

UNIVERSITY SENATE MINUTES

November 4, 2021

4:00-6:00 P.M.

AF 103 & ZOOM

Present: Martha Anderson, Allen Back, Colin Bolger, John Carelli, Janice Chernehoff, John Conahan, Cara Cotellese, Richard Courtney, Anne DeLong, Michael Gabriel, Amanda Garcia, Jennefer Gehringer, Meg Gooding, Julia Hovanec, Garrett Hudak, Daniel Immel, Loriann Irving, Mauricia John, Deryl Johnson, Erin Kraal, Pierette Kulpa, Andrew Mashintonio, Padraig McLoughlin, Amy Pfeiler-Wunder, Robert Portada, Christine Price, Shawn Riley, Thomas Robinson, Wendy Rogers, Rick Sakafia, Jennifer Schlegel, Kayla Sherry, George Sirrakos, Dan Stafford, Michelle Vaughn, Veronique Vlaun, Tony Wong, Steve Lem

Guests: Matt Delaney, Lisa Kowalski, Bernard McCree, Kyle Mills, Krista Prock

I. Call to order

S. Lem calls the meeting to order at 4 PM.

II. Announcements

III. Guest Speakers

1. Facilities: Matt Delaney

- KU's campus consists of over 30 buildings and has many types of HVAC systems; most have been upgraded in some fashion over the past 20 years, and all were professionally designed to the standards in place at the time,
- Existing HVAC systems utilize 3,903 individual air filters, building conditions are controlled remotely by the Building Automation, system uses 53 master controllers and 2,523 secondary controllers; which all are operating effectively,
- University developed a COVID Related HVAC Operations Plan and engaged Entech Engineering to complete a Campus-wide HVAC IAQ Study (Indoor Air Quality. The primary finding of this report was that KU's "COVID Related HVAC Operations Plan" meets or exceeds compliance with currently available federal, state and local requirements related to SARS-CoV-2 (COVID) for building occupancy. No mandatory improvements were identified beyond confirming the proper operation of each HVAC system,
- KU opted to adjust occupied/unoccupied programming to improve ventilation. All HVAC systems currently run 2 hours before and after building occupied times. This provides pre- and post- occupancy ventilation purge of buildings.
- IAQ report also suggests upgrading to MERV 13 filters where feasible. Due to HVAC system limitations, not all filters can be upgraded to MERV 13.
- KU's HVAC systems are varied and aging; facilities ensures the systems are running as designed and filters are changed annually, and design changes or studies require input from outside specialists,

- Currently reviewing HVAC IAQ Study, Health Center enhancements, Commencement Analysis,
- HVAC system in the Rohrbach Library upgrades or replacement systems are costly, Lytle HVAC upgrade from 2017 cost nearly \$3 million, typically handled as part of Life Cycle Renovation (DeFran underway)
- COVID Related HVAC Operations Plan is posted on university website under “Guide to the Fall 2021 Semester” This was supported by HVAC IAQ Study completed by Entech Engineering in Sept 2020,
- Hosted tour of Heat Plant on September 27, 2021, included campus leaders from University Senate, APSCUF, AFSCME, etc., joined APSCUF Meet & Discuss on October 12, 2021 and provided support documents in advance to answer questions at the meeting.

J. Stafford: Has the substances found in buildings been identified?

M. Delaney: Not yet.

IV. Approval of the Minutes from October 7, 2021

R. Courtney moves to approve, P. McLoughlin seconds; all in favor, minutes from October’s meeting approved.

V. Reports

1. Senate President – S. Lem

- Moving back to non-Covid related questions on Student Success committee, looking at what student success will look like in post-Covid world in terms of enrollment and retention.

2. Senate Vice President – T. Wong

The Committee on Committees would like to make the following recommendations on filling the vacancies of Senate committees due to retirement, leave of absence, or resignation.

- *Enrollment Management Committee*
College of Visual & Performing Arts Representative – replacement for the rest of the term till Aug 2022
- Summer Doll-Myers (Communication Design)
- *Events Advisory Council*
Faculty Representative from Sport Management – 2 years
- Jeffery Whitmoyer (Sport Management and Leadership Studies)

All senators in favor of the above recommendations.

3. Senate Secretary – M. John (no report)

4. University President – K. Hawkinson (no report; attending COT meeting)

5. University Provost – L. Basden Arnold (no report; attending COT meeting)

6. Student Government Board – K. Sherry

- Since the last Senate meeting, SGB's Executive Board set up a meeting with Senate leadership to further discuss the pass/no credit grading policy and how to possibly re-implement it for this semester. This will be discussed later.
- SGB participated in PrideFest, ElectHer, Grad Fest, and Homecoming Spirit Stations. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences representatives hosted a Meet the Reps event. Many collegiate groups sent out surveys to the student body to gather information to take back to administrators and college Deans, as well as use the feedback to generate ideas on how SGB as a whole can best help represented students.
- Academic Affairs committee released a newsletter to remind students of academic resources and events on campus,
- Public Relations committee continues to keep students informed and engaged through various initiatives,
- Student Affairs committee has worked hard for multiple weeks to plan the annual Fall Fest event being held on 11/4/21 from 5-7pm on the DMZ.
- SGB is looking forward to finishing the semester strong with a few more events and initiatives, and also hope to have an engaging discussion about pass/no credit later on in this meeting.

