

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA FACULTY SENATE

Special Called Meeting of the Faculty Senate

Wednesday, June 16, 2021

This session was held entirely online.

PRESIDING Chair Mark Cooper

SENATOR FRANK THORNE made a motion was made to have an open meeting due to lack of a quorum (at 3:10pm). No actions would be taken if the motion passed. The motion carries. The meeting was adjourned. Moments later Chair Cooper was informed by Professor Ramy Harik that a quorum has been reached.

Quorum of members arrived. PARLIAMENTARIAN BILL SUDDUTH stated that for the meeting re-adjourn and actions to be able to be made, a vote would need to be taken.

SENATOR DAVID FUENTE made a motion for the meeting to come back together. The motion was seconded. The motion carried.

Corrections and Additions to the April 7, 2021 Minutes

The minutes of the April 7, 2021 meeting were approved.

Discussion of the Carolina Online Program

INTERIM PROVOST DESIGNEE STEPHEN CUTLER thanked Chair Cooper for the opportunity to address the Senate. He restated that he is humbled to be able to shepherd this fine institution in the online learning effort and other efforts. He understands that for some we still need to earn his trust.

He shared some of his observations over the past few weeks regarding online learning and Carolina Online. In Pharmacy it is not practical to have online learning because it requires hands on learning. When the university started talking about Carolina Online, Cutler began thinking about the initiative in terms of what it could mean for the university both positively and negatively for the institution. Based on his observations we need to slow it down. We can all agree that online learning is important. As we look over the past year with pandemic, we can see how successful online learning can be.

Cutler was not part of the conversation in the beginning. He was looking at it from the lens of a dean from the College of Pharmacy. He welcomes input regarding how we can advance our institution.

His observations and conversation over the past few weeks throughout the system was the rollout was a bit quick. With that, concerns were raised were raised with entities including Faculty Senate. We from the resolution that was passed that concerns with roll out include the impact on

existing programs and students. We need a deeper dive into the Carolina Online initiative. We need to have discussions with the system chancellors, the Palmetto College, the Faculty Senate of the Palmetto College, and Columbia academic deans. Provost Cutler is interested in interacting more with these individuals and finding out what was left on the table “when the train left the station, and they weren’t on the train.” He wants work with these entities and build relationships. Collectively these relationships will make us successful with online learning whether it is Carolina Online or just online learning in general. He is very respectful of this body and very respectful of what this body passed at the June 2, 2021, Faculty Senate meeting.

PROVOST CUTLER wants to make sure Carolina Online does not cannibalize other programs specifically students on campus; that we are not harming system campuses. We need to avoid duplication both administratively and academically. We need to also look at the finances and identify the impact on Palmetto College.

President Caslen wrote a memo that Palmetto College would be rolled into Carolina Online. It is important that members are aware of this decision.

Cutler stated that we need to pay close attention how we will integrate these groups.

President Pastides has asked Cutler to develop a task force that will investigate the overall administrative structure, the overall governance, and provide a final recommendation. This task force will not build Carolina Online. This task force will shape the foundation material. From there, entities, stakeholders and groups will play a role in how we shape and develop Carolina Online. For now, the task force will include a few select people to discuss how we shape the administrative and governance structure issues with this program. Members of the task force include Dr. Cooper and Dr. Korsgaard from UofSC Columbia Faculty Senate, Dr. Diana Mitchell, Susan Elkins, Kelly Epting, Dr. Dennis Pruitt, and Scott Verzyl from enrollment management. The reason Drs. Cooper and Korsgaard are on the task force but not other system Faculty Senate UofSC chairs is because Cooper and Korsgaard are ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees (BOT).

These individuals will not develop the details of the plan. Cutler hopes faculty, including Faculty Senators, can assist in providing input through shared governance.

This task force will define the relationship between online learning and the Palmetto College. This is part of the information President Caslen put in his memo. It will look at duplication to avoid duplication and cannibalization of programs and students. It will look at institutional control points. These will be agreements with chancellors and deans who are running academic programs. The task force will seek approval from Faculty Senate and also opinions from the financial viewpoint. There must be at least a zero balance. Ideally, the initiative brings in revenue to the programs teaching the courses just like the residential model. The task force will also seek to establish other metrics that can be assessed on a regular basis to continue to enhance the initiative.

Overall, where we are today, we have a system-wide effort for a bachelor’s degree. We have a contract for Major League Soccer (MLS) through 2026. This contract is worth \$7 million; it

includes Carolina Online, and some Columbia graduate programs. If we do not meet this contract, we owe MLS \$7 million. The contract begins fall 2021. Palmetto College degree completion is part of the Carolina Online.

