Faculty Senate Minutes

Monday, January 25, 2021

4:00-5:30p

*Present:* Melissa Anderson, Amy Belcastro, Jeremy Carlton, Paul Condon, Brian Fedorek, Paul French, Andrew Gay, Marianne Golding, Justin Harmon, Laurie Kurutz, Jesse Longhurst, Merrilyne Lundahl, Brendan McMahon, Matt Moreali, Anna Oliveri, Michael Parker, Aprille Phillips, Mark Siders, Ellen Siem, Michael Stanfill, Chad Thatcher, Precious Yamaguchi, Kemble Yates

*Absent:* Tiffany Morey

*Guests:*  Lee Ayers, Douglas Daley, Dan DeNeui, Sherry Ettlich, Niko Hatch, Terry Longshore, Pavlina McGrady, Rene Ordonez, Alena Ruggerio, LInda Schott, Sue Walsh, Jody Waters

Meeting called to order at: 4:00 pm.

1. **4:00p Approval of Minutes from 1/11**

Motion & Vote:

Oliveri moved to approve the minutes, and Fedorek seconded. There was no discussion. **Motion passed** unanimously.

1. **4:05p President’s Report – Linda Schott**

Report:

* Board of Trustees Meeting (1/21-22)
  + *Board Vacancy*

Les AuCoin, a long-time trustee, resigned for health reasons. The current board will begin working to select a new board member.

* + *Employment of SOU Graduates*

VP Woolf and his office mined LinkedIn and other data from our graduates[[1]](#footnote-2) and found that over 80% of SOU graduates are employed in jobs related to their majors within 6 months, which is above the national average for our peers. A significant group also attends graduate school, but this number is slightly below our peers.

* + *New Credentials*

The Board was pleased to receive the new sustainability major and minor as well as the cybersecurity certificate and various microcredentials. They seem impressed by how faculty are rethinking how we can use and reorganize our knowledge and human assets to attract both current and new types of learners.

* + *General Education*

Gay and Paddock discussed revisions to SOU’s general education, and the Board seemed very interested in the discussion, which is expected to continue into the future.

* + *SOU Finances*
    - SOU Employees

President Schott emphasized that SOU is focused on controlling costs and saving money without touching employees, aside from continued furloughs.

* + - Early Retirement Incentive Program

Lardizabal (Director of HR) and Blodgett (Benefits Officer) conducted a thorough analysis of the impacts of the early retirement program for non-faculty. (Faculty retirement is governed by faculty contracts.) Considering who is currently eligible and the associated incentives, they found that there is no financial benefit. Therefore, SOU will not move forward on this. Please contact President Schott for more information about this.

* + - North Campus Village

The Board approved refinancing North Campus Village (NCV). The refinancing is complicated but involves the bonds used to finance NCV. The refinancing extends the payment period but reduces the debt load, significantly helping SOU during the pandemic. The success will depend on both the pandemic and enrollment. For more information, contact Jason Catz (SOU General Counsel) and VP Perkinson and/or review the Board materials.

* + - Federal Relief Package

SOU will receive $6.2 million, which is significantly more than was received from the first relief act last spring. The Department of Education has not yet shared finalized rules regarding how the funds can be spent, but SOU will be required to provide as much to students as before, which was $1.7 million (the required half of SOU’s first $3.4 million package). This leaves $4.5 million to put toward, *e.g.*, lost revenue and additional costs. SOU has a team currently considering how to use money in the most advantageous way for the institution and employees. President Schott anticipates restrictions on how this money is used and stated that it will not solve all of our problems.

* COVID Vaccination

The Student Health and Wellness Center has been authorized to give the vaccine. To help them prepare, SOU will administer a survey to determine which employees will want the vaccine. President Schott is hopeful that, by Fall term, SOU employees who want to be vaccinated will be vaccinated. She is not yet certain how this will work yet for students but hopes that vaccinations will proceed more quickly and effectively.

* Staff Assembly

Jason Catz has been working with a group to finalize the bylaws for the Staff Assembly. There are 1-2 more meetings, but the goal is to have the governance body operational by Spring. Once these bylaws are finalized, SOU will revisit work prior to the pandemic on revising the bylaws for the University. All such documents will be organized in a single location to reflect our current way of operating and doing governance.

