

Senate Council Minutes  
August 29, 2005

The Senate Council met on Monday, August 29, 2005 at 3:00 pm in 103 Main Building and took the following actions.

1. [Minutes from August 22, 2005](#)

The Chair asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. There being none, the minutes were approved as written.

2. Announcements

The Chair informed the Senate Council of an opportunity to meet with the executive search firm that is currently coordinating the Provost search efforts. The meeting will be Thursday, September 8 from 10:45 to 11:30 in 203 Main Building. Tagavi and Thelin volunteered to attend as Senate Council representatives. Dembo spoke favorably of the firm, noting their interest in the University's strengths and weaknesses as they might influence potential candidates. Tagavi suggested the Chair invite Grabau to attend as well.

The Chair announced an upcoming breakfast between the President and the Senate Council on Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup> from 8 to 9:30 at Maxwell Place. He encouraged the Senate Council members to mark their calendars.

The chair noted that during the preceding Friday's Chellgren Center opening the President called for the creation of a joint Provost-Senate Council task force on undergraduate education reform and assessment. He added that the formal charge and committee composition will most likely originate with the Provost and the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education but encouraged the Senate Council members to consider likely candidates for membership on that task force.

Jones asked if the product of the task force will be managerial in nature of academic. The Chair replied that recommendations would most likely be academic and will require the approval of the Senate. He added that the Senate Council, the University Senate and its committees will be heavily involved in the possible reforms.

The Chair announced the hiring of Kristine Hinson to replace Gretchen Sonnenberg as the Senate Council office's Staff Associate. He urged the Senate Council members to make her welcome.

### 3. University Senate committee formation

The Chair and the Senate Council members reviewed the committee formation recommendations. With a few minor modifications, the recommendations for both committee memberships and chairpersonships were acceptable. Jones requested that the Rules and Elections Committee receive no new members this year, since it was in the committee was in the middle of a substantial review of the Rules. Tagavi agreed with Jones. Grossman suggested moving the three proposed new members to different committees. After brief discussion, the Chair agreed.

Tagavi requested that the LCC representative to the USP Committee be removed, since LCC (or BCTC) is no longer part of the University of Kentucky. Ms. Scott replied that the Rules still call for a member from LCC. Greissman suggested that the representative remain on the committee as an *ex officio* non-voting member. Ms. Scott will communicate the same to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.

Jones made a **motion** to approve the committee formation recommendations with the changes listed above as well as some other minor changes. Grossman **seconded** the motion, which **passed** without dissent.

### 4. Academic Offenses Policy

Cibull made a **motion** to bring the previously tabled proposal back to the Senate Council for discussion. Jones **seconded** the motion, which **passed** without dissent.

Grossman, as committee chair, recapped the history of the proposal and the recently-approved changes to the Student Code of Conduct as approved by the Board of Trustees the previous summer. He revisited the idea of polling the faculty to determine what support of concerns existed among the faculty, noting that support for such a poll among his committee members was split. He asked the Senate Council members for guidance on how best to proceed.

Cibull requested a timeline for how long the approval process might be if a poll were approved. Grossman replied that if log-on authentication was required to make sure each faculty member responded only once, then more time would be required. Without the need for authentication the timeline would be

reduced. He added that he hoped the proposal could be approved during Fall 2005 so it could be in place for Spring 2006.

Tagavi suggested that some major constituent groups that hadn't been consulted should be. He suggested the SGA, the University Appeals Board, the Provost, and a group of past-Ombuds should be consulted.

Thelin suggested that instead of a poll an informational e-mail be distributed to include a draft of the proposal to every faculty member, asking that they share their views with their elected Senators. The Senators, therefore, could vote based on the feelings of their constituents.

Grossman agreed, noting that his intent all along was to foster an environment that welcomed feedback, noting that many divergent opinions had already been voiced and to varying degrees incorporated into the document. He welcomed additional opportunities to receive input, but confessed to some degree of frustration regarding a lack of feedback from certain quarters, including the University Appeals Board and the SGA.

