Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
For Wednesday, June 24, 2020

Call to Order (10 a.m.) (digital through Collaborate)
Chair’s Introduction: Dr. Jayne Violette
Call for Executive Session, moved, second, pass
Move to executive session.

Faculty Senate Standing Committee Summaries and Statements:
Faculty Welfare Committee – Dr. George Pate

From the Faculty Welfare Committee:

- Simply put, any plan for any amount of in-person classes, including the face-to-face element of hybrid classes, puts health and safety at risk.

- At one of the earlier online briefings in the spring, Dr. Panu had indicated that testing and contact tracing would be necessary to move forward with a face-to-face plan. Later briefings seem to contradict this.

- There is an overall overreliance on personal responsibility inherent in all messages, including the latest from Governor McMaster and Dr. Panu on video.

- The process of communication has been incomplete and confusing.

- By extension, it is deeply problematic for faculty to be held responsible for notifying students of any changes to the modality of the class as that should be coming from the Office of Academic Affairs. Students should be told to routinely monitor Self Service Carolina for updates on their classes.

- As of the date of this letter, Beaufort County (and South Carolina overall) has seen a dramatic increase of new cases since just last week.

- In April, news was released of the particular vulnerability, coupled with the lack of robust health care, of this geographical region and community. Here is the link: https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/how-one-high-risk-community-in-rural-south-carolina-is-bracing-for-covid-19/

How One High-Risk Community In Rural South Carolina Is Bracing For COVID-19
Just as some demographic groups are more at risk than others of getting seriously ill from the new coronavirus, some parts of the country are more vulnerable to…

fivethirtyeight.com
• It has been mentioned that USCB will discourage the campus community from traveling, yet that is impossible given people’s existing need to commute.

• Air quality in the buildings (including classrooms and offices) is not always good even without the pandemic. How will this be addressed and what new systems will be purchased and installed?

• There is discussion of the need for backup of faculty on record in case someone is sick or worse, dies. How is this being handled?

• Contingent faculty lack health insurance. Insured faculty are subject to poor and limited insurance in South Carolina.

• When and how will you determine the number for “acceptable risk” that would then shift everything fully online?

• How does the Office of Academic Affairs, in concert with Deans and Chairs, and the Department of Public Safety plan to stand ready and support any and all faculty who are faced with students who fail to comply with wearing face coverings, cleaning, etc.?

• Air dryers in all restrooms are a significant problem since blowing air has been determined to pose very high risks. For example, guidelines for hair salons preclude the use of blow dryers. Will these be rendered fully inoperable at USCB and replaced with single use paper towels?

• If there is an expectation for cleaning in classrooms, will covered biohazard trash cans be installed in classrooms and regularly emptied especially since on ordinary days these are overflowing onto the floor?

• Will all doors be changed to operate remotely?

• The Chancellor said that we are partnering with Beaufort Memorial Hospital to provide student health services. What are the terms of this relationship and what does this agreement entail? Is this an ongoing relationship and does it go through summers also? Can students use these health services, even if they don't suspect they have COVID-19? How will students access these services? Are these services free of charge? Furthermore, how will students without transportation get to and from medical appointments? Since there are three campuses, is there discussion about partnering with each hospital in each local area? As faculty, we often are tasked with helping students out on matters that are not strictly academic, and the need for comprehensive health services for our students has already been acute.

• Given the recent years of hurricane evacuation and school being cancelled, what are the advance plans for this? In light of the fact that fall break has been cancelled and in person work ends by Thanksgiving with the rationale that all of that would decrease travel, what then happens after a hurricane evacuation? Would this shift all classes fully online for the duration of the semester?

• In light of the above issue being very likely---and thus the need for expenditures to be minimal in a dire crisis----the faculty want to know the total cost of installation of all
cameras and other equipment to accommodate for hyflex as well as the total cost of all measures being taken.

- Faculty Welfare wanted the above concerns in writing.

**Academic Steering Committee – Dr. Erin McCoy**

Academic Steering Report
8 June 2020

After today’s Faculty Update meeting, several faculty members approached the Academic Steering Committee with questions regarding (but not limited to):

- Requests for clear communication regarding instruction – students are being told one thing and faculty another, and students are often given news before faculty are aware, re: course delivery.
- Setting unreasonable precedents for online course enrollment numbers.
- Lack of support, re: faculty without laptops, properly functioning equipment, et. al.

In times of unprecedented uncertainty, the Faculty & Administration need to work together as a team. With this in mind, the Academic Steering Committee consulted the American Association of University Professors’ statement regarding general principles of shared governance, as reflected in their Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities. The AAUP statement reads, and thus the Academic Steering Committee recommends:

"[F]aculty have primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process."