Discussion:

**Gay** shared that he is a member of the shared governance group for staff. They have had positive conversations regarding the development of an organized leadership body, in which the Executive and Advisory Councils interact with leaders of the Staff Assembly and student leaders, and they are currently considering a quarterly meeting where faculty, staff, and students can interact and solve problems together.

**Oliveri** asked for clarification regarding the part of campus being refinanced, and **President** **Schott** clarified that it is North Campus Village (housing and residence halls).

**French** asked for the national average of student employment in jobs related to their field. **President Schott** replied that there was not a large difference between SOU’s value and the national average, but that SOU was slightly ahead. She asked Provost Walsh to verify the actual value with VP Woolf, and **Provost Walsh** later added, in the chat:

*Following up on the stat that Linda mentioned regarding graduates working in their fields or continuing to grad school: SOU alums are beating the national average by 8 points (85% to 77%).*

**Thatcher** asked how the $1.7 million in relief money goes to students. **President Schott** stated that the money from the last package was distributed through the Dean of Students and financial aid. We utilized Cares reports and created a simple application for students. Last time, SOU could not give relief money to students who were ineligible for financial aid, such as DACA students. In addition, students could not use the relief money to pay off an unpaid balance from a previous term. SOU believes the rules are more lenient this time and that students also have the ability to receive additional funding if they have greater need. President Walsh stated and **Provost Walsh** verified that students will be able to use funds from the new relief package for unpaid balances.

1. **4:10p Provost’s Report – Sue Walsh**

Report:

* Geospatial Science Certificate

The certificate in geospatial science was approved at the last Board meeting.

* SB 233

At the last Senate meeting, the IFS report presented by Shapiro discussed Senate Bill 233, which addresses common course numbering. Provost Walsh and several other provosts met with Senator Dembrow last week. There is a lot of support for the common course numbering concept, and this continues to move forward. The provosts are providing as much input as possible on the behalf of academic affairs. There will be a transfer council that will include faculty and chief academic officers from community colleges and universities. If SB233 does go through, it is uncertain what will happen with the MTM (major transfer mappings) work that resulted from House Bill 2998, but Senator Dembrow thinks it might be put on hold.

* Revisiting the Academic Structure

Provost Walsh thanked everyone who responded to the call for ideas and everyone who expressed interest in joining the working group that will focus on this topic. She will get back to us soon regarding teh composition of the working group.

1. **4:15p Advisory Council Report – Chair-Elect Melissa Anderson**

Preface:

Though it was a holiday, AC met last Monday to plan the agenda and discuss recurrent items.

Report:

* Senate Voting

AC discussed how to adjust our voting methods in Senate, and we may adjust them again.

* New Courses

AC discussed the group of new graduate program courses and the new University Studies course on the agenda.

* University Studies Committee

AC discussed the current and future roles of the University Studies Committee (USC). The committee is currently working on the new general education model, but courses were put forward before this new work began. We want a procedure that will allow these new courses to be considered and voted on while protecting the committee from being overloaded.

* Faculty Awards

The Faculty Awards process will come back to Senate for a later discussion. The goal is to make the process more clear as well as straightforward and consistent.

* Board of Trustees Presentations

AC discussed Yates’ presentation to the Board of Trustees. Specifically, AC discussed Yates’ suggestion that he mention that faculty are considering in-person teaching when it is safe and faculty are willing. AC also learned that Gay and Paddock would give a presentation on the new general education model to the Academic and Student Affairs committee at the Board meeting.

* Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

AC discussed the EDI issues raised by Siders at the previous Senate meeting, highlighting the good work the OAL program is doing in regards to EDI and the desire for hiring practices that would promote diversity and inclusion and, for example, include methods for reaching candidates from underrepresented groups. AC discussed the potential for professional development in those areas and hte possibility of having the EDI Committee provide a report to Senate about some of their work.

* General Education Survey Results

Gay reported that responses from the general education survey were in and would be sent to the subcommittees. He stated that only about one-third of the 40 programs at the University responded to the general education survey, so the information would not be representative of all programs.

1. **4:20p ASSOU President’s Report – Niko Hatch**

Report:

* Student Incidental Fee

This process is ongoing. However, a couple of budgetary levels were missing on the original form, so it has been updated and was sent out again 2 days ago. The deadline has been extended to 1/29, giving an extra week. ASSOU still believes they will be able to finish the process around 3/9 to then present the results to President Schott and the Board of Trustees.