Tagavi added that additional opportunities to discuss the merit of the proposal should be arranged. He outlined a variety of concerns with particular aspects of the proposal, including his opinion that the assignment of the XE grade was too harsh. He also suggested that all penalties and guilt should be subject to appeal to the University Appeals Board, and expressed concern that only two of UK's benchmarks have the grade of XE as an option. He added that the flowchart was convoluted and worried that students would have difficulty understanding the process. He suggested that the unofficial "deals" struck between faculty and students when offenses occur are unavoidable and will always happen, no matter what the policy. He concluded by asking that he be given time during a subsequent Senate Council meeting to outline the rest of his concerns.

Grossman argued that the current policy was overly simplistic and didn't allow for flexibility based on circumstances. He suggested the proposed system would hold both faculty and students more accountable and would provide a mechanism for tracking and punishing repeat offenders – a provision not available under the current unofficial "deals" system. He noted that the current system didn't make allowances for students who make simple mistakes from which they can learn, since the minimum penalty is a grade of E in the class, while the proposed system would only penalize multiple offenders. He supported the grade of XE, noting that it is often difficult to

determine if an E on a student's transcript is a result of an academic offense or poor academic performance. The XE would represent "truth in advertising" and would represent a more honest way of depicting what had occurred. In response to the argument that unofficial "deals" will always exist, Grossman said that inconsistent reaction on the part of the faculty to academic offenses was not only unfair to students but was legally indefensible. He added that students who cheat multiple times should receive a harsher penalty than those who cheat just once, and noted that only multiple offenders would have any indication of an academic offense noted on their transcripts.

In response to the argument that all penalties should be able to be appealed to the University Appeals Board, Grossman replied that the confidence of the faculty in their ability to determine a lesser penalty, such as redoing an assignment, should not be second-guessed by a distant body with no real stake in the outcome or consequence of the decision. He added that the faculty's confidence in the process would be shaken and would encourage them to constantly only give the minimum penalty if they sensed a lack of autonomy. He added that the decision of a lesser penalty for a minor offense should be kept as close to the situation as possible, since those who are most familiar with the situation are the student, the faculty member and the department chair.

The Chair noted that there were very sharply divided perspectives on this issue and asked the Senate Council members to recommend possible courses of action.

Cibull made a **motion** to open a web-based form of communication to all faculty and students to discuss this issue for a finite period of time. The results of faculty and student input should be collated by the committee and brought before the Senate Council, along with input from other interested parties either in writing or in person, at the Chair's discretion. The proposal would again be discussed at the Senate Council and, if deemed appropriate, forwarded to the University Senate for one period of discussion and then forwarded to the subsequent meeting for a vote. Jones **seconded** the motion.

Grossman supported the motion, but offered the **friendly amendment** that the proposal be presented at the November University Senate meeting for discussion and the December meeting for a vote, adding that the Senate Council would therefore need to discuss the proposal at an October meeting. Cibull accepted the **friendly amendment**.

Duke suggested that input received should not be anonymous. Grossman agreed. Tagavi suggested that there should be adequate publicity to ensure an adequate level of feedback. Cibull agreed that a broadcast e-mail to all faculty and students was the most appropriate means of communication. Jones suggested the Chair consult with the President of SGA to encourage student participation.

The motion, as amended, **passed** without dissent.

#### 5. University Senate agenda for September 12, 2005

Jones requested five minutes at the end of the agenda to provide an update on particular applicable changes to the recently-approved Governing Regulations. After further brief discussion Tagavi made a **motion** to approve the agenda with the addition of Jones' request. Thelin **seconded** the motion, which **passed** without dissent.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10pm. Unfinished business will be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

Respectfully submitted by  
Ernie Yanarella, Chair

Members Present: Cibull, Dembo, Duke, Grossman, Jones, Moore, Tagavi, Thelin, Yanarella.

Liaison Present: Greissman.

Prepared by Rebecca Scott on August 29, 2005.