- USCB Administration is thus tasked with the request to honor matters which are the faculty's primary responsibility. Means of consultation include formal bodies, such as the Faculty Senate and its committees, and more informally, other representative and appropriate groupings of faculty, whose primary work is teaching.

This recommendation echoes a previous Academic Steering Report, cf. Faculty Senate Minutes from 14 Feb 2020 meeting:

“The Academic Steering Committee has been approached by several faculty with concerns regarding how decisions are made in reference to Degree Program governance, placement, and changes coming from Administrative directives. These discussions are inevitable as USCB continues to grow. While the Committee understands that many decisions pertaining to Degree Programs cannot be retroactively changed, the Committee recommends:

**Faculty input regarding respective Degree Programs must be held in higher regard and considered by Administrators.**

USCB Degree Program Faculty love sharing ideas, collaborating, etc. Faculty remain excellent resources regarding what is best for the students in Degree Programs. Students rely on Faculty to

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advocate for what is best for them, and Faculty cannot do so when their consultation is not part of important discussions/decisions.”

Addendum: 23 June 2020

In the 6/12/20 email from the EVCAA’s office (“Faculty Update #5”), the following sentence brought many questions to the Academic Steering Committee:

“We are crafting a degree program for anticipated fall 2021 implementation, that will merge humanities disciplines with digital technologies.”

1. After productive discussions with a Dean, various Department Chairs, and the EVCAA, the Steering Committee’s would like to convey the following information:
   o All USCB faculty, many of whom have long been involved in digital humanities curriculum development and projects, share the enthusiasm of the EVCAA’s office regarding getting multiple disciplines and faculty together to work on this initiative. Working groups are being formed, and we are excited about the prospects of digital humanities at USCB as it progresses through the standard processes in place.
   o There is no formal proposal for a new Digital Humanities degree program or minor at this time.

2. Lastly, the Academic Steering Committee would like to remind everyone of those aforementioned processes, which were approved by Faculty Senate on 2/17/17 at the recommendation of the Academic Steering Committee (full size on next page):
It is the recommendation of ASC that everyone keep a copy of this chart for future reference.

Department and Campus Deans Summaries and Statements:  
Business Administration – Dr. George Smith

- What qualifies someone to work or teach remotely beyond being a member in the high-risk category? How will this determination be made? (The target on this one continues to move.)

- Have the new technology requirements been communicated to the students? Students will need access to a reliable computer and Internet connection regardless of mode of instruction (MOI). This isn’t likely to change when we get through the pandemic. (Per COVID-19 addendum document the technology issue is consistently on the faculty when it is an institution-wide issue and problem (Addendums 3 and 4). We don’t believe that term and
research papers on iPhones are acceptable across the University, but we could be wrong.)

- How are faculty to determine which students participate in a face-to-face class on a given day when a class has to be split due to the new classroom capacities and to maintain social distancing? If the class splits nicely TTH may work. MWF is a logistical nightmare.

- If a faculty member or a member of a faculty member’s family contracts COVID-19 or is quarantined due to suspicion of contraction the students will have been notified that classes will have to move online until the quarantine period is over, right? (Addendum 6 “consult with Chairs” so that the “instructor and Institution are covered.”) I ask because apparently parents are calling concerned that they are investing in room and board for a semester.

- Worst case scenario, who will teach a class where there isn’t another qualified faculty member to step in for the ill instructor? For departments with specialized faculty this is a problem. Some of these faculty are hard to identify as it is; a short-term hire would be unlikely.

- What are we doing to protect our interns and experiential learning students in general? (nursing, education, hospitality management, business, etc.)

**Computer Science – Dr. Brian Canada**

- Concerned about being able to trouble shoot during class when student has problem during practice/coding exercises; has filed help request for troubleshooting from a distance can be done during face-to-face, and/or troubleshooting remotely
  - Upgrade to the Crestron system: Can bring up any students computer and project for teachable moment and problem solving
  - Amenable to troubleshooting remotely

**Education – Dr. Bruce Marlowe**

- It is certainly possible to imagine a scenario in which there will be a sufficient number of on-campus cases of COVID-19 for it to be unsafe to continue f2f instruction. Should this occur, what is Plan B? There has been virtually no discussion of this other than the usual bromides about our need to be “nimble”, “flexible”, and “ready to adapt to the unpredictable”.