* Director Vacancies

ASSOU is still looking to fill the Director of Multicultural Affairs and Director of Recreational Outdoor and Athletic Porgrams positions. There will be a Southern Exposure post about them, and the applications for these were sent out 3 days ago.

* Board of Trustee Vacancy

The current student representative to the Board of Trustees, Dylann Loverro, will graduate this year. ASSOU is working with Sabrina Prud’homme (University Board Secretary) to find a student in their freshman or sophomore year to become the new student representative, which is a 2-year term. Please send names of outstanding candidates to Hatch.

1. **4:25p New University Studies Course (Action) – University Studies Committee**

Preface:

One J-strand course (ENG 315) was considered at the last senate meeting, and there was no discussion on this course.

Motion & Vote:

Gay moved to approve the ENG 315 as a J-strand course, and Fedorek seconded. There was no discussion. **Motion passed** unanimously .

Discussion:

**Yates** asked Ayers to provide a sense of the current work of the USC and whether it had room to consider new courses.

*Current work:*

**Ayers** replied that the USC had 4 courses in Fall and ENG 315 was the only one to go forward. Sometimes a course goes back and forth after the USC requests additional information, sometimes a course is not a very good fit, and sometimes a course has too many prerequisites. *This term*, members of the USC have been reassigned to subcommittees of the General Education Task Force to get a better feel as to how the general education is shifting. The goal is identify the proficiencies of the resulting capacities and to put forth the additional work needed to create a faculty template and provide a pathway for faculty that helps them see how their courses (current/modified/new) can become a continuance of our general education.  *In addition*, this term the USC completed an audit of all of the courses listed as eligible University Studies courses from the University Studies mainpage. This audit was completed today and the information will soon go out to chairs. Of the currently listed courses, some have not been taught since the 1st, and others since the 2nd, retrenchment. These courses are still in the catalog and the hope is to continue counting these courses in DegreeWorks for students who have taken them but to hide them on them from students who might hope they will be taught again.

*New proposals:*

Ayersadded that some programs are developing new major courses as electives are concerned about attracting students and asked whether they can, for these courses, apply for an integration strand status. Ayers has encouraged faculty to direct their efforts into creating courses for the new model.

*Moving forward:*

Ayers noted that Senate can decide if it would like the USC to take on a different charge for Spring term, but there are not currently shortages in courses that can satisfy the exploration (E, F, G) or integration (H, I, J) strands, even after using the results from the audit to clean up courses on the list.

**Yates** stated that this will be a discussion item on the next senate agenda. He asked Senate to consider how to proceed in cases for which a program applied for a strand status of a course last year but cannot move forward with their application process. He asked senators to consider whether they would like to halt such applications or continue considering new courses, now the current general education model has been for another year.

1. **4:35p New Graduate Programs and courses (Action) – Graduate Council**

Preface:

Last week, Senate considered the updates to the BI 434/534 and EE 501 and 503 course description.

Motion & Vote:

Phillips moved to approve these updates, and Belcastro seconded. There was no discussion **Motion passed** unanimously.

1. **4:50 More New Graduate Programs and Courses (Discussion) – Graduate Council**

Preface:

Three programs have proposed updates to their programs and/or courses. Senate will vote on these in 2 weeks.

Summary:

**Proposals from MBA (Ordonez)**

Orzonez is the coordinator for the graduate programs in Business.

1. Add a new concentration to the MBA pogram called Sustainability in Business. This is a joint effort between Business and Environmental Sciences and Policy
2. Make a minor tweak to the MBA for the arts concentration to make it more flexible, accessible, and responsive to students in OCA. This is a joint effort with OCA headed by David Humprey and professors in OCA.

**Proposals from Music (Longshore)**

Longshore commented that changes will also be brought to Senate by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC).

