

2020-21 Graduate Council

October 1st, 2020

Members present: Randolph Burnside, George Boulukos, Phillip Chu, Scott Collins, Saran Donahoo, Otis Duncan, Themistoklis Haniotakis, Karen Jones, Usha Lakshmanan, Junghwa Lee, Liliana Lefticariu, Ruopu Li, Adrienne Long, Buffy Ellsworth, Matt McCarroll, Trish McCubbin, Caleb McKinley, Grant Miller, Marc Morris, Rachel Nozicka, Julie Partridge, Kyle Plunkett, Yuhosua Ryoo, Nicholas Sanislo, Thomas Shaw

Ex-Officio: Lizette Chevalier, Gary Kinsel, Meera Komarraju, Stephen Shih

Guests: Senetta Bancroft, Leonard Gadzekpo, Chelesea Lewellen, Walter Metz

Meeting started at 8:01 AM

Morris: Good morning. Consideration of the minutes

Corrections were given

Morris: Motion to approve the minutes?

Moved and Seconded

Minutes approved (6-0-1)

Remarks from the Provost:

Kommaraju: Good Morning, everybody. I have a few updates today. The first is regarding our current semester. I would to thank all of the faculty and staff for helping keep the fall semester going. There's a weekly fall implementation group that includes Associate Deans, School Directors, Chairs, faculty, advisement, and student representative. One issue that arose from this group was how grading will work for the fall. Some students had attested to having technical difficulties in regards to their synchronous virtual meetings. From this discussion, in respect to the ongoing learning obstacles students are facing, we are now considering the pass/fail grading option that was implemented for the spring. The second topic is about spring semester. We are starting the semester a week late and will go continuously, without a spring break. We've asked faculty to submit the modalities for their upcoming courses, prior the start of spring registration. Regarding faculty hires, we have approved 25 hires for next fall. In regards to the proposed budget cut of 6%, we are discussing how to meet it across the board

for this year, as well as all years in the future. I am serving on a system-wide committee for strategic plan. We are working on survey to gather input from Illinois employees.

Questions for the Provost:

Shaw: Is it just a 6% cut? Or will there be additional cuts?

Kommaraju: Just 6%. Our strategy is in two parts: focusing on how we will be the cut for the current year and how we will meet it year after year. For the current year, the cut is especially difficult because the decision can't be made overnight. There are commitments in place that we can't take back. We need to approach the cuts strategically.

Jones: Is there any talk about doing differential cuts at the program levels?

Kommaraju: First of all, the Vice Chancellors are receiving cuts across the board. At the program level, we are looking at the programs that bring us tuition revenue, as the cut is a result of lower tuition revenue. All Deans were given past enrollment numbers, so they will look specifically at each unit within their college. But, if we go for differential cuts, we will also need to look at what units will pick up a cut over 6%. I will be discussing all of this with the Deans. They have just recently received the enrollment data.

Burnside: I have two questions. Is this 6% percent cut permanent? Because, if the cut is tied to enrollment, like you said, wouldn't the percent decrease if enrollment is up? Secondly, at what point will we decide to remove programs with low enrollment and end the cutting of healthy programs?

Kommaraju: The 6% percent cut is permanent. When I say 'year-by-year', I'm talking about how we will meet it each year. When we have more revenue, we will then be unable to unchill some categories, such as faculty hires. Regarding differential cuts among programs, we have IBHE guidelines that we tell when to sunset programs. What would be helpful is academic programs coming forward to provide adjustments when their enrollment numbers raise a red flag. For example, some programs reduce the number of specializations. The adjustments need to begin at the program level.

Morris: I would like to address, while the Provost is still here, your thoughts and the thoughts of your constituents on the Pass/Fail grading for this semester.

Jones: My group has 3 camps: the students should be allowed to make an informed decision regarding their grades, the Pass/Fail option leads to D work, and that each instructor make the decision for themselves.

Haniotakis: I think the last option is the best. I think the instructors should choose the option for their course, because they know what is happening with it. There's a big difference in having on-campus courses and online courses, so there shouldn't be one decision for everybody.

McCarroll: I've received feedback from a few units. Generally, there was support for the Pass/Fail option.

Shaw: The vast majority of my constituents were against the option. Their concern was that the academic rigor would be diluted. One supported the option, but with the caveat of a D not counting as a Pass.

Lakshmanan: I asked the colleagues in my school, and, generally, people were not opposed to it, because we already faced this in the spring. We supported the flexibility that the option provides, however, there are some courses in which the student needs to earn at least a B.

Donahoo: Our issue is with the state licensure teaching programs. The courses in these programs need to be at least a C. The consequence of allowing students earning a D to be licensed is that they are sent back to SIU if they show to be ineffective teachers.