- With respect to making such a decision (i.e., that the campus is unsafe for f2f instruction), how will this determination be arrived at? How many cases of COVID are too many? Is there a formula? An absolute number students, staff, and/or faculty identified w/ the virus?

- It’s not clear who’s in charge of implementing plan? We have trouble at USCB with communication, and it’s unclear who will monitor and adjust plans once the semester starts.
English, Theater, and Interdisciplinary Studies – Dr. Lauren Hoffer

- ETIS shares many of the concerns outlined in the senate committee reports (and by my fellow chairs). Specifically with regard to fall 2020, and in no particular order, we have questions and concerns pertaining to:

- Faculty rights
  - The rights of faculty electing to teach F2F in the fall to go fully online at their discretion as the public health context evolves
  - The rights of faculty, as experts in their fields, not only to choices about their personal safety and that of their students but also with regard to pedagogy in their own courses (i.e. which modality is best practice for a given discipline/course/assignment, etc.)
  - Administrative micromanagement of schedules and enrollment caps

- Planning & Communication
  - Threshold numbers re: covid-19 cases on campus and/or in the community
  - Enforcement protocols for mask-wearing and other public health policies
  - Hurricane evacuation planning and decisions re: a potential return to campus
  - Testing and contact-tracing
  - University-level communication, especially to students

- Resources
  - Student accessibility and technology needs to engage in coursework
  - Faculty accessibility and technology needs (i.e. access to university-issued hardware, provision of software requirements, etc.) to complete all work-related tasks pertaining to teaching, scholarship, and service
  - Provision of other adequate resources/compensation for faculty
  - Realistic consistent and continuing availability of personal hygiene products (wipes, spare masks, etc.)

Hospitality Management/HHI Campus – Dr. Charlie Calvert

- Concerned about faculty and students wearing masks
- Concerned about faculty and students having the right equipment
- Concerned about ethics of bringing students back on campus
  - Maybe we need to survey parents
  - Experiential learning campus
    - Students in field experiences
Why not faculty?
- Students will drop out if not in the field

Mission: if we come out on the other side without student base, not concerned about furlough; more concerned about shrinking of university
  - Need to know what the parents think

Humanities – Dr. Brent Morris
  - Communication is confusing. By the time faculty receive information it has already been filtered through multiple levels.
    - Don’t know what we need to know
    - Don’t know what students are being told
    - Unable to get answers to questions we have to make necessary decisions
    - Need communication to be more thorough and transparent
  - There hasn’t been discussion about cost cutting or potential furloughs
    - Need communication of information to plan classes and lives
  - Health and safety:
    - Continual retreat from previously stated
    - Now needing medical documentation to go online; still pressure on top of that
    - Documentation for people already teaching online (no telecommunication agreement in the past)
    - Concern stigmatizing faculty who want to be online
      - Not team players
      - Those face-to-face celebrated
      - Sense is that one is better than the other.
    - Plan B: we don’t have a plan for when all shifts back to online.
      - No maximum case threshold for moving fully online
  - Teaching and pedagogy:
    - Lack of information about specific technologies, safety measures, university decisions for course decisions
    - Being asked to make plans without information needed
• Concerns that best delivery model not determined by the faculty members who are experts in their field
  o Other concerns have already been discussed.
  o Link to other information from the chat (Accessible Campus Action Alliance): https://docs.google.com/document/d/11RIcYNb-4Ev1i1kpBeqO8RY-Dup2kT_ioCf_8sxV1MU/edit#

Mathematics – Dr. Bud Sanders

■ Faculty senate has power to determine our own working conditions should we choose to do that.
■ Chancellor’s plan is best case scenario for reopening.
■ Support self-determination for every faculty member; set modality as they see fit as we go through this
■ Addendum to syllabi is wording problem.
■ Need to begin addressing faculty workload concerns as we progress
  o Structure of higher ed may drastically change
  o Would like a say in decisions
■ Think about safety concerns of when faculty, staff, students put others at risk: part of Faculty Senate in Faculty Manual is discipline of own members; what are the parameters we expect faculty to abide by and are there sanctions if not followed

Natural Sciences – Dr. Stephen Borgianini

■ Nursing and Health Professions – Dr. Lynne Hutchison

The nursing and public health programs have identified the following areas of concern for return to classes Fall 2020: Health, education, equity

Health concerns:

• Ability to maintain social distancing in class rooms. Who is going to enforce use of masks, seating charts etc.
• Plans to control the spread of covid on campus: referring students for free testing? Let me share my experience with trying to get a covid test, that I was willing to pay for! It was a monumental cluster….doubtful we will be able to get students tested in a timely manner and at no cost.
• Will there be enough PPE available for students and faculty, who need to work closer than 6 feet? I am thinking lab settings, hands on skills acquisition

Education concerns:

• Pedagogy of nursing and PH is active learning, skill acquisition and development of critical thinking. If classes are split ½ f2f and ½ online, there will be a disparity in learning.
• Half of clinical hours must be in person and can include lab time, simulation. Need to be able to meet safely on campus to teach these courses.

