

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FACULTY SENATE

Friday, May 14, 2021

The entire meeting was held virtually via Blackboard Ultra.

PRESIDING: Dr. Mark Cooper, Faculty Senate Chair

as amended and approved by the Senate, June 2, 2021

FACULTY SENATE CHAIR MARK COOPER called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. Two items up for discussion today include (a) the events of the past week and (b) a resolution to restore confidence in the Presidential selection process.

DISCUSSION of CAROLINA ONLINE

PROVOST WILLIAM TATE addressed the institution's difficulties experienced during the week of May 10, 2021 as President Caslen submitted his resignation. Provost Tate's provided his observations over the past two years. He stated that we have a faculty body with tremendous resolve. Provost Tate is 100% confident in the faculty. The level of transparency is largely a function of the Faculty Senate and its leadership. He is confident that the institution will survive and thrive. Governance is happening and the University of South Carolina will be fine. Provost Tate encouraged faculty to reach out if they need to talk. Incoming interim Provost is Dr. Stephen Cutler. He will also be available to talk with faculty.

PROVOST TATE discussed the Carolina Online approval processes. The only difference between Carolina Online and regular courses is that Carolina Online looks specifically at the marketplace. This does not change the governance function. Parallel admission standards exist; however, we are targeting different students. Residential students are students who want to be on campus and experience the totality of experiences. Carolina Online students are those who are working full time, or perhaps in the military. The Carolina Online student will be a more robust student who either has work experience or does not plan to experience activities on campus.

Provost Tate continued to state that if you agree to participate in Carolina Online, or are offering a course in Carolina Online, your deans will decide if the courses are overloads (i.e., paid additional income). Faculty members and department chairs negotiate whether they want to participate in the eLearning courses associated with Carolina Online. The goal is to build the

relationship with entities across the globe who want eLearning. The marketing of Carolina Online has been significant. UofSC has been in the press and it has been positive.

Provost Tate mentioned that the impact of Carolina Online over the campus is collaborative; as far as he has seen. They have snags but as far as he knows the initiative is progressing. There may be growing pains for a year or two, but Carolina Online will add revenue.

SENATOR REBECCA STERN asked a question regarding ACAF 2.00 in relation to faculty governance. The question is why some programs are being offered through Carolina Online without going through Faculty Senate, bypassing ACAF 2.00.

PROVOST TATE stated that he is unaware of any programs that did not properly go through the governance systems. Provost Tate responded that ACAF 2.00 was followed because online delivery of programs does not go to Faculty Senate. Notification was sent to the deans, CHE and SACS. Online programs were not required to go through Faculty Senate.

DR. DIANA MITCHELL, Senior Associate Provost for Social Innovation and eLearning, responded to Dr. Stern's inquiry by saying that part of the problem is that ACAF 2.0 was not updated.

CHAIR COOPER made the distinction between approvals of courses for online delivery and changes of program delivery mode. Many courses were properly approved by the Senate for online delivery in the past year. At issue here is the case of a change in the modality of a program. When the change of modality is for the program and that is the only change, the approval has bypassed Faculty Senate.

SENATOR MARK MACAUDA expressed concern regarding Carolina Core courses that are not currently offered online. The question was posed to Dr. Diana Mitchell "how will Carolina Online programs impact the units that offer the Carolina Core course and what is the plan to identify the capacity of the online courses and who will teach these online Carolina Courses?"

DR. DIANA MITCHELL explained that enough of the Carolina Core courses are currently online for Carolina Online to be successful. Most of the Carolina Online students will be transfer students. With respect to faculty, the program currently has 36 applicants and 16 admitted students. Carolina Online will grow slowly. The university has time to assess transcripts and where students' needs in the Carolina Core are needed. We do not anticipate all Core Courses be offered simultaneously. Carolina Online funds go directly back to the unit. Units will be able to assess where to use the funds to best meet their needs. Funding has already been returned to the units. The deans can choose how to use the monies. Carolina Online is not going to be based on the "backs of faculty." We have an idea of the budget requests. Three full time persons are

currently employed for Carolina Online (Dr. Mitchell, an executive director of student affairs, and a person in the call center). A question was made regarding Palmetto College. All online transfer students should go into Carolina Online. The two bachelor's degrees in Palmetto College will no longer be marketed on its website. These students will go into Carolina Online. Palmetto College two-year brick-and-mortar institutions will continue. As such, there will not be overlap.

SENATOR KAREN EDWARDS encouraged faculty involvement in courses involved in Carolina Online. There is a concern for enhanced communication and transparency in the planning process. Senator Edwards encouraged faculty members be invited to work with Dr. Mitchell's team. She also asked how this process will impact SACS review process.

Dr. Mitchell reminded faculty that the university is not violation of SACS. Dr. Mitchell talked with deans and discussed which programs would be possible for Carolina Online. Deans recommended programs. Deans' communication with faculty should have been ongoing. Dr. Mitchell and her team did not override any dean or college.