1. Change to name of MUS 515, a new course. The original name was Introduction to Music Industry, but he has learned that the word “introduction” is not appropriate for 400- or 500-level courses. The department would like to propose the new name Music Industry Studies.
2. Change the number of credits from 4 to 3 credites for both MUS 515 and MUS 516, which is called Copyright and Publishing and the companion course to MUS 515. This change will allow these courses to better align with the upper division and graduate level courses in Music, most of which are 3-credit courses.
3. Add 3 new courses in the music education area: Music 481/581, MUS 582, and MUS 583. Each of these courses are proposed in hopes to broaden the Music program’s audience and each is paired as a split-level course with a 400-level option for students in the undergraduate program preparing for the MAT program and a 500-level option for students in the Master of Music program. MUS 482 is Music in Elementary Schools and MUS 483 is Music in Secondary Schools are courses currently offered, and the proposal is to add a 500-level version. Music 483/583 is a new course, Music Education Conference Attendance, designed primarily to serve teachers who might be attending conferences and looking to gain credit for graduate-level professional development or credit that could be applied toward steps in their careers. At the graduate level, the 3 courses have been structured into a badge.

Music Proposals Discussion:

**Gay** stated that the undergraduate proposal for MUS 483 is in the Senate folder for the current meeting and asked if other undergraduate changes are not included in that folder. **Longshore** replied that there are quite a few undergraduate changes and all have been presented to the UCC and that most if not all have been approved. **Yates** added that the copy of all of the catalog changes from Music is in the folder for the current meeting. **Waters** clarified that one of the changes proposed to the UCC needed a revision. The UCC sometimes votes by email but does not include Waters (who does not vote) in the email. Because the UCC receives more proposals, it takes a little longer. The UCC will bring the changes proposed by Music to Senate soon.

**Proposals from GSWS (Waters)**

1. Add 2 split-level open-numbered, practicum, special topics courses, GSWS 407/507 and GSWS 409/509. GSWS does not anticipate teaching these courses in the next year or two, but they will be placeholders and are proposed because GSWS anticipates that the major will grow and they will have more need for these courses. For example, they continue to build a relationship with the Ethnic and Racial Studies Minor, which has gone through the UCC and will be coming forward soon. Members of the Graduate Council are enthusiastic about these courses because they feature areas where they have a project/thesis opportunity for students, giving them the ability to work on or apply projects with committed faculty members. This is of particular interest because GSWS lacks in-program faculty or curricular support.

**Additional Information (Waters)**

There’s been an ongoing discussion that dates a couple of months back and includes Ettlich about whether we should or could standardized all of the open-number course numbers. This was the intent for the open-course numbers many years ago, but there is currently no system to their numbering (some involve practicum, some reading conference, etc.). The desire is to have course numbers respond to the same sort of experience for students.

Discussion:

**Yates** reminded senators that these proposals will be voted on at the next meeting and clarified another split-level course, BI 444/544, was approved by Senate.

1. **5:00p Potential Bylaws Amendments (Discussion) – Constitution Committee**

Preface:

**Yates** stated that the student administrative assistant (Caitlin Richardson) and Patrick Stubbins have reviewed the changes to the Faculty Bylaws that have been approved over the past 10 years to check that everything is up to date. The work is not complete, but the Constitution Committee would like Senate to consider new language for 2 fairly minor items. The language is located in the folder for the current meeting materials.

**Yates** asked if wording was sufficient to put forward to all faculty on Monday (2/1) and emphasized that Senate would not vote on the proposed amendments to the language until all faculty was given a chance to review the changes.

Summary:

**Anderson** commented the current proposed changes were incredibly small.

* The firstinvolves granting emeritus status to professional track faculty. Senate voted to approve this a few years ago but there was no change to the bylaws to reflect this approval. The proposed change is to add 2 words, “or instructor,” to a line in 5.510 that clarifies which faculty are eligible for emeritus status.
* The second is from the Student Learning Experience Survey Committee. Previously, language in the bylaws addressed how instructors chose which courses would be evaluated with student course evaluations. One line in one of those bylaws stated that no evaluations would proceed for chosen courses that did not reach a minimum enrollment. However, the previous language did not address courses with low enrollment not doing evaluations, but there was a practice in place of not doing them at all. The bylaws for the new survey do not include language for having faculty choose which courses are evaluated; however, minimum enrollments (*e.g.*, 5 students) are still needed to protect student confidentiality. The practice was still in place last fall, as the survey was not administered for a course with one student. This proposed bylaws change is to make it clear that a class must meet a minimum enrollment to receive the survey.