• Stress level of students from spring and their fears of returning to campus

• Tech support for both faculty and students

Equity concerns:

• Push to do split classes with half the class in person and have synchronously broadcast. Who and how do we decide which students can come f2f and which need to be on computer?

• Expectation of faculty to teach multiple sections of courses to limit class size without adequate compensation for increased workload. This is especially true in lab based classes.

• The increased workload of preparing classes for both f2f instruction and online versions, without adequate compensation or assistance.

• No plan to provide coverage for faculty if they become ill. This has been very apparent with my recent diagnosis of covid. Although many of you reached out to assist me in any way needed, administration just said, get well soon! So, if I was really down and out, who would have taught my classes? How would they be compensated?

Social Sciences – Dr. Cindy Lahar

Need to know if there will be change in grade procedures

Need to know for guiding planning

Concerned about enrollment caps and how administration is micromanaging caps, particularly an issue with large, double classes

Share technology concerns, remote troubleshooting, technology access for students and faculty

Ongoing discussion about whether or not there will be salary and/or staff cuts; would like to know when we might know something more specific; is there anything being done about possible cuts; how might faculty think about possible cuts, etc.

Promotion and tenure: flexibility in choice; will there be any freeze in promotion and tenure; advice for those seeking tenure

Need strong communication: students getting announcements we as faculty don’t see; we need to know what students are learning about

Hope we can continue to offer online training

Visual Art and Design – Professor Chris Robinson

• Quality not equivalent online in this department

• Health and life primary concerns

• Faculty concerned about face-to-face

• Numbers are down across the board; concern if not able to offer quality education in the fall
• Concerned about liabilities for those without access
• Concerned about low numbers

Beaufort Campus – Dr. Robert LeFavi

Floor Open for Faculty Discussion:

• Categories for grouping concerns
  
  o Health and safety concerns
    
    ▪ Sign form understanding expectation that students and faculty will abide by guidelines
      
      • Vague expectation v. requirements
    
    ▪ Who is making decision if can be fully online? What if there is an extenuating circumstance? Will faculty be forced to use EFMLA (no income) or sick leave?
    
    ▪ Eating and drinking during class? No physical homework to be submitted, no quizzes submitted, contamination from surface contact; what is the correct procedure?
      
      • Columbia requires mandatory masks. Can be enforced.
  
  o Pedagogical concerns
    
    ▪ Student survey – faulty assumption to assume that students faced with the choice of taking classes online or dropping out would drop out. May have been expressing a preference. Need more thorough analysis of students’ responses.
    
    ▪ Concerns about setting up for distancing in the classroom – need to purchase materials (will they be covered/reimbursed); time to set up; repeated set up measurement between students; will this need to be done prior to every class meeting or can the markings remain so that don’t have to change it again
      
      ▪ 30% cap for our students in a room. Other universities 50% capacity. Which is correct for USCB?
  
  o The ability to “monitor and adjust” is the bedrock of good teaching practice. When students return for f2f instruction, who is the “teacher”? Who will keep track of the complex web of issues that will invariably emerge, adjust to the changing landscape, and communicate with students, staff, and faculty? Saying we must all be responsible just doesn’t cut it. It’s hard to imagine that preparing for a global pandemic is less complex than teaching. Plans are never perfect. We need to know who is ultimately responsible for making the inevitable, required adjustments to an enormous range of procedures—e.g., entering classrooms, dorm living, the dining hall experience, etc.—and how these decisions will be clearly communicated. For lack of a better metaphor, who’s the teacher in charge of the daily monitoring and adjusting that will be required?
• Equity concerns

Chat posts ideas:

• In a phone conference last Friday with South Carolina State Epidemiologist Dr. Linda Bell along with clergy from all over our state to hear the latest data and projections on the COVID-19 coronavirus.

• One of the most notable data points Dr. Bell told them was that there was a 200% increase in the infection rate for ages 18 to 25 and a 600% increase in ages 11 to 18.

• NPR is reporting that asymptomatic Covid-19 = at least temp lung damage - that's a risk to think about

• City of Columbia has mandated masks - $25 fine if not wearing one in a public place. We don’t have that here, so we keep spreading. IF USC decides to close, will we follow?