SENATOR ELIZABETH RAVLIN perceives that the resources are not being allocated consistently across the various colleges. For example, one dean may use resources in one manner and another dean may use resources in another manner.

PROVOST TATE responded by reminding faculty that Carolina Online is following the RCM model. This is the budget model used for all other courses (i.e., face-to-face). This is the "cleanest" method of budgeting. There is a 70/30 split [70% to college of instruction, 30% to college of major]. Resources are given back to each unit equally [according to this formula]. Each dean can decide if he/she wants to participate in Carolina Online. The deans do not have to participate.

SENATOR KIRK RANDAZZO discussed Arts & Sciences requested funding for Carolina Online does not seem to be part of the proposal. He is concerned because his unit is listed as one of the programs, but his unit did not vote for this initiative.

PROVOST TATE reminded the faculty that the budget will be voted on June 11, 2021. We are waiting for the results. Once the budget is finalized, the deans will better be able to provide faculty members with an update.

DR. DIANA MITCHELL reminded the faculty that her team is an online program manager. There may be an assumption that we are trying to control the programs and faculty. We (Carolina Online) are responsible for the marketing efforts, not the curricula. This team also focus on the consistency on the students' experiences. That is why we are advising the students. The team was sent the list of programs to be placed on Carolina Online. If your faculty have not

voted and you do not want it to participate in Carolina Online, send me (i.e., Dr. Diana Mitchell) a note via email or call me. I will take your program off the list.

SENATOR WILLIAM DOXADER is concerned about the process specifically that Dr. Mitchell went to the deans instead of the Faculty Senate. He is also concerned about the approval process for Carolina Core course.

CHAIR COOPER reminded the faculty that ACAF 2.00 changes would go through the Faculty Advisory Committee and that in any case the Faculty Manual overrides ACAF 2.O.

PROVOST TATE reminded faculty that when the Provost's office reached out to each unit, they were asked if they wanted to participate. Provost Tate and Dr. Mitchell assumed the administration in each unit discussed Carolina Online with faculty. Provost Tate also stated that if any unit is not comfortable with Carolina Online, any unit can withdraw. Carolina Online is going to take five (5) years to get going fully.

TRENA HOUP, Interim Director of Office of Academic Programs, clarified the process for approving online programs. Regarding the addition of an online program, the Office of Academic Programs obtains notification from a dean that a program is to be offered online. The notification is sent to CHE and SACS. When APPS was first implemented, it was decided that course modality changes would be processed through the APPS system, but program modality changes would not, thus they would not go through Faculty Senate. The modality change was viewed as administrative and not a change in the program. The university is adopting a new curricula approval system called Curriculum Information Management (CIM). If faculty so desire, we could add a link whereby online programs are reviewed and approved by Faculty Senate. The current online programs in Carolina Online were provided by the deans. The handful of courses that are not yet approved for online delivery are posted in the Carolina Online program because the deans have assured the Office of Academic Programs that the courses will be approved by the time the budget (i.e., June 11, 2021) is approved. Some units have already received initial funding to get courses approved.

DR. DIANA MITCHELL mentioned that the original money was strategic planning money. This is not Carolina Online funds. Carolina Online funds are currently to be used for advising. The funds that were returned to the deans can be used any way the deans see best for the college. Dr. Mitchell reminded faculty that Carolina Online is a system-wide initiative. If any unit is uncomfortable at offering a program right now through Carolina Online, send her (Dr. Mitchell) an email. She will take the program off the website. This will not harm Carolina Online.

SENATOR KRISTINA SCHWOEBEL asked what resources are being offered to students in the Carolina Online program? Dr. Diana Mitchell discussed the working groups such as registrar and bursar. Students will have access to all academic resources in the digital space.

The budget model will include all these issues that the students need. For example, advisors, disability resources, career resources, Handshake etc.

CHAIR COOPER reminded faculty that no new resources will be available until Carolina Core begins to make money, so we are in effect talking about shifting resources to fund this priority.

SENATOR FRANK THORNE asked for clarification of mathematics courses that are not currently online. What happens if Carolina Online students request a math course that is not offered online? Dr. Diana Mitchell no courses will be forced to be placed online for the Carolina Online initiative. This is a voluntary effort.

TRENA HOUP also reminded faculty that a unit cannot offer a program as Carolina Online if a required course offered by another unit is not being offered online. The courses are governed by the faculty. For example, if a unit in the College of Engineering & Computing wishes to place a degree on Carolina Online. Engineering & Computing must gain approval from all outside units for required courses to be taught online (e.g., MATH).

SENATOR MARK MINETT inquired about who made the decision to not have changes in modality to exclude Faculty Senate.

