

University Senate Meeting
September 3rd, 2019

1. Call to order at 4:00pm

2. Roll call

In attendance: Abrams, Bal, Bellum, Billings, Brater, Carnevale, Carr, Collins, Curnutt, Dinour, Emery, Field, Fitzpatrick, Fleming, Friedman, Gaynor, Gingerich, Gurskis, Hagiwara, Halaby, Herness, Hood, Hunt, Jacobson, Kay, Kelly, King, Kingstone, Kurze, LaFountain, Lucas, Mamonov, McDermid, Misra, Murray, Nurse, Panorkou, Peterka-Benton, Rufus, Smolowitz, Spitz, Sullivan, Temoney, Trubatch, Wolfson

3. Senate President's Welcome, David Trubatch

- a. **Trubatch:** Welcome new *ex-officio* members Elizabeth Emery and Peter King.
- b. **Trubatch:** Recognize Sandra Adams service as Faculty Representative to BOT and *ex-officio* member of the University Senate
- c. **Trubatch:** Welcome University President Susan Cole to Opening Day Meeting
- d. **Trubatch:** All voting members of the Senate serve on one of three Councils. Members should respond to the survey to indicate their Council preferences.
- e. **Trubatch:** Check the Senate Canvas for documents and materials. Previous Senate Recommendations and responses from the Administration are posted to the Senate web pages.

4. University President, Dr. Cole Addresses the Senate, and Discussion

My priorities for the year were outlined in my speech this morning and as follows:

- a. **Cole:** We need to be more intentional and demanding of ourselves in ensuring our curricula are where they should be. Our programs need to be current and in demand so we can build enrollment; structured in a way for today's students. Needs, demands, and knowledge are changing fast and we need to be sure we are keeping up within the University.
- b. **Cole:** Ensuring student progress to their degree: we can't take students academic progress for granted. Educating a much broader cross section of the population than in the past. Students have obstacles that perhaps past students didn't have. It is increasingly difficult for students to afford education. Their time is in demand. We have a lot of first-generation students. We need proper advisement, having materials available online and in-person, all processes in place.
- c. **Cole:** Grow deeper connections with our alumni: 130,000 living alumni and most of them live nearby.
- d. **Cole:** Continue to grow into Research University designation by increasing funding and research engagement: We need to do more partnering with major industry and corporations.

- e. **Cole:** New Vice President for University Communication, Joseph Brennan: This is very important. We need to be more “on the map”. We will get more grants, donors, student enrollment, faculty, etc. Being known helps us complete our goals.
- f. **Trubatch:** The University Senate is making a concerted effort to be more organized and effective, and I think we’ve made some progress. The University is very large and complex, so a lot of our work is done in the Councils and in committees. When a Council has questions and needs information, what are proper paths for inquiries, and requests for information? For example the Administrative Affairs Council is working on a recommendation regarding the use of single-use plastics, and asked for input from the Vice Presidents.

Cole: If the University Senate decides it wants to take up issues, the best thing to do is let the Provost know. The Provost is your primary connection to the University Administration. The Provost will then determine which offices and staff can help with your inquiries.

Trubatch: We have the Vice Presidents sitting on the Senate *ex-officio* but we should still go through the Provost?

Cole: Yes, any individual Vice President may only be aware of part of the issue.

Gingerich: The practice has been that when there is a resolution it comes to me. If other consultations were needed it was my responsibility to pull that together for a response. If you have another suggestion for that, let me know. Yes, Vice Presidents are here, and when we know that their units are involved we ask them to be prepared for the Senate meeting, as a separate process as a response to recommendations. Pleased with how things are going now.

- g. **Trubatch:** Compilation of University Policies and process: is there more progress since May?

Cole: I can’t give you an up-to-date report today, but the University Office of the Counsel is making progress. There is a Website with current policies, Vice Presidents have been asked to ensure they are up to date.

- h. **Collins:** Is there a plan for revision of the Course-Scheduling Grid? If so, where are we with that and who is involved?

