

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

SUMMARY OF FACULTY SENATE SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

WEDNESDAY, April 1, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

PRESIDING: Professor Mark Cooper, Chair

1. Call to Order

FACULTY SENATE CHAIR MARK COOPER (Film and Media Studies) called the meeting to order via the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra platform.

2. Reports of Faculty Committees

a. Senate Steering Committee, Professor Elizabeth West, Secretary

SECRETARY ELIZABETH WEST (University Libraries) – To address complications presented by the COVID19 pandemic, the Faculty Senate Steering Committee proposed detailed grading accommodations for undergraduate students enrolled in spring 2020 circulated in advance of the meeting (see attached), with two modifications:

The following pass/fail scale will be used: Earned grades of A, B+, B, C+, and C will be replaced with SC, earned grades of D+ and D will be replaced with S, and an earned grade of F or FU will be replaced with U. (*FU was added*)

Last paragraph of document: In addition, students who were retaking a class for grade forgiveness in Spring 2020 can retake the class another semester, without penalty. **Grades of SC, S and U in Spring 2020 courses may replace previous grades.** (*Last sentence was added*)

As a motion from a standing committee no second was needed, and the Chair opened the matter for discussion.

SENATOR RAMY HARIK (Engineering and Computing)- Raised the concern the grade SC may result in negative connotation in the future.

SENATOR BETHANY BELL (Social Work) – Made a motion to use S+ instead. The motion was seconded.

SENATOR ABBAS TAVAKOLI (Nursing) – Recommended similar changes for Graduate Courses based on the wording in the current document under review.

CHAIR COOPER – Explained the document is specifically for Undergraduate courses as well as students taking graduate courses. The discrepancy can be rectified with an editorial change. The first sentence will now read,

All **undergraduate** courses will be graded as originally planned according to grading criteria in course syllabi.

After discussion the following motion was voted on by Senators: SC was changed to S+ throughout the document. The motion passed.

CHAIR COOPER – Returned to main proposal by the Steering Committee to extend Pass/Fail options.

SENATOR BELL – Made a motion to add language to this document that would exempt Spring I classes from this policy. The motion was seconded. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

CHAIR COOPER – Returned to main motion as amended. The motion passed.

b. Committee on Instructional Development, Professor Karen Edwards, Chair

PROFESSOR KAREN EDWARDS (Department of Retailing) – Brought three items of interest before the Senate.

- 1) For the Senate's information the updated checklist (attached) for online course approvals, which should simplify the process. Edwards also noted that INDEV will begin speeding up the approval process by reviewing courses on a rolling basis instead of waiting for a scheduled monthly meeting. This will provide feedback in a more efficient time.
- 2) The Instructional Development (InDev) Sub-committee, with concurrence from the Steering Committee, proposes a blanket approval to offer courses online (as circulated in an attachment):

in the event that the University determines that Maymester and summer 2020 courses will be delivered solely online, to extend approval for online course delivery to all face-to-face, hybrid and blended courses scheduled for Maymester 2020 and/or any Summer 2020 sessions. This one-time exemption from the usual online course approval process is temporary in nature. Those faculty teaching courses under the terms of this exceptional provision during Maymester 2020 and/or Summer 2020: a) must submit to their unit head the course syllabus, to be delivered to InDev via the Office of Distributed Learning (ODL) prior to the first day of scheduled classes; and b) are expected to work collaboratively with the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) and/or ODL for course development and to ensure adherence to best practices in online teaching. Courses slated for online delivery for fall 2020 or thereafter must be approved via the normal process before the course is taught online.

SENATOR REBECCA STERN (English) – Raised an issue with the following wording: b) are *expected* to work collaboratively with the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) and/or ODL for course

development and to ensure adherence to best practices in online teaching. She suggested the word “encouraged”.

SENATOR KAREN EDWARDS – Provided a friendly amendment to make the change which will read, b) are *encouraged* to work collaboratively with the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) and/or ODL for course development and to ensure adherence to best practices in online teaching.

SENATOR REBECCA STERN: Moved that references to Maymester 2020 and Summer 2020 be struck such that the blanket exemption would extend for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency. The motion was seconded.

CHAIR COOPER – Restated that motion as amended:

Based on the extenuating circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Instructional Development (InDev) Committee, with input and concurrence from the Steering Committee of the UofSC Faculty Senate, proposes, in the event that University courses will be delivered solely online, to extend approval for online course delivery to all face-to-face, hybrid and blended courses scheduled. This one-time exemption from the usual online course approval process is temporary in nature. Courses slated for online delivery after the COVID-19 emergency must be approved via the normal process before the course is taught online. Those faculty teaching courses under the terms of this exceptional provision: a) must submit to their unit head the course syllabus, to be delivered to InDev via the Office of Distributed Learning (ODL) prior to the first day of scheduled classes; and b) are encouraged to work collaboratively with the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) and/or ODL for course development and to ensure adherence to best practices in online teaching.

The motion passed.

- 3) The IDEV Committee presented two courses for approval: ACCT 404 and MGSC 395. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

c. Faculty Advisory Committee, Professors Charley Adams and Andrew Graciano, Co-Chairs

SENATOR CHARLEY ADAMS (Arnold School of Public Health) – The Faculty Advisory Committee presented a motion (circulated in advance as an attachment) to allow Senators to serve consecutive terms but not three.