7. Assessment Office – K. Prock

- Assessment fellowship applications are due on 11/5/21,
- All departments except one submitted academic assessment reports,
- January Assessment Day will be held on 1/19 and 1/20: there will be a session on grading assessment and Gen Ed.

VI. Unfinished Business

S. Lem: A lot of polices are currently with ASPC, questions are being investigated, there is not much to report just yet.

Senate Constitution: Feedback is being used from JEDI initiative to make sure all angles are covered in the Senate constitution.

1. Course Grading – Undergraduate Students (ACA-048) @ ASPC
2. Final Examinations (ACA-025) @ ASPC
3. Repeating Courses – Undergraduate Students (ACA-008) @ ASPC
4. Individualized Instruction (ACA-034) @ ASPC
5. Course Withdrawals (ACA-011) @ ASPC
6. Senate Constitution Revisions - @ Task Force

VII. New Business

1. Pass/No Credit Grading Policy: K. Sherry

- Pass/no credit was implemented for the past 3 semesters during COVID-19 to alleviate stress and worry from our students, so we are asking to bring pass/no credit back during yet another COVID semester to help us ensure the well-being of our students.
- We are potentially setting our students up for failure and increased pressure during an already harsh time in our lives without the option of pass/no credit. Unless there is an equal amount of support offered in another manner, such as increasing mental health resources or accommodations for online learning, pass/no credit seems to be the best compromise and solution to preserve our students' well-being and passion for learning.
- Students' ability to perform is impacted by sick family members, working multiple jobs, and switching between online classes and face to face classes. Many students are also suffering from mental health issues.
- The benefits of helping the students in need will outweigh the risk of students who use the pass/no credit system. This will mean less stress, less tension, and better success & retention rates for students.

S.Lem: This was discussed with the Senate Exec. committee, and President Hawkinson will endorse what the Senate body votes on.

T. Wong: Response to SGB's motion:

- Sympathetic of the situations that many students are facing. A historical background of this grade-changing policy is important. In Spring 2020, Drs. Hawkinson and Zayaitz contacted the Senate Executive Board about implementing a pass-no credit policy. The Senate Executive Board did the research and discussed with the Academic Standards and Policies Committee. There were roughly three scenarios: let students change to pass-fail by a certain deadline during the semester; blanket pass-fail; let students change the grade afterwards. The first scenario caused extra stress to students, unknown consequences; the second scenario discouraged students to work hard, some want good grades on the transcript for graduate school application or work; third scenario offered the greatest flexibility. In the end it was decided that, because we changed the modality on the students, we should allow them to change their grades,
- In Fall 2020, Dr. Zayaitz asked if it was possible to have the same policy again, and this was agreed on by the Senate Executive Board. This semester, Dr. Hawkinson withstood a tremendous amount of pressure to ensure that courses do not change modality,
- What students signed up for is exactly what they get, thus there is no reason for this exceptional flexibility,
- Transition from online back to face-to-face is not easy, but all students have 11 years of face-to-face education, so it is also not an impossible task, changing grades hurts students a lot without them realizing it,
- Although No Credit does not hurt the GPA, it hurts financial aid since it is considered an attempt,
- Grade changing policy should only be offered if students were treated unfairly. Hardship mentioned, very sad, may not ease up in the foreseeable future. The difficulty to transfer back is also not a reason to change grades

G. Sirkakos: Do we have any sense of what sister schools are doing this semester, concern is similar to senator Wong, if students continue to use P/NC, how will this affect them in the future for graduate school? Not sure if SGB has looked into other PASSHE schools.

P. McLoughlin: Three sister schools do not offer this; other schools make no mention and are not doing it this semester. This all stopped in Spring 21". Math department discussed this policy this morning and voted no.

J. Schlegel: Thanks to senator Sherry. What are the parameters that need to be in place where SGB believe KU should return to the regular grading?

T. Robinson: We need to make consistent adjustments, due to things out of our control, SGB should consider thinking broader, petition administration for more variability, other groups were not afforded same accommodations and continue to be resilient.

M. John: We cannot offer this indefinitely; impression was that this was only being requested for this semester and not indefinitely?

K. Sherry: Yes, we just request this policy to be extended for this semester.

M. Gooding: We need to trust students to make these choices. How is taking P/NC is an easy way out when the current system is setting students up to fail?

