

Senate Council Minutes  
May 22, 2006

The Senate Council met on Monday, May 22, 2006 at 3:00 pm in 103 Main Building. Below is a record of what transpired.

The meeting was called to order at 3:07 pm.

1. [Minutes from May 15](#) and Announcements

The minutes from May 15 were approved as distributed.

The Chair offered [statistics](#) on the numbers of curricular proposals processed in the Senate Council Office during the 2005-2006 academic year: minor changes – 174; “other” changes – 7; program proposal – 81 (53 of which were program changes); and major course proposals – 217 (140 of which were new courses). The Chair opined that these numbers were similar to past year’s statistics.

The Chair noted the swirling controversy regarding the math placement exam letters that was to go out to incoming freshmen with scores below certain ACT/SAT levels. He stated that the description of the math placement exam process in the letter has since been set aside and the exam process would again be similar to that of last year’s. He spoke to the likelihood that other Senate Council members had, as he had also been, contacted by various faculty members concerned about the change in process not having been brought before appropriate faculty bodies and a lack of confidence in the veracity of results from self-administered tests.

The Chair shared that he had enjoyed his time as Senate Council chair. He noted his belief that groups such as the Senate Council worked best when there was a blend of talents such as is present in the Senate Council (SC).

2. Joint Senate Council-Staff Senate Committee on Mutual Concerns Nominations

The Senate’s Nominating Committee (SNC) chair Jones said the SNC had received some nominations and he was putting them forward not to lead the discussion, but rather to initiate it. Jones said that four slots were open and then read the names of the nine faculty members nominated; the individuals had not yet been contacted to ascertain a willingness or ability to serve. Tagavi observed that Staff Senate chair Kyle Dippery was a staff member of the Joint Senate Council-Staff Senate Committee on Mutual

Concerns (JCMC); he asked if Grabau, vice chair-elect, or another SC member should be a member. In response to Jones, the Chair said that a decision regarding co-chairs had not yet been made. In response to Tagavi, Grabau said he was willing to serve, but could not do so during the summer; Tagavi volunteered to serve during the summer months. Grabau noted that many of those mentioned as possible faculty members were nine-month faculty and not on campus during the summer. The Chair confirmed for Jones that three nominees plus Grabau/Tagavi was acceptable. Jones said he would contact those nominated and bring their names to the SC listserv. In response to Michael, the Chair said that the listserv would be the method by which a surplus of names could be whittled down.

Tagavi asked that the JCMC somehow reflect that it was an ad hoc committee of the Senate Council. He also suggested the committee be given an end point; the Chair said that the JCMC had been given a fairly broad purview in terms of an effort to encourage the JCMC to formulate its own sense of mission and responsibilities.

Jones also gave an update on the SNC's attempts to identify faculty members to serve on various academic area advisory committees (AAC). The Biological Sciences AAC was full except for one slot, which needed to come from an ecological discipline. Jones related that the College of Agriculture Faculty Council had promised to send him names soon. With regard to nominations from the College of Medicine, Jones expressed disappointment with the lack of suggestions. He said he was still trying to drum up names. Jones also raised the question of which academic AAC would become home to a representative from the College of Public Health, which was currently unrepresented, and wondered out loud about the possibility of one College of Medicine slot being used for Public Health. Duke suggested the Medicine clinical department chairs be contacted for nominees. Jones said that he had been planning on doing so. He also expressed appreciation for Linda Dwoskin's efforts to come up with nominees from the College of Pharmacy.

Jones said that the Social Sciences AAC was more or less completed. The Physical and Engineering Sciences AAC needed more nominees from a wider variety of departments; there were three individuals nominated from one department, so those three were all available for just one slot. In reference to the Humanities and Arts AAC, Jones stated that the major problem was that of the small size of many departments from which nominees were drawn. Jones shared that one of those proposed to fill a vacancy was an alternate, which

would leave the alternate position hanging open. He said he had begun pleading directly with specific individuals to offer nominees. Jones related a conversation with Dean Hoch, in which Hoch offered a possible explanation for the lack of nominees – many committees met 12 months out of the year, while many faculty were on nine-month appointment; many were tired of serving on AAC during the summer months with no additional financial compensation.

Jones shared the Librarian AAC was finished and ready to go. He said also that the Agriculture Faculty Council had also promised to offer sufficient numbers of nominees for the Extension AAC. Dembo suggested that Tagavi, as incoming Senate Council chair, could initiate intermittent dialogue with AAC chairs and the chair of the privilege and tenure committee, to calibrate everyone and reiterate the SC's interest in the AAC process. Tagavi agreed to the suggestion. Jones said he had sent requests to those individuals for suggestions addressing possible solutions for the AAC nominating problems. In response to Tagavi, Jones stated that he had been aggressively trying to cultivate relationships among those individuals and accelerate the environment. In response to Randall, Jones said that some chairs had offered names for nomination to AAC.

### 3. Review of Completer Degree Draft Communication

There was extensive discussion among all SC members present about what exactly should be included in the letter from the SC Chair to the Provost regarding the SC's opinion on completer degrees.

After a lengthy conversation, Michael **moved** that the Chair be directed to send the letter, substantially as written. Lesnaw **seconded**.

Tagavi **moved to amend** the motion, so that the letter's numerical points numbered one and two would be the letter's body. Jones **seconded**. Randall offered a **friendly amendment** to the amendment to the motion, such that the third and final paragraph would include a statement that any and all efforts would be made to work within the guidelines set forth under state law regarding completer degrees, but that under no circumstances would the Senate Council agree to compromise the academic standards of the University of Kentucky's admissions process. Both Tagavi and Jones **accepted**.