Kommaraju: Just to clarify, the Pass does imply a C or better.

Boulukos: I just want to say that I've observed that undergraduates have had a very disruptive semester in terms of limitations in technology and quarantining. I want there to be empathy for the challenges that our students are facing, even though I agree with points that everyone is making.

Kommaraju: Can we hear from the students?

Duncan: Previously, as an undergraduate, I had to leave due to medical reasons, and picked up some Fs because I didn't withdraw through the proper channels. Because of this, I took longer to return to school once I was ready. I think we are doing a huge disservice to students who receive Fs because of being disrupted in life, and, consequently, taking longer to come back to school. I want to ask if what's considered the minimum passing grade is across the board, or dependent on the passing grades that the courses set in the catalogue?

Kommaraju: This question came up last spring. The Provost's office is providing recourses for higher-level classes to students who pass with a D. One reason for this is that transfer students from community colleges are not coming in with letter grades. We shouldn't penalize our students when we are accepting transfer students.

Jones: Are we going to have this discussion every semester that the pandemic is going on?

Kommaraju: That's a good question. Because of the uncertainty, it is hard to predict what course of action we will take in upcoming semesters.

Jones: When would the conditions be right for us to return to the traditional grading scale?

Kommaraju: When students enroll in a traditional semester, they know what to expect and they are in control. So, the closer we get to a traditional semester, the closer we will be towards the typical grading system.

Lakshmanan: Do you have the numbers for how many students opted for the Pass/Fail option in spring?

Kommarju: We can provide that data.

Burnside: I think that we do a disservice to students when we don't explain the negative ramifications. There will be long-term consequences for students who opt for the Pass/Fail, while others do not. This will create a two-tiered system. It is in the institution's best interest to give students the full information now, so they don't blame us down the road.

Kommarju: Students have asked to talk to their advisors before making the decision. We don't take this choice lightly.

Long: What about the Law School? In professional schools, grades really matter, and, last spring, we have mandatory Pass/Fail. I feel disadvantaged, because my letter grades were awesome, but I was forced into Pass.

McCubbin: The faculty at the Law School has decided not to allow Pass/Fail for the reasons Adrienne mentioned. We have students competing for the same jobs and licensing issues. From my understanding, we are allowed to make this decision for the Law School.

Kommarju: Yes, the School of Law and School of Medicine are allowed to make their own decisions.

Lakshmanan: I agree with the concerns raised regarding the long-term implications of the Pass/Fail. If just for a semester, I can see how students will be able to tide by for the short-term. We need to have in place more proper counseling for students. It shouldn't fall solely on the instructor.

Miller: It would be helpful for the programs to make these decisions, because we at Education have the added wrinkle of needing to assess for reliable and dependable future professionals. We don't know if students aren't turning work in because of the circumstances or because they are banking on a Pass.

Shaw: Is this option also for pre-designated online courses?

Kommarju: No, those are not included.

Report from Dean's Council:

Collins: In regards to what the Provost mentioned, we are working towards meeting our budget cut. We appreciate everybody's efforts for this semester in all areas.

Report from Faculty Senate:

Miller: We did not pass any resolutions last meeting. There's not much to report, other than the VCR joining our meetings and receiving reports from his office.

Remarks from the VCR:

Kinsel: Good morning, everybody. I'm happy to announce that we've filled the position for the Director of the Advanced Coal & Energy Research Center. Dr. Ken Anderson, from ESS, is taking over the position. He officially started in the middle of August. I also want to mention that our fringe benefits were evaluated. Surprisingly, the rate went down. Last year, our rate was around 52%, but now it's around 48%. The new rate was approved in September, which is later than usual. Grants that have existing previously were adjusted to reflect the new rate. There's a funding opportunity through the Illinois Innovation Network that I sent via listserv. There's the requirement that a collaborator must be from another hub, such as SIUE. The deadline is December 1st. We are looking to put together a virtual research expo. If anybody has interest in hosting a table, please get in touch with the McNair Scholar's Program. We may even open this to the local high schools. We think an emphasis on undergraduate research can be used to recruit them.

Questions for the VCR:

Li: What grants are the new fringe rates applied to?

Kinsel: It's applied to all existing federal grants. Many non-federal get it as well, due to the reliance of federal dollars.

Li: How are those differences being allocated?

Kinsel: It's up to the PI to keep track of the accounting.

Remarks from the Graduate School Dean:

Shih: Good morning, everyone. On September 21st, we had the 2nd annual Co-op meeting between SIUC and SIUE. This year, the event was hosted by SIUE. The question that arises from this program is whether to consider the SIUE faculty as our own. It is important to make this designation as we update our catalogue. The second item I have is regarding creating a listserv for graduate faculty. We've considered using Microsoft Teams for all grad faculty and a separate Teams account for Grad Council members. I'll be submitting a request to IT.