SENATOR DENISE MCGILL requested a recap of the difference between Palmetto College and Carolina Online and why did it look attractive to take part of Palmetto college and expand it to Carolina Online.

PROVOST CUTLER reminded the Senate that he was not part of the decision-making process for Carolina Online. However, he did clarify the difference. Palmetto College involves a 2-year program for most their programs. Carolina Online focuses on 4-year baccalaureate programs.

SENATOR MCGILL asked if there is an option to fold Carolina Online into the Palmetto College.

PROVOST CUTLER stated that this is part of the history question. He does not know the history, however, the contract with the Major League Soccer is written specifically for Carolina Online.

SENATOR STEPHEN CRISWELL stated that Palmetto College is a 2-year program only in the sense that the campuses offer the associate degree. Although the baccalaureate degree comes from Columbia, the courses are taught by the regional campuses. Criswell teaches 300-400 level courses. His concerns are that Palmetto College's 4-year programs will be taken away from the 2-year campuses and they will lose the opportunity to teach upper-level classes. These courses and programs have been very successful. He wondered why Palmetto College is being "messed" with.

PROVOST CUTLER appreciates his comments. He reassured the Senator that the faculty at the 2-year campuses are not being abandoned. UofSC is building a more comprehensive offering where more degrees and programs are offered. All system campuses input is critical and important to ensure success of online education at UofSC, not just Columbia, but the whole system.

SENATOR MIHALIK inquired if the MLS contract is with a specific unit or with the University.

PROVOST CUTLER stated that the MLS contract is with the Carolina Online initiative with the Columbia Campus.

SENATOR MIHALIK stated that he believes that in the Department of SPTE, there is little to no support for the MLS contract.

PROVOST CUTLER responded by saying it is his understanding that MLS is interested in the sphere around sports. It is not just the players but also the support staff as well. Other areas of interest include hospitality and retailing. There are other professional areas of interest being discussed as well.

CHAIR COOPER reminded the Senate that Palmetto College has Senators on the Columbia campus and representatives on key committees.

SECRETARY MARIANNE BICKLE clarified a statement made by Senator Mihalik. HRSM did have a vote regarding online education. Senator Bickle is in RETL and BAIS. As the Director of Online Learning, she works with SPTE and many of the faculty in SPTE in placing courses online.

PROVOST CUTLER stated that quality online learning is what the university seeks to achieve.

SENATOR MIHALIK stated that the vote at the college was a generic vote. Stated as “Do you support online education?” It did not go in detail. In SPTE we are drowning. There is push-back to place the program online.

SENATOR REBECCA STERN asked what specific contractual obligation is there from the Columbia Campus?

PROVOST CUTLER stated that we have a contractual obligation for the Carolina Online to deliver online education to the players and staff of Major League Soccer (MLS). We do not want to default on the contract. He hopes we can build a better online program. For example, last summer, he was looking for an online Spanish course for my daughter but had difficulty finding one, even though he knew we offered such a course. He thinks we need to brand our programs and courses better. This will afford us to strengthen who we are as a university. It is Cutler’s hope that Faculty Senate will work collaboratively to shape, guide, and improve online learning in general.

SENATOR MARK MINETT asked 1) How much support is there financially for the units? and 2) If we provide provisional approval of programs and are not satisfied one year from now, what recourse do we have?

PROVOST CUTLER stated that an annual assessment of Carolina Online will be made. Regarding positions and support, CTE and admissions and enrollment will participate. Money will return to the deans. There are deans that have resources to hire. The steps will be gradual. The funds will be through tuition dollars.

CHAIR COOPER asked Cutler to clarify about the checkpoints that the task force is asked to identify. Checkpoints are the controls Senator Minett asked about.

SENATOR JUSTIN BYARS asked if anyone has entertained the idea of speaking to MLS; asking for a postponement in delivery.

PROVOST CUTLER stated that he did not have an answer. If he personally entered a \$7 million contract and was told the contract could not be satisfied, he would want his money back.

This is a consideration for legal counsel and the Board of Trustees (BOT). Cutler stated that he would talk with legal counsel.

CHAIR COOPER reminded the Senate that the trustees are the signatories. All contracts that large are signed by the BOT.

SENATOR MARK MACAUDA believes there is a disconnect between what the deans knew and what the faculty knew. As we move forward so we do not get here again, he asked how can we ensure the chain of governance is maintained throughout all channels?

