Faculty Senate, Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 5:00 PM
Via Zoom

Voting results appear in red.

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM.

2. The January 12, 2021, minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

3. Announcements and Information

Speaker Lewis reminded faculty that the deadline for attendance verification is noon on Feb. 3. A Strategic Plan forum is scheduled for Feb. 5 at 1:00; it will be recorded. Next Friday, Feb. 12, is the SURF grant application deadline. Diversity EDU training is ongoing; we are hoping for 100% participation by May 15, and we are currently at about 30%.

4. Reports

   a. Speaker of the Faculty Simon Lewis thanked the Information Technology Division for all their work in providing technical support and materials for teaching during the pandemic. He raised the questions, how and when will we be able to go back to face-to-face teaching, and what kind of shape will the College be in when we do? The success of this year’s CofC Day and the application figures for the fall suggest that we’ll be in good shape financially, but COVID-related variables--- specifically our ability to limit the spread of the virus and the timetable for vaccinations --- are less certain. Speaker Lewis noted that we have about 100 days remaining in the semester, and we need to be vigilant about COVID protocols, including calling out people on campus who are noncompliant.

   b. President Andrew Hsu thanked faculty for bringing creative energy and positivity into the classroom. He reported that we saw a spike of positive COVID cases last week, along with reports of large off-campus parties. He said that the College is doing everything we can to try to curb that reckless behavior, including joint patrols with C of C Public Safety and Charleston Police, and having Student Affairs follow up on violations. He acknowledged that there is a lot of anxiety among faculty and staff, but he said that there is reason for optimism and hope. While we saw an alarming number of cases a little over a week ago --- over 127 --- today the number is down to 76. He reported that even when we reached the peak in cases, we were using only about half the allotted isolation beds. We had set aside over 100 spaces for students in quarantine; our high-water mark was 60, and we’re now down to 30.

   President Hsu recognized the tremendous amount of work by our Student Affairs team and other units across campus, and he added that senior leadership members and many faculty members volunteered to deliver meals to isolated students. He stressed that the administration is trying to provide as much flexibility as possible for faculty during this
time. He is encouraged by the declining case numbers but said that we will pivot at a moment’s notice if necessary.

Turning to the Strategic Plan, President Hsu noted that the implementation phase actually started last summer, and we’re already seeing progress in areas such as student retention. The College formally launched the implementation phase on C of C Day. By implementing this ten-year plan, he said, the College will strive to become a national university redefining liberal arts education through innovation. President Hsu encouraged everyone to participate in this Friday’s Strategic Plan forum on implementation. Despite the pandemic, he said, this is an exciting time at the College. He added that rather than just talking about the College having great potential, now is the time to realize that potential by working collaboratively toward a shared vision. The College’s fundraising on C of C Day was highly successful, with over 1700 unique donors in one day. That sends a strong message that the College is moving in the right direction.

In response to questions Speaker Lewis had given him earlier, President Hsu said that at this point, the plan is to be back to normal classroom teaching in the fall. Also, MUSC wants to set up a vaccination site on our campus when those vaccinations are available, and if the logistics are not in place when our faculty and staff are eligible, we can still get the vaccine at MUSC.

Senator Ashley Pagnotta (Physics and Astronomy) expressed a concern about students in RITA (Rita Liddy Hollings Science Center) hanging out to eat in the building and remaining unmasked longer than one would like. EVP for Student Affairs Alicia Caudill responded that they are allowed to remove their masks to eat, whether they’re in the cafeteria or in another building, but they must be actively eating and remain six feet apart. She said to report any concerning behavior of that type to Student Affairs.

Professor Lisa Covert (Guest) asked if there will be an effort to take stock of what teaching methods have been effective during the pandemic, so that we can make some updates in policy and practice if we can’t completely go back to normal next fall. She also asked what other measures are being taken in case the fall semester isn’t “normal.” President Hsu responded that he thinks some practices from this past year will survive, even assuming we do go back to normal in the fall. For example, we will probably offer more hybrid courses. Provost Suzanne Austin added that she hopes to establish the Center for Teaching and Learning by the end of this semester and believes that there will be many lessons learned from this experience in terms of teaching.

Senator Irina Gigova (HSS) said that she is teaching in-person this semester partly because of the demands for more in-person classes from students and parents, yet students in her classes generally opt to attend via zoom and often keep their cameras off. With that in mind, she asked what the administration was hearing this semester from parents about our delivery modes. President Hsu and Provost Austin both reported that they are hearing far fewer complaints. Provost Austin added that many students have fallen into bad habits
during the pandemic, and that it will be easier to get control over those issues when the College is fully back on campus.

