

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA**  
**SUMMARY OF FACULTY SENATE MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, November 4, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.**

**1. Call to Order**

FACULTY SENATE CHAIR MARK COOPER (Film and Media Studies) called the meeting to order.

**2. Correction and Approval of Minutes**

CHAIR COOPER – There are no minutes to approve. They arrived after the deadline and will be approved at the December 2020 meeting.

**3. Report of Officers**

**President's Report**

PRESIDENT ROBERT CASLEN--Thank you to the faculty for the work they do while facing the daily challenges of the pandemic, racial injustice, or the unending election.

The three broad topics of the President's report are: 1) testing strategies; 2) spring semester faculty and student engagement; and 3) observations of what we are learning about various modalities.

- 1) Strategies for sending students home for Thanksgiving are based on directives of the CDC. We don't want our asymptomatic students to go to their families and transmit the disease to their -vulnerable family members. We want to send students home safe and healthy. We are putting out a campaign to request that all students test twice before returning home.

Requesting faculty test themselves as well. Testing will be available until mid-December for faculty.

Tests should be taken by all students either before they return or as soon as they return. We have the ability to make the tests mandatory for students living on campus and strongly encourage students living off campus to be tested as well.

- 2) Appreciate efforts made by faculty to respond to student and parent requests for increased engagement with students. Freshmen and sophomores, in particular, have increased educational benefits from engagement and access to ~~increase engagement and~~ synchronous learning environments.

3) Where is higher education going for the future? How is higher education delivered through a number of different modalities? He was in two classes this week and in one class, only 4 of 25 students were there in-person, the remainder decided to take it synchronously online. Students seem to have grown more comfortable with taking classes online. It has grown to be a preferred modality for some students.

We're all learning a lot. We are working on getting classrooms wired. We need the technology to support increased online access.

SENATOR MIHALIK-- We are currently doing unit level strategic plan. While doing this, we noticed that there was no mention of internationalization or globalization in university's plan. Can you expand on what that means?

PRESIDENT CASLEN-- The issue of globalization, is driving us closer together. Having the ability to connect across cultures and having the interpersonal skills to develop relationships across cultures is increasingly important. We have programs already, but I am not sure why they are not connected to the strategic plan. I will look into that.

The strategic plan must be connected to budget. There is an implementation cycle and the spring will be a time of assessment. Internationalization and globalization are one of the things we should look at.

SENATOR CARNES --The Center for Teaching Excellence will help faculty to raise engagement. There are some tools that we have available to assist.

PRESIDENT CASLEN -Caslen- The ability of CTE to assist is appreciated.

SENATOR BRACKEN -- Can you tell us more about the December cut off of faculty testing? Will that be December 15<sup>th</sup> or around 22<sup>nd</sup>?

PRESIDENT CASLEN -- I will need to connect with the Pharmacy School, they actually conduct the testing. I don't know the details of what is available after mid-December. However, if we have the capacity to test faculty up to the end we should try. I will look into the precise details.

### **Provost's Report**

PROVOST WILLIAM TATE-- I will start with question from Senator Mihalik. Provost's office is bringing in folks who are working on global and international work to better coordinate this work. There is a lot of good work being done, but based on my initial assessment, the work is not synced and synergistic at this point, but whe will work to remedy this. Although it does not appear transparently in the strategic plan, it is there implicitly.

Merit exercises will go forward next semester. Departments should be preparing for that. The financial infrastructure for this does exist.

Thanks, faculty, for flexibility in modalities. We are at about 63% face-to-face/hybrid course offerings, which is optimal. Preliminary data suggests that students in face-te-to-face courses have had lower attendance and express being depressed.

The Lab committee, which is examining research infrastructure on campus is ongoing. There is a similar classroom committee. We will report on the insights and findings of these committees next semester, as well as the directions we want to take to enhance these spaces.

SENATOR CARNES-- Do we have access to student survey results?

PROVOST TATE--We do not, they are not completed. I just have preliminary results. Once finalized, we will share. The work is still ongoing to analyze.

CHAIR COOPER-- The student survey will remain open for another week. Senators should know that there is a parallel faculty survey. If we can present the findings of those two surveys in tandem, they will likely be more meaningful.

SENATOR MIHALIK-- My college and academic unit has largest collection of tourism faculty in the United States.

#### **4. Faculty Committees**

##### **a. Senate steering committee, Secretary Spencer Platt**

SECRETARY PLATT--We have two committee vacancies for less than one year and no vote is needed. The Professional Conduct Committee requires a tenured professor and the other opening is for Standards and Petitions Committee. Inquiries should go to Chair Cooper or Secretary Platt.

There is a Committee Vacancies and Volunteer form to go out via email prior to the next meeting. This will provide descriptions of each committee.

##### **b. Committee on Curriculum and Courses, Professor Marianne Bickle, Chair**

COMMITTEE CHAIR MARIANNE BICKLE--- There are 20 Proposals, 11 are from Arts and Sciences, 4 from Engineering, 2 from Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management, and 3 from Information and Communications. As a motion from standing committee, this needs no second. there was no discussion.

The motion carries unanimously.

##### **c. Committee on Instructional Development, Professor Ramy Harik, Chair**

COMMITTEE CHAIR RAMY HARIK-- Proposed 20 from Indev, 12 proposals are from Arts and Sciences, 1 from College of Education, 2 from Engineering, 4 Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management, and 1 from Information and Communications. As a motion from a standing committee, this needs no second. there was no discussion.

The motion carries unanimously.