Questions for the Dean of the Graduate School:

Ellsworth: Which PhD programs are Co-op?

Shih: We have 5 Co-op PhD programs: Computer Science, Engineering, History, ERP, and a collaboration between Neuroscience and Pharmacology.

Ellsworth: Thank you. I also want to mention that I've had trouble with Teams. It seems to require more bandwidth.

Morris: I'm not always logged into Teams, but I am email.

McCubbin: I agree. Teams is not on the radar for many of us at the Law School.

Lakshmanan: I have a question regarding the Co-op programs. How many faculty members from Edwardsville are being given adjunct status at SIU? I don't see long-term benefits for SIUC in doing this, because these programs may migrate to Edwardsville in the future.

Shih: I think this is going to be a win-win situation. The main purpose is to share resources, which benefits the students in the SIU system.

Lakshmanan: It would help know how many faculty members from SIUC are part of the Co-op programs.

Shih: I can provide a list of faculty members from both campuses.

McCarroll: I think we need to look at the expenses required to maintain this program.

Boulukos: I think the History program has been beneficial because it builds a bridge for the MA students at SIUE to eventually become PhD students at SIUC.

Lakshmanan: I think the collaborations need to be thought through more fully. There needs to be support from more than just the unit heads.

Shih: Ok. This will need further discussion. In regards to the listserv and Teams, I think we can do both. There will be more options this way. We will see which communication platform is better.

Report from Chair:

Morris: I'd like to start with spotlighting some current research at SIU. Thanks to Dr. Donahoo for providing us with 2 guest speakers today. We have Dr. Senetta Bancroft, who teaches science education and holds an appointment in Chemistry, and Chelsea Lewellen, a PhD student who received the Graduate Student Teaching Award here today. I'll turn it over to them.

Bancroft: Thank you. My research centers on designing and facilitating novel evidence-based instructional and educational practices, as well as longitudinal professional programs that support K-Doctorate educators. My primary research goal is to close the achievement gaps that are correlated to race, ethnicity, and economic factors. The impact of these factors on achievement is heightened in STEM. I'll talk about how I've used the flipped classroom model in

an introductory Chemistry course that I teach every spring. In this model, the role of the student in class is flipped from a passive to active participant. The instructor role is also changed from the transmitter of information to the facilitator of learning. My motivation to flip my class came from seeing Black and Brown students fail in disproportionate numbers. Flipping the classroom completely closed the achievement gap; every other aspect between the traditional and flipped models stayed the same. The achievement gap, however, between low-socioeconomic students and mid-to-high socioeconomic did not completely close. We think that this is due to low-economic students having less time for schoolwork, as they usually have jobs. As far as I know, this is the first study that flipped a gateway course in a STEM field. This is low-cost adjustment that universities should favor for equity. There's an NSF grant to train local instructors in STEM fields to flip their gateway courses. This has a tangible impact. From my courses, I estimate 100 students since spring 2018 passing the course, who would have either earned a W or F.

Lewellen: My research revolves around Critical Race Theory and the lived experience of African-American female educators at the administrative level. I started at looking at the concept of the Glass Ceiling, which describes how females have obstacles in ascending to the administrative level. A lesser known concept, the Concrete Ceiling, describes an impenetrable barrier. If you visualize the difference between the two, you understand that glass is transparent, so you can see what's ahead of you, so you can better reach your next goal. With concrete, you don't even know what the next steps are. The people that would face the concrete ceiling are Black and Indigenous people. This better describes what I'm looking for, but is still not sufficient for me. I ultimately came up with Iron Ceiling when discussing the intersections of race and gender, namely African-American women. The iron evokes imagery of slavery. I am looking at how the Iron Ceiling differs from the other two. There has not been a widespread study of the intersections of systemic race since 1996, so this work is necessary and timely.

Morris: Thank you. That was excellent. Any volunteers for next meeting's spotlight? Maybe another faculty member and student?

Partridge: I'll volunteer the College of Health and Human Sciences.

Morris: Great. I have one more item for my report: The Chancellor would like to have two more meetings with us for his Listening and Learning Tour. I'm thinking one in November and the second in February or March. I'm thinking of having a face-to-face meeting option, as well as Zoom connectivity for those who prefer remote. Thoughts on this?

McCubbin: Is it possible to do a Thursday at 8 am, since we are all set up to do this?

Morris: Yes. That was my thinking as well. I'll work on getting the dates and rooms set.