PROVOST CUTLER reaffirmed that he came up through the ranks. He serves the faculty and staff. He hopes the deans do the same. Faculty successes are the University's successes.

Reports from Representative Colleges

CHAIR COOPER called for reports from faculty in programs proposed for online delivery as part of Carolina Online.

SENATOR CHRISTIE MARTIN reporting for Elementary Education: The B.A. in Elementary Education is not currently approved for online education but has CHE approval for partial hybrid online delivery. The program is currently set up as a degree completion program through the Palmetto Program structure. This is existing and active online degree completion program. Being approved for online would give us the ability to make a transition to Carolina Online from the Palmetto model when it is appropriate.

SENATOR NATE CARNES stated that Elementary Education is a degree program with the Department of Instruction and Teacher Education. The platform does not make much difference for the degree. The stakes are not that high.

SENATOR NESET HIKMET from IIT program: Senator Hikmet arrived at UofSC in 2012 as the Director of Master of Health Information Technology. At the time, it was all face-to-face. One year later, the degree was placed online. IIT program was also placed online.

PROFESSOR JOHN GERDES is the Undergraduate Director for IIT. Over seven years ago, the move was made to begin placing the program online. Courses have been approved for online delivery during the past two years. The program was changed to make it 100% online, working with the Math department.

For the upcoming year, the program faculty feel they are constrained for our online delivery because the provost required us to provide the same number of courses online as we did pre-pandemic. As such, we are offering less online courses than desired.

We are planning on having an online program independent of Carolina Online. Typically, we have two sections; one section face-to-face and one section is online. Carolina Core courses are offered online prior to the pandemic. There is a path. Every course needed is available.

SENATOR VAN KORNAGAY asked if students gravitate toward face-to-face sections or toward the online sections.

PROFESSOR GERDES responded that students gravitate to the online section. These are not just courses with a camera. These sections fill up faster, although some students do want face-to-face.

SENATOR KORNAGAY reporting for Communication and Information: Communication and Information is comprised of Mass Communications, Journalism, and Library and Information Sciences. We urge the adoption of all the programs to participate in Carolina Online.

In Journalism, there are six majors. This past spring, the Mass Communications major decided to participate in Carolina Online. The other majors adopted a wait and see attitude. Part of the reason is that 90% of the Mass Communications major has been approved for online delivery. They feel comfortable to begin experimentally with an online degree.

The entire Journalism School faculty voted to approve the move. The Information School faculty has more nuances. They have a strong interest. They have developed an online curriculum for a B.S. degree. It is contingent on resources they did not feel that they had at the time. They are also in a search for a new director. They are interested in Carolina Online. The Journalism School is ready to participate in Carolina Online.

Neither School wants to see a move that would slam the door shut or damage the possibility of an online program. We urge the Senate to approve the motion to let those programs who choose to join move forward. Those who wish, can opt out or wait with their resources are in alignment. The Journalism School will continue to move forward with online education.

Not a lot has been said about making higher education accessible and affordable to students. It is important to look at the student debt by the time they graduate. Students have about \$30,000 debt by the time they graduate.

SENATOR THORNE responded that you mentioned the motivation to make education more accessible and affordable. Why would online education be less expensive?

PROVOST CUTLER reminded the Senate that Carolina Online has a different fee structure. Students will be paying a lower tuition rate. In addition, students who do not live on campus would be saving money by living at home.

SENATOR THORNE commented that you can pull out all the stops and make a good course or you can have a pre-packaged course. From his perspective, offering the course online would be more expensive apart from the dorms.

SENATOR KORNAGAY gave anecdotal information about a synchronous course. A student needed to return home due to finances. The student saved thousands by living at home and did fine in the course.

SENATOR BYARS asked were the courses for online delivery approved pre-COVID and which courses still need to be approved?

SENATOR KORNAGAY stated that there is a mix of courses; some were approved pre-COVID, most courses were approved during COVID.

CHAIR COOPER reminded the Senate that a chart was sent to all senators regarding which courses have been processed and which remain to be approved. This document is in your UofSC email.

SENATOR KORNAGAY estimates that approximately three courses still need to be approved for online delivery for Mass Communication to go forward.

SENATOR WANDA FENIMORE would like to address the affordability issue. This is the case with Palmetto College. These students live in his or her hometown and can earn an Associate Degree while living at home. Also, the tuition rate for Carolina Online undercuts Palmetto College tuition rates.