• Registration is occurring throughout the summer in conjunction with orientations. It would be beneficial if the "bulletin" reflect NOW (as they register) which classes are currently scheduled for online and which are currently scheduled for face-to-face so that folks can take that into consideration as they make their choices if there are different options for different sections. (Some people have strong preferences of one over the other, and that might make their decision-making easier, as well as minimizing conflict, monitoring enrollment numbers, and drop/add rushes in the fall.)

• Faculty Rights/Governance q: if it gets to furloughs, how can we faculty participate in these designs (re: financial exigency and faculty terminations - there is a formal process in the Manual --> it goes to Welfare Committee) Should we form a Fac Sen Ad Hoc committee on Pandemic Budgeting? (Should faculty senate just have a standing Budget Committee?)

• We only have 7 weeks before we are expected to come back. I think we need to be more specific and make recommendations.

• Proposed we adopt: “All teaching faculty in Fall 2020 at USCB have the right to self-determination in terms of altering the modality of instruction for their courses at any time the semester by informing their chair.”

• What happened to the money from the CARES Act (didn't we get $2M? Can faculty get a stipend for inline training?

• The communication has not always been clear to this point. It may not be clear in the future. I think we need to be clear in our requests. Gather questions, group them, send to person responsible, get answers, send out to faculty, have meeting end of next week then send to administration

• JayneIt is increasingly possible to imagine a scenario in which there will be a sufficient number of on-campus cases of COVID-19 for it to be unsafe to continue f2f instruction. Should this occur, what is Plan B? There has been
virtually no discussion of this other than the usual bromides about our need to be “nimble”, “flexible”, and “ready to adapt to the unpredictable”.

- With respect to making such a decision (i.e., that the campus is unsafe for f2f instruction), how will this determination be arrived at? How many cases of COVID are too many? Is there a formula? An absolute number students, staff, and/or faculty identified w/ the virus?

- Call for more involvement in AAUW – communicate with Dr.s Violette or Kilgore.

Note – In order to allow everyone who wishes to speak, please indicate in the chat or raise your hand if you would like to speak. Dr. Violette will recognize speakers. When called upon, enable your video and mic to make comments. Feel free to continue comments in chat while each person is speaking. When you are called upon to speak, please limit comments/questions to 3 minutes or less, if possible, to provide all who wish to speak their opportunity.

Comments from part-time faculty:

- The key points is that "We are USCB+ (meaning all 3 campuses) and we all need to have a voice including and especially those who support and work behind the scenes to make it happen (ex janitors etc). As the expression goes put up or shut up. Be a part of the solution. Let's face it, what does the faculty truly fear, job loss, health and if afraid to open your mouth with the administrative faculty there then those individuals have no "backbone."

Actions to be taken by/for Faculty Senate motion

Suggestion to talk through motions faculty would like to make before going back to regular faculty senate meeting

Encourage recommendations

Not permitted to vote during executive session

Motion to exit executive session; seconded, discussion, voted, passed.

Decision made to reconvene 6/29 at 10:00 a.m.

Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Drive Thru Celebration:

At the directive of the USC Board of Trustees, an in-person Commencement Ceremony has been canceled for 2020. In an effort to honor and celebrate our graduates, the Commencement Committee will be hosting two events; a Virtual Commencement Ceremony to be launched on July 20th and a Drive-Thru Celebration scheduled for June 26th on the Bluffton Campus. We reach out to our entire Sandshark Family to invite you to join us from 6pm to 8pm on June 26th to celebrate our newest alums at our Drive-Thru Celebration. This is a time to show our support and how much we honor our latest graduates, even in these unprecedented times. Graduates will have an opportunity for a photo-op, to have their name announced, and hopefully see many familiar faces from the faculty and staff that have assisted in them achieving this life-changing accomplishment.

Please note that social distancing will be utilized along with the use of face masks during the entire event. We encourage folks to wear their own regalia to this event if possible. Feel free to bring lawn chairs, umbrellas, etc to ensure your comfort as well.
Faculty and Staff who wish to join us are welcome to park in the Hargray Parking Lot or the Parking Lot by the Port Royal residence Hall. Note that the procession of graduate cars is planned to loop from the front of Hargray back towards the Recreation Center. Cars parked in the Hargray Lot may not be able to leave until after the conclusion of the event. Similarly, faculty/staff arriving late may not have the option of parking in the Hargray Lot if the procession of graduate cars is backed up that far.

We hope to see you there!

Commencement Committee