Tagavi train peer counselors, who could then deliver the presentation to students.

Greissman suggested utilizing senior-level communications classes by asking for a ten-minute brainstorming session with students in those classes to offer ideas for a marketing campaign to students. He added that reaching students about these types of problems was a perennial problem. Grossman said that most students were unaware of even the current academic offenses policy until an accusation of an academic offense was made. Hobson stated that the problem was primarily with freshmen, and opined that many offenses were due to ignorance, and not intentional malicious behavior. Duke asked about the education of international students on the new academic offenses policy.

Tagavi stated that as Academic Ombud, he talked twice yearly with international teaching assistants. Duke requested that other levels of international students be addressed, as well. Baxter noted that any "entering student" should be briefed, not just freshmen.

There being no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 4:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ernie Yanarella
Senate Council Chair

Members present: Baxter, Duke, Grossman, Jones, Hobson, Jarvis, Lesnaw, Moore, Randall, Tagavi, Thelin, Yanarella.

Liaison present: Greissman.

Guests present: Scott Smith

Prepared by Sheila Brothers on February 22, 2006.