PROVOST CUTLER stated that the \$333 per credit hour tuition rate for Carolina Online is the middle part of the national rate for online programs. There are some programs at a higher rate; some at a lower rate. Our rate is a promotional rate. This is one of the check points. We want to make sure Carolina Online tuition is affordable, but not harming us as an institution, not just Columbia campus, but across the university system.

SENATOR ELISE LEWIS stated that the Library and Information Sciences School is 95% approved for online education.

SENATOR MIHALIK inquired if all the courses are offered in one section. For example, is there a face-to-face section and an online section or is the degree online only?

SENATOR KORNAGAY responded that in Mass Communications they offer options of face-to-face and online sections. The online sections fill up first.

SENATOR KAREN EDWARDS reporting for the College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management: HRSM agrees with Senator Kornagay about not wanting to slam the door on Carolina Online. She stressed the need for faculty governance. HRSM faculty are concerned with doing it right. They want to move toward online programming in general.

Background information was provided. In early spring, the College was approached regarding placing HRSM degrees online. The initial meetings were between the Provost's Office and the College leadership. The leadership met and asked unit chairs and directors to meet with the faculty to discuss the online programming. It was not specifically couched as the Carolina Online program but online programs in general.

Based on the feedback in the units, faculty were generally in support if the resources and funding for the programs were to be provided. College leadership informed the Provost's office that funding would be needed for programs to be delivered online.

In April, Carolina Online was unveiled; the contract with MLS was announced. The College was told funding would be provided for Carolina Online but somehow the funding mentioned was from a separate pot allocated for the new dean.

In May, the College overall did vote to participate in Carolina Online. All programs were approved by the majority of faculty by unit and overall. The vote was split. There were many faculty who had reservations of moving forward, specifically SPTE.

HRSM wants to move ahead in ways that allow faculty-led measures to ensure all the systems are in place, that the degrees are of high quality, and that we have the resources and support needed to develop online programming.

Now, if the Faculty Senate approves the pilot period for Carolina Online, HRSM is comfortable with offering BAIS with that test. BAIS has already been approved for online delivery. In the meantime, we would like to spend time at the unit level work on key issues (e.g., funding, faculty workloads, advising, scheduling) before other programs are offered online. BAIS is ready to participate in the pilot.

SENATOR MINETT asked for confirmation of the programs staying on list for the pilot testing for Carolina Online.

INTERIM DEAN DAVID CARDENAS stated that because BAIS is already approved for online delivery [through the now disputed process], he feels comfortable moving forward. The college needs to get a few courses approved in RETL and HRTM. Also, we want to look at the funding model, admissions, and progression. He believes once the college gets everything straight, it can start these programs (i.e., RETL, HRTM) in spring 2022. Regarding SPTE, that is a bit more complicated.

CHAIR COOPER asked for clarification. Dean Cardenas is not seeking temporary approval for any program other than BAIS.

INTERIM DEAN CARDENAS confirmed that BAIS is the only program seeking approval at this time.

SENATOR MILHALIK stated that at the College level, there was a vote. The verbiage was succinct. What was the result of the vote?

INTERIM DEAN CARDENAS confirmed that all units supported the vote by majority. The closest vote was in SPTE.

Resolution

SENATOR MINETT introduced the resolution circulated with the agenda:

Be it resolved,

1) the Senate temporarily authorizes the continuation of advertisement of and enrollment for Carolina Online for the following programs:

- Journalism and Mass Communications
- BAIS
- Elementary Education
- Integrated Information Technology

To the extent needed to avoid direct, financial reputational damage to the University for a term of one year, to be reviewed there after by vote of the Faculty Senate each year or by a process developed by the Instructional Development and Curricula and Courses Committee requiring the approval of the Faculty Senate as a whole AND

2) calls upon the Instructional Development Committee and the Committee on Curricula and Courses to develop a careful, deliberative, and evidence-based approach process for changes in modality. This approval process must be affirmed by a vote of the Faculty Senate prior to implementation and should consider the following:

- Impact on other units and the need for concurrence from all units responsible for delivering courses required for degree completion particularly Carolina Online.
- Anticipated impacts of modality changes on face-to-face instruction.
- Resources and plans for meeting the novel challenges of student success in the online environment, including but not limited to resources allocated to student advancement, instructional technologies, sequencing and availability of program courses, faculty being, and staffing considerations, AND

3) calls upon the Faculty Welfare Committee to study and report to the Faculty Senate on issues of faculty workload, compensation, and contingency in relation to Carolina Online, AND

4) calls upon the Admissions Committee to track and report to the Senate on possible effects of Carolina Online as University admissions overall.