T. Wong: We think some students are ill informed, switching grades is not appropriate, alternative ways such as late withdrawal are available, the concern is that grade changing might not be the only way.

G. Sirkakos: Not sure it is about getting an easy way out, Covid protocols are great questions that should be addressed to the administration.

R. Courtney: Very rare that students contact faculty due to Covid, we cannot issue certificate in department without letter grade.

A. Back: Students in quarantine want to follow missed classes on zoom, but faculty are unable to do so via a hybrid model.

E. Kraal: Very flexible, but concerned if we are truly helping with retention if this is implemented

A. Pfeiler Wunder: Thanks for SGB, one concern is when we see patterns where these P/NC grades are hurting students in the long term. Faculty are thinking academics as well as the financial story.

B. McCree: This policy has had a very negative impact on students in terms of financial. Students must have 2.0 and complete 2/3 of classes attempted in order to receive financial aid. Very concerned if we do that this semester, we will have a greater loss of students due to no financial aid. This year Financial Aid had to work with the Registrar for students not to complete W so as to not affect their GPA. At some point we have to move forward; we need to retain students not lose them. We can only give one financial appeal per student in their academic history.

J. Carelli: Finding alternatives is very important, we can offer incomplete grades, and get it done over winter or summer, some majors require minimum GPA to graduate.

A. Pfeiler-Wunder: Please let students talk with their professors about what they need, use support structures.

K. Sherry: Any other solutions will be great. Will continue to remind students about resources available.

D. Johnson: Is it allowable for academic exceptions committee to change a grade from a F to an NC?

B. McCree: This is currently happening. Students can still change any F grade using this policy, by communicating with Registrar's office.

E. Kraal: Idea of appeal is beneficial, more of an education campaign for students, flow chart can be useful, make students aware of wide variety of options that exist without this. Many students who need this information are not engaged so reaching out is important.

J. Chernenkoff: Sympathetic, but transcripts virtually have no grades for three semesters, many faculty are doing their best, continue to emphasize those resources.

P. McLoughlin: Thanks for bringing this forward, one of the best conversations seen in Senate for the last decade, thanks to Tony Wong for facilitating the correct channels to voice this concern.

M. Gabriel: What about extending withdrawal deadline?

S. Lem: SGB felt students did not need the option.

K. Sherry: SGB felt that this compromise was not equivalent to P/NC, a withdrawal would hurt students, but SGB is willing to consider this now.

J. Carelli: Since the withdrawal deadline is tomorrow, this is difficult to do at this late stage.

P. Kulpa: Is this another underscoring of the issue that resources available may not be enough for students?

J. Conahan: There are many factors involved in this process, to find one policy to address all of this would be a very difficult undertaking. There are negative unintended consequences.

J. Schlegel: 40% of college students have depression and 30% have anxiety, according to webinar attended. We need a consultation, assessment and referral team to look at all of it together; this might be a way to deal with this.

S. Lem: SGB has decided to withdraw the motion to extend the P/NC option, no need for a vote. Fantastic use of shared governance.

2. Senate Exec Officer Nominations – A. Pfeiler-Wunder, C. Price, G. Sirrakos

G. Sirrakos: Positions are open are for Vice President and Secretary of Senate. Request is out for nominations; deadline is Nov 15th to submit. We would like to now open the floor for nominations for Vice President and Secretary.

Senator Cotellese nominates senator Johnson for Vice President and senator Sirrakos nominates senator Cotellese for Secretary. Both senators Johnson and Cotellese accept the nominations. Nominations will remain open until November 15th for both positions.

VIII. Good of the Order

T. Wong: There is no centralized place for faculty publications, awards and research, and student success stories. I would like to suggest merging all information to one location such as the provost's office. There will be a single request sent out by Provost office every semester in order to accommodate this. This will take care of COT reporting, which many forget about reporting to.

A. Back: Admissions should display Chambliss awards at registration, recommendation was made without answer.

G. Sirrakos: Information reported to the Council of Trustees is unknown, this may be useful rather than adding another layer of what needs to be done.

T. Wong: We are suggesting this process to reduce the work and even replace the Council of Trustees report. Many are confused about the data collected for COT. This method will make it clearer, and create a more centralized reporting process.

E. Kraal: Centralized database can be useful.

T. Wong: After reporting, data will be cleaned, we are looking at a more holistic approach for reporting.

D. Stafford: Library has this in place, Research Commons is perfect for this. Some faculty already have this. Contact Susan Cherney at library. Solution already in place that might work for this,

S. Lem: Feel free to send to T. Wong with any suggestions.

IX. Adjournment

P. McLoughlin moves to adjourn, K. Sherry seconds; meeting adjourned at 5:54 PM

Please note: University Senate meetings are recorded to facilitate the documentation of University Senate proceedings (minutes). Audio recordings are only shared with members of the University Senate Executive board and support staff. Records will not be uploaded to the internet, shared or transmitted.