- d. Section 2. The number of Senate members allocated to each college, school, or Regional Campus is ten (10) percent of the total voting members of the University faculty in such college, school, or Regional Campus, except that the clinical, teaching faculty from each School of Medicine will be represented by three faculty. Each college, school, or Regional Campus shall establish and publish rules and procedures governing the election of its members to the Senate and the filling of vacancies. Those colleges or Regional Campuses which are departmentalized shall allocate the

Senators amongst the departments so as not to exceed the ten (10) percent limit for the total college or Regional Campus (Table 1). At the first election of members to the Senate, each college, school, or Regional Campus shall designate terms of one, two, or three years for its members so that approximately one-third of its members will be allotted each of the terms. Thereafter, members elected to the Senate shall have terms of three years, unless chosen to fill unexpired terms. ~~No Senator shall be eligible for an additional term in the Senate until one year following the expiration of the term of service.~~ **Senators may serve no more than two consecutive 3-year terms and no more than 9 years in a 12-year period.”**

The motion passed.

3. Report of Chair

CHAIR COOPER – Presented several items of interest:

- a. **First, I want to thank President Caslen for his leadership in this crisis.** I see him asking the right questions, engaging the right people, developing appropriate procedures, and setting clear and appropriate priorities. When mistakes are made, they are acknowledged and corrected. When I need the President’s ear, he lends it. And when he thanks us for our efforts as a faculty, he really means it. Thank you, Mr. President.
- b. **The election of chair-elect.** Because the term doesn’t start until August, the election was deemed not essential for today. It will become essential before the end of term. Expect a called meeting to deal with this and some other business. “Except in cases of emergency, at least three (3) days’ notice shall be given.” We’ll try to give you more than 3 days.
- c. **Faculty participation in emergency decisions about campus closures and online instruction.**
I am in the loop, and I am trying to involve you as much as possible.

It is true that in the first-round decision to cancel classes after Spring Break, a preliminary press release was leaked to the press before I was fully engaged. Our friend at the *Post and Courier* caught me late at night, and I said that I had not yet been consulted.

The leadership team took immediate action to make sure I was involved in high-level discussions—including the decision to cancel classes before it was final.

As a result, I spent 11 straight hours on conference calls yesterday. You’re welcome! I participate in a morning briefing. I’ve been added to meetings of the President’s executive council and the Emergency Management team. I’ve been added to the Cost Analysis and Review ad hoc committee, or CAR, which is one of several groups planning for budget impacts related to the pandemic. And there are other meetings.

Whenever possible, I am trying to engage established deliberative bodies in decision-making. Today's discussion was the fruit of work with the Steering committee on Faculty Manual language changes and on the pass/fail proposal with InDev.

The Faculty Advisory Committee met virtually last week, some other standing committees will meet virtually next week. COVID-19 response discussions have priority, but regular faculty business is also moving forward.

We are working hard to improve and coordinate communications. The challenge here is that there are a lot of stakeholders--from the Governor to the Board to the Legislature to the faculty who believe they should be told before anyone else.

- d. **The Board.** I have been included in meetings of the ad hoc Governance committee chaired by Trustee Dorn Smith—and so has the rest of the Board, in the customary fashion.

The governance committee is moving on the steps it agreed to take in its retreat with AGB. One of those steps is to hire an external governance consultant. They have hired Cameron Howell who is a VP for Strategic Initiatives at UNC. Howell has consulted with our university in the past and comes highly recommended. He is also the cousin of Trustee Mack Whittle.

I did share with the Board my suspicion that you would greet this appointment with skepticism. I am assured by Trustee Smith that Howell has been advised to proactively reach out to the Senate. I expect to hear from him soon.

There has been further discussion within the ad hoc committee of changes to the meeting format and calendar, but nothing has been decided. I will keep you posted

There is now also an ad hoc Finance committee of the Board, chaired by Trustee Whittle, that is paying attention to the potential economic consequences of the emergency. They met this week. I believe they were satisfied that our current contingency planning is adequate through the summer. Fall remains uncertain territory.

- e. **Budget/finances.** This is obviously an area that we all need to watch. I think it's appropriate for the President and Provost to lead the discussion of our financial planning. Those of you on the Town Hall meeting yesterday had a chance to hear directly from them and ask questions. I anticipate other similar fora as the situation develops. With respect to the fall semester in particular, there are just too many variables at this point. We need to plan for worst case scenarios and hope for better ones.
- f. **I have not had a chance to do anything about an ad hoc committee to look at college-level shared governance.** But I haven't forgotten. We'll see what folks have the capacity to do. This is a situation in which we really need such structures, but it will also be a challenge to build them.

SENATOR RAMY HARIK (Mechanical Engineering) – Proposed a resolution to express the Senate’s confidence in President’s Caslen and the leadership team. Discussion followed.

SENATOR ANDY KRETSCHMAR (LAW) – Motion presented to table the motion the proposal until the next meeting.

CHAIR COOPER – Motion passed to table the proposal until the next meeting.

4. Unfinished Business

No Unfinished Business.

5. New Business

No additional New Business.

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was seconded and passed.