Gingerich: Yes, there is an examination of the Grid. Many people in the Registrar’s Office are looking at how we can better manage the schedule and more and make more efficient use of classrooms across the week so as to accommodate 21,000 students. It is still in the process of being hashed out, it will be at least this semester before a draft can be circulated for discussion. The expectation is that by next fall we will have a new grid.

Cote-Bonano: We are work towards implementation in fall 2020.

Trubatch: That’s a tight turn-around. Class schedules for the fall are submitted early in the spring term. Please share plans with the Senate sooner rather than later.

Collins: What faculty will be involved?

Sumner: We discussed a new Grid the All-Chairpersons Meeting, Recently 6,000 sections were off-Grid, which really show that the current Grid is not working. Even

excluding labs and studios, many lecture courses are off-Grid. We've been looking at the Grid for a long time. We changed the scheduling of finals, for example.

Gingerich: So the Department Chairpersons were the faculty representatives.

Murray: I went to one of the meetings that Joanne (Cote-Bonanno). One of the things I took away is that people need to get a look at it sooner to ensure the Departments are prepared

Gingerich: Chairpersons will see it in the fall workshop.

Wolfson: 30 lines approved for tenure track faculty, do you anticipate that number changing?

Cole: There are a few undecided at this point, it could go up or down a few. We had a lot of retirements this year and don't like to lose those seats. We had 16 last year, so it has doubled.

- i. **Trubatch:** What are your major concerns and goals as general education is reconsidered and redesigned?

Cole: I have a lot of concerns, with what was called Gen Ed and will be called the Liberal Core going forward. I really think our academic program structure needs to serve students' educational needs. Sometimes, structures serve other ends, such as preferences of members of the Faculty, or the need for enrollment in courses of a given department. Instead, each part of the curriculum should have a rational basis in what is best for the students.

All programs should include (i) Major study, (ii) Liberal core, and (iii) Intellectual exploration in other areas, including possibly extended major study, or a minor. It is very important that students have a program that can be completed within four years and 120 credits. A rule of thumb is a 40/40/40-credit breakdown. Recognize that a given course can satisfy more than one category, so we should not worry so much about staying within the 40/40/40 as long as each student's overall academic program makes sense and is rigorous.

Having a list of Gen Ed courses is obsolete. We are past that moment. We have rich resources of courses at the University. For example, a history requirement ought not be restricted to specific history courses. Instead, a student should be able to take any history course within the University to satisfy the requirement.

The categories themselves should be reconsidered. There are new disciplines. Media literacy, and the ability to make sense of data are important areas.

No courses should be for majors-only. Any student who satisfied the prerequisites for a given course should be allowed to enroll in that course.

There should not be courses that meet general-education requirements that cannot also be taken by majors, such as a "rocks for jocks" geology for non-majors only. If we

believe students need certain literacies, they should take “real” courses, and not ones that have been “dumbed down”.

General education is not about the distribution of credits among departments and programs to insure a distribution of enrollments. Students need flexible and thoughtfully considered access to the all the intellectual resources of the University.

LaFountain: Do you have thoughts on the writing requirement?

Cole: I have taught writing courses. It is a critical discipline for students. They should take two writing courses: the first taught by writing professionals; the second should continue in the writing department, or each discipline should also offer writing courses. Writing is critically important but should be broadened.

McDermid: Does that mean you are envisioning a reduction in writing courses from three to two?

Cole: Two required, one in writing, a second within another discipline, and writing to be integrated within other courses in the University.

Trubatch: There is a trade-off between flexibility and simplicity. Some students don’t know what to study, so flexibility in the curriculum can make it harder for students to move forward deliberately..

Cole: Simplicity is attractive but the world is not simple. The choices our students will face everyday are not simple either- it puts pressure on us to be better advisors and provide guidance to students. The University has invested in advising centers and strengthening advising.

5. Report from the Provost

- a. **Gingerich:** The strategic plan will be discussed next meeting.

Wolfson: I understand that in the next Board of Trustees meeting we will see another draft plan or is it final?

Cole: It has gone through all the processes, and it is back at the Board for their approval on Wednesday, September 11th.

6. Elections Committee

No Report

7. Adjournment at 5:10pm