The motion was seconded.

CHAIR COOPER confirmed that BAIS is the only program in HRSM under consideration.

SENATOR BYARS stated that this has all been discussed and voted on in the past meeting. How can this issue be voted on again? Is this an amendment?

CHAIR COOPER stated that this a separate motion that supersedes the other motion. He asked the Parliamentarian for confirmation.

PARLIAMENTARIAN BILL SUDDUTH stated that the resolution in the prior meeting was voted on and approved. This is a new meeting and a special call. It is a different meeting.

SENATOR BYARS asked if nine other members were to call for meeting, could this resolution be overturned?

PARLIAMENTARIAN SUDDUTH stated that it is up to Chair Cooper to decide if the motion is different.

CHAIR COOPER stated that today's resolution reverses the resolution previously approved, so it is clearly different.

PARLIMENTARIAN SUDDUTH stated that if you want to void a resolution, you need to rescind the resolution. This is a different resolution.

SENATOR MINETT stated that this is a significantly different resolution. We did not resolve the end of the June meeting to have C&C and INDEV help with the approval process. Nor did we call for Faculty Welfare to study consequences and competencies workload.

CHAIR COOPER stated that if Senator Byars were to present him with a list of ten Senators asking for a called meeting that would revise this motion significantly, he would call a special meeting.

SENATOR LEWIS asked if we have any idea of the enrollment numbers for these programs. The last known estimate was 50 applicants for all Carolina Online.

PROVOST CUTLER stated that he believes Carolina Online currently has 50 applicants.

SENATOR THORNE asked about the temporary authorization. What happens if we vote yes for one year and after one year vote no. Wouldn't this cause problems for the students and for accreditation?

PROVOST CUTLER stated that there is not any concern for accreditation. CHE has given authority for this as well as SACSOC.

SENATOR JASON DEBAKER stated that it was his understanding that only two of the stated programs under consideration had CHE and BOT approval, which are required for advertising.

CHAIR COOPER stated that we have a 2017 blanket approval. He may be referring to that document.

PROVOST CUTLER confirmed that yes, that is what he meant.

CHAIR COOPER stated that we are waiting for approval on the other programs.

SENATOR MACAUDA asked for clarification on what we are voting on today. We are saying the prior resolution stands, but this resolution is for these programs only.

CHAIR COOPER stated that Senator Macaуда's assessment is accurate. Provisional approval of the programs listed is what we will be voting. In addition, this resolution gives guidance about the kind of approval process the Senate would like to see developed by INDEV, C&C and Faculty Welfare. This resolution amplifies the earlier resolution.

PROVOST CUTLER stated that CHE has also approved these courses. Where we are lacking is the approval at the BOT level. He purposely waited to put the programs forward to BOT out of respect to Faculty Senate. He wants to have a better working relationship with Faculty Senate.

SENATOR RAVELIN stated that document is written to help us move forward. The document is to make sure Faculty Senate remains a player in the process and is not sidelined by the University's interests.

SENATOR DEBAKER asked for clarification regarding only two of the programs received approval by BOT. He would think it would be a mistake to vote on a resolution that violates university policy. He proposed striking all programs but the two that have BOT approval (i.e., BAIS, IIT).

CHAIR COOPER stated a motion amend the proposal by striking Elementary Education and Mass Comm was moved and seconded. The amended motion was carried.

SENATOR STERN stated that today she found that SACSOC requires notification. We have a blanket approval to offer programs online however we still are required to tell them that we are offering the gram online. Many of the programs were sent too late. We are violating SACS requirements.

PROVOST CUTLER stated that we have notified SACS about these programs.

SENATOR CARNES stated for Elementary Education we are the only Columbia Campus college that has a degree completion program through Palmetto College structure. That puts us in a unique position with regards to this decision. We will not be impacted. We are fully online and vetted.

SENATOR KORNAGAY stated that if we strike Elementary Education and Mass Communication, we will be allowed back in Carolina Online once we get BOT approval?

CHAIR COOPER stated that they would need to get through the approval process that would be created.

SENATOR STERN stated that we have a violation. SACS requires every university have a written procedure; we are out of compliance.

CHAIR COOPER stated that he believes other people can disagree.

SENATOR BYARS asked if it would be better to keep the programs in a state once they get approval?

CHAIR COOPER reminded the Senate of the time; Blackboard Collaborate would be ending soon.

The motion to amend carried. There was no further discussion of the main motion. The motion for the resolution carried.

The meeting adjourned at 4:59pm EST