Discussion:

**Siem** said she once received an evaluation for a section of a class that had only one student and asked whether, when considering enrollments, the survey would distinguish between sections. **Waters** replied that it is possible to distinguish between sections, clarifying that the previous system parsed at a higher level than the current system.

**Golding** asked for the minimum enrollment necessary for a course to receive the survey and whether graduate and undergraduate courses have different minima. **Waters** replied that the minimum has been 10 for undergraduate and 5 for graduate courses, adding that these numbers correspond to what is listed in the CBA as minimum enrollment for courses at these levels.

**Yates** stated that it was the will of the Senate in 2014 to grant professional track faculty emeritus status. He expressed appreciation to the Directors and Provost for their willingness to grant special applications for retiring instructors while Senate updates its bylaws.

**Golding** asked whether students in courses that do not meet the minimum enrollments are automatically informed that they will not receive the survey and, if so, when they are informed, or if faculty are responsible for providing that information. She also asked if the minimum enrollment requirement had already begun or when it would begin. **Waters** replied that students are not they’re not automatically notified if they are not in a course sufficiently enrolled to receive the survey but that, if helpful, general information about this could be provided to the students. She stated that in Fall, the previous 5/10 cutoff practice was still in place, so the minimum enrollment requirement is already active. She added that the problem was that the language in the bylaws read “all courses will be evaluated.” **Anderson** agreed that the old policy had been continued but that the language did not agree with that practice.

**Yates** stated that he will send an email to all faculty and to bring questions/concerns about these items to the next Senate meeting, when space will be made to discuss the proposed amendments. He added that the amendments cannot be amended on the floor and that any amendments to the language will, according to the Faculty Constitution, require another 7-day process so that all faculty know exactly what bylaw language will be voted on.

1. **5:25p Announcements/New Business**

**Yates** announced that the Task Force on Post-Tenure Review (PTR) was dormant until recently and has agreed on wording for a report and a set of recommendations for Senate. However, it will first consult with the FPAR Task Force, which has been waiting for its input before preparing its reccomendations. Recommendations from the PTR could be ready as early as the next Senate meeting.

**Oliveri** asked if the FPAR Task Force should update their current document and be prepared to present at Senate with the PTR. **Yates** replied that the PTR would share its information with FPAR Task Force, which can then decide what, if any, updates it will need to make.

**Gay** announced that in the near future, perhaps the next month sometime, the General Education Task Force would like to host a campus-wide discussion with anyone engaged in portfolio-building in their programs. A component of the new model that the task force is considering is a general education portfolio, and there are a number of programs that currently do great portfolio work. The task force is thinking of organizing a group through CATL to share some of their best practices and recommendations.

**Ettlich** announced that at 12:30 on Friday (1/29) will be a presentation from a number of colleagues regarding things they have done with in-person instruction. All faculty are welcome, and the link to the presentation is in an email to all faculty that was sent on 1/19 and had the subject title “Panel Discussion about Teaching on Campus.” McBee is working to put an announcement for this in the daily news on Wednesday. The discussion will be great help for faculty thinking about doing more in person, even if just in small groups, because it will be a way to get ideas and learn from what our colleagues have learned instead of starting from scratch.

**McMahon** asked if it would be recorded. **Yates** replied that he believed that it would, Ettlich stated that she believed McBee had said that it would be recorded, and, in the chat, **Lundahl** confirmed this with:

*I emailed Joan and she said yes!*

**Thatcher** announced that he created a fun podcast that came out a couple of weeks ago on maximizing serendipity in your life. He’s done a few talks about this in the community and people have wanted to discuss this with him, so he added a link to the podcast in the chat:

*Happiness in Progress*

*#146 Maximizing Serendipity in Your Life*

*https://happinessinprogress.libsyn.com/146-maximizing-serendipity-in-your-life-feat-dr-chad-thatcher*

**Ayers** announced that a campus theme presentation hosted by the University Seminar faculty was scheduled for Wednesday, 1/27, at 7 pm. The concept is thinking uncertainty, and a number of Seminar faculty will be participating in a Ted-Talk-like approach. A ZOOM link will go out with the campus theme announcement. It will be recorded!

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.

1. Woolf added that the data included LinkedIn [↑](#footnote-ref-2)