#### **d. Faculty Advisory Committee--Professor Charley Adams, Co-Chair**

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR CHARLEY ADAMS— Put forth a resolution requesting that the Strom Thurmond wellness and fitness center be renamed. This is a large-major revision of a motion that came from referred by the floor in General Faculty at the September meeting and was sent to FAC, after a discussion, to build more justification. As a motion from a standing committee, this needs no second.

SENATOR CARNES-- Does approving this motion mean that we will name 6 members to a committee that will be established to work with ~~who will be added to~~ the Presidential Commission on University History?

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR CHARLEY ADAMS—That is correct.

SENATOR STERN – Is there a reason for that specific number?

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR CHARLEY ADAMS—It was suggested that we determine the size of the committee. I am not sure why we settled on the number six.

CHAIR COOPER- It is the default number. That is the standard committee size.

The motion carries almost unanimously.

### **5. Report of Chair**

CHAIR COOPER: The Committee of 9 exists due to financial pressures currently faced by most colleges and universities. Our tuition revenue for this fall is better than budgeted, which relieves some of the pressure, but we also see revenue reductions due to a shift to in-state students. Looking into the medium-term future—3-5 years, hopefully beyond COVID--we can expect expenses to go up. There are not many currently known ways to raise revenue. After 2026-27 we face the demographic cliff. So, there's a need to think about cost-savings as well as revenue-enhancing opportunities.

President Caslen, in his wisdom, charged a faculty committee to begin this effort. The Committee of 9 was asked to work with an external consult to consider “options that may result” in the reorganization of academic programs. The consultant is the Educational Advisory Board (EAB).

The Committee is charged to “assess the reasonableness of the process followed and the feasibility of the recommendations generated” by the external consultant. The committee is also to “weigh comparatively any specific options proposed,” and to “balance any proposed restructuring against the priorities expressed in the University’s Strategic Plan.” We are to submit our written evaluation to the oversight group, the “Gang of 6” which will perform its own assessment and forward to the President. The Gang of 6 comprises: the CFO, the Provost, the VP

for Student Affairs, the VP for DEI, Tayloe Harding as the Council of Academic Dean's representative, and myself.

To form the Committee of 9, you nominated diligent, thoughtful, senior scholars who are doing a tremendous job. The group has maintained an impressive focus on the welfare of the institution as whole, while bringing diverse perspectives to the work.

The committee has received a preliminary report from the consultant, and it will now work to fulfill its charge. The preliminary report follows eight hours of meetings with EAB. There are no surprises in it, although there are few matters the committee needs to discuss. The committee anticipates that it will be able to present its assessment by early December. At that point, we will release a final report that will include the EAB preliminary report we have received. It is possible that we may ask EAB to generate some additional data.

EAB makes six preliminary recommendations. Again, the committee is to "assess the reasonableness of the process" that EAB followed to generate these recommendations as well as their "feasibility." We are to weigh them comparatively, in balance with the priorities in the strategic plan.

1. Reduce instructional costs by defining a process to realign instructional resources with student demand and reduce reliance on adjuncts.
2. Reduce academic administrative overhead by engaging deans and faculty in a process to merge some of the smallest colleges to achieve economies of scale.
3. Grow tuition revenue by expanding capacity in high demand programs that are currently turning away highly qualified students.
4. Grow tuition revenue by improving marketing and program attractiveness for existing master's and professional programs with high employer-demand.
5. Engage deans, chairs, and directors in a project to reallocate resources to higher-performing doctoral programs.
6. Reduce reliance on residential undergraduate tuition by building the infrastructure to support growth in online education. This recommendation is already underway under the direction of the System Online Advisory Committee.

EAB will present these preliminary findings at the Board of Trustees' meeting next week. It is likely to provide, at the Board's request, more details than I have just given.

Please remember that this is a preliminary report. The final report will include the Committee of 9's evaluation. Also note that almost every recommendation proposes a process that will necessarily involve a range of stakeholders including deans, chairs, and directors. The committee has been very sensitive to the need for such involvement and is likely to make specific

recommendations along those lines. Finally, let me underscore that elimination of academic programs is not on the list.

The unit level governance committee has almost completed its work and has a final meeting scheduled for later this month. I think the Senate Steering Committee plans to call a meeting of the Faculty Senate on December 9<sup>th</sup> after our next scheduled Faculty Senate Meeting to discuss the recommendations of the unit level governance committee and review recommendations for curriculum process improvements.

SENATOR MIHALIK-- Are these made reports available in print?

CHAIR COOPER- No, the idea is that the detail will be in the final report, but I can email my remarks to Senators.

SENATOR MIHALIK-- Are you seeking feedback from our units?

CHAIR COOPER—No, ~~t~~The time for that will come later, with the final report. The committee of 9 is already the representative committee of the faculty tasked to advise on this.

SENATOR MARCUS-- Which are the high-demand programs that turn away quality students?

CHAIR COOPER--- The recommendation is to create a process ~~is~~ to identify these programs.

SENATOR MIHALIK-- Can we expect that if we are a unit that has expanded in capacity, that resources will quickly follow? There has typically been a bit of a lag, if the resources ever come.

CHAIR COOPER-- This is exactly why the committee's work is important. The committee will need to give careful detail. You have to invest in growth in order to grow.

## **6. Unfinished Business**

No Unfinished Business

## **7. New Business**

No New Business

## **8. FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

SENATOR MIHALIK-Is there a status update on the intellectual property ownership of online teaching?

CHAIR COOPER-- There is not a status update that I am aware of. We can take that up at the next Senate meeting.

CHAIR COOPER- Congratulations to Parliamentarian Bill Suddeth! He passed exam, gains access to membership in National Association of Parliamentarians.

## **9. Adjournment**