After additional discussion, a **vote** was taken on the amendment to the motion, which was that the third and final paragraph of the letter regarding

completer degrees would include a statement that any and all efforts would be made to work within the guidelines set forth under state law but that under no circumstances would the Senate Council agree to compromise the academic standards of the University of Kentucky's admissions process. The motion **passed** in a show of hands with five in favor and four against.

A **vote** was taken on the amended motion to send a letter including only paragraphs numbered one and two, and a third paragraph as outlined in the friendly amendment. The motion **passed** in a show of hands with five in favor and four against.

The Chair indicated he would try to rewrite the letter per the motion before his term ended on May 31. If that were not possible, he said that incoming chair Tagavi could address it.

### 3. Admissions Policy: Issues and Update (Tony Baxter)

Baxter explained that as a chair of the Senate's Admissions Advisory Committee (SAAC), he and the SAAC were charged with regulating the standards for automatic admissions requirements. Two years ago the requirements were raised, which resulted in a static change in the numbers of incoming students. He noted that the numbers of African-American students dropped at that time, but opined that the increased requirements were not the impetus. Baxter said that last year, the SAAC had decided upon rolling admissions requirements for students not meeting the minimum requirements for admission to UK. The thought was to take a more holistic approach, considering essay questions, letters of recommendation, etc. that were not reviewed in automatic admissions. Enrollment continued at a constant level of approximately 3,800 students.

Baxter concluded by saying that Provost Smith had advised preparation for the next rise in student admissions and that the SAAC confer with incoming Provost Subbaswamy regarding the next step up in enrollments. While UK's Administration sets the standards, the SAAC decides how to get there. He wanted to remind SC members that there would be a step function ramping up at some point and that it would be an issue next year.

The Chair asked Jones to make his presentation regarding the change to *Senate Rules 5.1.8.5*. Michael moved to suspend the agenda to allow Dembo some time for faculty trustee-related information. Jones said that the change to the *Senate Rules* was not pressing and could be postponed until fall. The Chair agreed to defer it to a future meeting.

Dembo shared that he and Moore were still requesting feedback regarding the peculiar situation of the Boone Center (BC). The longer such a building sits vacant, the more it is an eyesore. President Todd had indicated another proposal for the BC; unfortunately, no details (how to create a state of solvency for the BC, architectural plans, etc.) had been offered to anyone. Dembo said he had been assured that the BC Board of Directors had been consulted, but there were still doubts among Board of Trustees (BoT) members. He said that the proposed renovation would not utilize any state loans or recurring funds.

Lesnaw said that the original arguments for renovating the BC were sound, such as saving money in the long run by having a nice facility on campus for meals for guests or meetings. What concerned her was an indication that, again, faculty and staff were being left out of the process of renovation planning. She said it was primarily an administrators' club towards the end. She supported the renovation, with the caveat that the faculty and staff be included in the process. Duke asked if the figure for renovation quoted by Dembo (\$6.2 million) was just the same proposal two years later, with inflation accounted for. Dembo said that while he had not personally seen new plans, he believed they existed and were different from the last renovation plans. In response to Lesnaw, Dembo said that he was not entirely clear on who conceived the plans nor even who had seen them. He said he had not yet met with Bob Wiseman [Vice President for Facilities Management].

In response to Jones, Dembo said that the renovation of the Boone Center was nested in with four other items for the BoT to take action on at the June BoT meeting, which would give the green light to begin construction. He noted that the renovation cost was included in the budget approved at the last BoT meeting. Duke asked for confirmation that the issue of the Boone Center was part of the President's evaluation. Dembo concurred and added that the evaluation would occur on or around the June BoT meeting.

Tagavi spoke in support of the President's authority to make non-academic decisions regarding non-academic buildings. Dembo replied that the issue was subject to BoT approval, thus giving faculty the right to offer input through their trustees.

The Chair recalled Ernie Bailey's points (from the first go-round regarding renovating the BC) that other major universities with a conference center idea

also paired it with an allied hotel in close proximity to the conference center, which UK was not doing. The Chair urged the BoT and Dembo to consider a past and prevailing concern that the proposal was too narrow in light of the larger ambitions for what the facility would be. The Chair also suggested an economic analysis. He understood from conversations with President Todd that when the doors finally shut, UK had been losing about \$200,000 annually by operating the BC. The Chair suggested a market analysis of faculty and staff would be appropriate, along with an analysis of use by prospective alumni and other groups. He also suggested thinking along the lines of renovating the BC as opposed to what other possible options might involve and open up. If UK desires to pursue the Top 20 Business Plan with vigor and replicate success stories at other campuses, it would merit a lengthy study of alternative possibilities despite the fact that the BC was currently deteriorating.

In response to Michael, Dembo opined that the renovation was not a “done deal.” He said that one BoT member in particular stated previously that a business plan for the BC would be necessary before voting to approve. Randall expressed confusion in that a building for faculty and staff would be designed and renovated without any input from the very groups that would be using it. The Chair recalled that one of Bailey’s basic arguments was that if faculty had been more strategically involved in the process of design, there might have been greater support for renovation and redesign of the existing building. Duke suggested that President Todd would be hearing from faculty about any renovation, whether or not an invitation to comment was issued.

The Chair asked for additional comments. Randall summed up the consensus opinion that there was support for moving forward, so long as appropriate input was solicited. Tagavi again expressed support for the President to make this decision without requiring faculty input. Lesnaw stated that the building was a different sort of building, created specifically for faculty and for it to be successful, it must be of the faculty. Dembo thanked SC members for their input. The Chair thanked Dembo.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ernie Yanarella,  
Senate Council

Chair

Members present: Baxter, Dembo, Duke, Grabau, Jones, Lesnaw, Michael, Randall, Tagavi, and Yanarella.

Liaison present: Greissman.

Prepared by Sheila Brothers on May 24, 2006.