Report from GPSC:

McKinley: Good morning, everybody. GPSC just had our awards ceremony, which was hybrid. We also recently had our October meeting. We discussed our budget, navigating travel funds. If graduate students need assistance for conference fees, they can fill out a form through us. Our executive officers participated in a Listening and Learning meeting last night with Chancellor Lane. There was a lot of really positive feedback from the students that were able to be there. We are looking for more participation in our organization, so let your graduate students know about us.

Report from Vice Chair:

Shaw: I would like to reinforce the tremendous need for creating a listserv for all graduate faculty, in order to communicate in a timelier manner. For example, we need a better way to solicit volunteers for committees. We are looking for volunteers to serve on a committee for the Department of Public Safety, as well as a search committee for the Associate Chancellor of Diversity. Email me if you are interested in serving on either of these.

Morris: What's the timeline for the Associate Chancellor search?

Shaw: The names should be submitted by October 5th.

Morris: You can move my name forward on that one.

Report from Research Committee:

Jones: I want to give a heads up to my committee that the VCR talked about having a symposium for research. Dr. Kinsel asked that the Research Committee be involved in planning this.

Report from Program Review Committee:

Donahoo: Nothing to report.

Report from Educational Policy Committee:

Partridge: Nothing to report.

Report form Programs Committee:

Haniotakis: We have two resolutions regarding certificate programs. The first one is to elimination of the Certificate in Civil Society, Communication, and Media Practices. There are no students currently enrolled in this program. The department unanimously agrees with this resolution. This is a first reading, so if somebody finds a problem with the resolution, we can postpone voting on it today.

The second resolution is for the addition for a new certificate program in Africana Studies. The faculty strongly support this resolution. With this certificate, other programs would be involved, as the certificate courses are to be cross-listed. We've received letters of support from the other relevant departments. Additional resources will not be required, as these courses are already available to students majoring in Africana Studies. This is already in its first reading.

Chevalier: We have a faculty member from Africana Studies here with us today. I would also like to mention that COLA Council voted 10-0 in favor of this certificate program.

Gadzekpo: The faculty members of Africana Studies concluded that we should offer a certificate that students can use in addition to their degree program in order to become more marketable. There's also an opportunity to add more cross-listed courses after the program emerges.

Boulukos: My students in English have expressed interest in this certificate. There has been some frustration from students who are writing their thesis or dissertation in a related area, due to this area of expertise not being indicated on a transcript.

Morris: Any further discussion?

McKinley: I was wondering if we can go ahead and vote on this RME?

Haniotakis: I don't see any objection to passing either today. I'll agree to vote after one reading, but only if there's agreement from the rest of the council.

Chevalier: There's no issue on my end, but I'm not a voting member. The council can choose to suspend Robert's Rules in order to vote on the first reading.

Donahoo: I move to suspend Robert's Rules of Order.

Morris: Dr. Haniotakis, do you feel the need to discuss with the council before the vote?

Haniotakis: I would like an opinion from the Provost.

Chevalier: The Provost doesn't give an opinion on such matters.

Haniotakis: Okay. I agree with proceeding in one voting.

McCarroll: I believe that, unless there's a reason to fast-track voting, we shouldn't get into a habit of rushing the process.

Jones: I agree with that.

Boulukos: Would delaying the vote delay the implementation of the certificate?

Chevalier: No.

Boulukos: In that case, I agree that we shouldn't rush to suspend Robert's Rules, even though I support the RMEs.

Chevalier: I said 'no' in regards to students not being able to enroll in the program sooner, however, passing the RME earlier will give us more time to advertise and generate excitement. I see this more than passing an RME without two readings. I frame this as showing support to a vital unit in our institutional mission.

Duncan: I think passing the certificate now will help with recruitment.

Morris: Do we still have a Motion to Suspend?

Donahoo: Yes.

Seconded

Robert's Rules suspended (9-2)

Morris: Motion to approve the RME for the implementation of the Certificate in Africana Studies?

Moved and Seconded

RME passed (17-0-1)

Morris: Is there a motion to pass the RME that eliminates the Certificate in Civil Society, Communication, and Media Practices?

Moved and Seconded

Morris: Any further discussion?

McCarroll: Is there a reason that we are expediting this vote?

McCubbin: We've already moved to waive Robert's Rules.

Haniotakis: My opinion is that this RME is straightforward, however, there is no benefit in passing it immediately.

McCarroll: Since there is no consequence in waiting, I would not be in favor of voting on it today.

Partridge: I agree. It's in our Operating Paper to read it twice.

McCubbin: In that case, I will withdraw my motion. I agree that we shouldn't be waiving Robert's Rules if there is little reason to.

Morris: Okay. Motion to reinstate the rules?

Moved and Seconded

Rules Reinstated (18-0-6)

Morris: I'll see you all next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10: 08 AM