CHAIR COOPER reminded faculty that the decision was made in 2017. This issue has not come up before. It seems there are now issues. The key question to ask if a unit wants to offer a program online, what are the grounds the Faculty Senate would say no they cannot offer this program online? If there are none, then it might be appropriate to notify the Senate of the change. If there are some, then we need to describe the criteria before we ask Curricula and Courses to review the proposal.

DEAN JOEL SAMUELS, Interim Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, apologized to his faculty in the Senate. He discussed Carolina Online with his Associate Dean but not with his faculty. He anticipates that he will pull back the programs in Arts and Sciences until more is known about the budget. Funding that has already been returned to Arts & Sciences is desperately needed in other areas. Dean Samuels is not willing to commit these funds to Carolina Online. He mentioned concerns regarding two levels of governance: college level governance and Faculty Senate governance. At the college level, Dean Samuels stated that he should have handled this situation better.

SENATOR REBECCA STERN repeated her initial question of faculty governance in the existing policy in the website states that online programs need to go through Faculty Senate. Dr. Stern is concerned that programs are offered online that have not been approved.

SENATOR MARK MINETT stated that he heard there will be a five-year plan for Carolina Online. It will be useful if this plan is shared with the faculty.

DR. DIANA MITCHELL responded by saying we cannot predict how many students will be realized in the first technical year (2021-2022). We anticipate 250 students in the first year. We are estimating 4,000 students by year five (5). If we reach this number, Carolina Online will generate \$28 million for the university. We will not know anything until we know how our marketing efforts are making an impact.

CHAIR COOPER stated that he will ask INDEV to develop a recommendation regarding program modality change approvals for the Faculty Senate.

NEW BUSINESS

CHAIR MARK COOPER brought forth a document regarding “A resolution to restore confidence in the Presidential selection process.” This resolution was drafted and vetted by members of the Steering Committee. Faculty Senate members were able to read the resolution prior to the meeting. Chair Cooper also read the resolution to the full body of the Faculty Senate.

SENATOR MARCUS mentioned that a separate bullet is needed regarding the Board of Trustee chair independently refused President Caslen’s first offer of resignation. Should we address this and have a resolution regarding this issue.

CHAIR COOPER recommended this be a separate resolution.

SENATOR MARK MINETT stated that given the fact that the Faculty Senate chair is a member of the search committee but is also required to sign a confidentiality agreement it is recommended we include a bullet point “exclude the reporting of departures from procedures and processes from any confidentiality.” The motion to amend was seconded. No discussion. The motion carried.

The vote for the resolution as amended was held. The motion carried with a good margin.

The resolve as amended reads:

Resolved, that the Board of Trustees should:

- foster open and clear communication regarding both the procedures and the process of the presidential search;

- take great care to ensure that search procedures are transparently followed;
- ensure that the search committee includes appropriate representation from key constituents, including faculty, staff, students, and alumni;
- ensure the search committee membership will be diverse both demographically and in its expertise;
- require that the search committee develop, approve, and make public a clear position profile related to institutional needs, “following a thoughtful discussion with the campus community” as recommended by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges in *Presidential Search: An Overview for Board Members* (2012);
- expect that the search committee will produce a slate of diverse high-quality candidates through a search process that reflects the University’s mission and values;
- solicit and consider the counsel of the UofSC community throughout the search and in its deliberations regarding the final candidate(s); and
- exclude the reporting of departures from procedures and processes from any confidentiality.

SENATOR STANSILAV MARKUS mentioned that a separate bullet is needed regarding the Board of Trustee chair independently refused President Caslen’s first offer of resignation. It is important that the Board be aware of the lapse of judgement.

CHAIR COOPER stated that the Board clearly knows that there was a lapse. This is clear because an interim president was announced and then the statement was “walked back.” He recommended that the Senate “let the dust settle and let this play out.” The Senate can act, if necessary, in June.

SENATOR JUSTIN BYARS mentioned that we do not know how the resignation was supposed to be presented. It would be premature to say the Board Chair did anything wrong with the resignation until we knew the steps of the resignation.

SENATOR REBECCA STERN made a motion that Carolina Online immediately cease and desist advertising and enrollment in any and all online degree programs that have not been approved by the Senate for online delivery. Further, the Senate requests that all requests for online degree approval be submitted through the APPs system and C&C, in keeping with University policy and the Faculty Manual.

Carolina Online cease and desist advertising all programs that have not been approved through Faculty Senate until such time as that are formally approved through C&C and Faculty Senate. The motion was seconded.

DISCUSSION

SENATOR KAREN EDWARDS stated that she does not have enough time (i.e., six minutes) to decide. It is premature to make such an important decision. She made a motion to table, which was seconded.

SENATOR RANDAZZO spoke in support of the main motion.

SENATOR RODNEY supports Senator Stern's motion but wants to table the motion for the June 2, 2021 meeting.

The motion to table carries. The main motion will be taken up at the June 2nd Faculty Senate meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00pm EST.