Professor Jacob Steere-Williams (Guest) reported that he asked his students earlier in the day what one thing they would like President Hsu to do; they replied, enforce the mask ordinance. He also reported seeing the throng of unmasked revelers on King St. last weekend. His question: are we implementing new strategies for enforcement? President Hsu replied that he walks across campus several times a day, and students on campus seem to be compliant with mask wearing; but he also hears from students that they want the College to be more forceful about enforcement. EVP for Business Affairs John Loonan added that the College has Allied Security staff roving around campus from 3:00 until 8:00 PM four days a week, asking unmasked students to put their masks on. That seems to be working, he said.

Professor Elizabeth Jurisich (Guest) discussed the difficulty of teaching students simultaneously in the classroom and on zoom, specifically having to rely on the document camera rather than a chalk/white board. While recognizing the difficulty and expense of providing new classroom technology, she wishes that we had equipment better suited for simultaneous in-person and zoom instruction. Senator Ashley Pagnotta (Physics and Astronomy) supported Prof. Jurisich’s comments with further examples. CIO Mark Staples responded that IT adjusted the placement of classroom cameras over the holidays to make them more effective at capturing activity at the front of the room. He said that their strategy had been to make all classrooms equal in terms of equipment for online delivery, spreading the cost of upgrades evenly across about 350 rooms. But he added that they are now considering providing some classrooms with greater capabilities for video and audio to accommodate classes that need specific functionalities. He also mentioned that purchasing iPads for everyone to use in the classroom would have been extraordinarily expensive, but iPads do work well.

5. New Business

a. Curriculum Committee (Nenad Radakovic, Chair)

1) EDSP: Program and Course Change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:178/form

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

2) TEDU: Program change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:181/form
Approved by online vote.

3) CHEM: Pre-requisite change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2893/form

Approved by online vote.

4) CITA/DATA: Program change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:183/form

Approved by online vote.

5) PSYC: Course change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2870/form

Approved by online vote.

6) CLAS: Minor change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2903/form

Approved by online vote.

7) EXSC: Program and course change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:185/form

Senator Ashley Pagnotta (Physics and Astronomy) said that, contrary to language in the proposal, the concerns of the Department of Physics and Astronomy, which were spelled out in a letter from the department chair, were not addressed. The concerns included the removal of certain courses, including PHYS 101/L, from the list of required courses; specifically, the department stressed the importance of students gaining a thorough background in forces and torques, given that every motion the human body makes involves forces and torques. This objection was later reiterated by Physics and Astronomy Chair Narayanan Kuthirummal (NK).

Professor Kate Pfile, Director of the Exercise Science Program, responded that she met with the department and provided the program’s rationale for the change. After the meeting, she received a letter with some concerns addressed to the Curriculum Committee, and she responded to the committee, though not directly to the department. She said that biomechanics is a subdiscipline of exercise science, like
sports psychology or sports medicine; that is why they removed EXSC 440: Biomechanics from the list of core courses and made it an elective. She said her program is trying to meet the needs of their students while providing a basic foundation of knowledge and skills of exercise science. The program includes other required classes with lecture and applied activities that involve concepts including torque and equilibrium; students may elect to take courses that further emphasize these concepts.

Professor Kuthirummal (NK) noted that, according to the program document supporting the proposed change, most EXCS majors will still take PHYS 101/L as a prerequisite for graduate and professional programs. He asked why, then, they would remove it as a requirement, and asked if it would make the program less rigorous. Prof. Pfile responded that it is not about rigor but about giving students more options, since students have various interests within exercise science and various future plans. With fewer required hours for the major, students can pursue minors and courses that will complement the major and prepare them for specific graduate programs and careers.

The proposal was approved by online vote, 32-21, with 7 abstaining.

8) JWST: Minor, major, and course change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:188/form

Approved by online vote.

9) WGST: Course change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:3021/form

Approved by online vote.

10) MATH: Course number change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:189/form

Approved by online vote.

11) ENGL: Minor, major, concentrations, and course change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:184/form

Approved by online vote.

12) HISP: New courses, course, and program change:

Approved by online vote.

13) FREN: Pre-requisite changes:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:186/form

Approved by online vote.

14) ARTM: New course and course changes:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:179/form

Approved by online vote.

15) BIOL: course changes:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:180/form

Approved by online vote.

16) COMM: major, minor, and course changes:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:182/form

Senator Tom Ivey (Mathematics) said that the proposal to remove MATH 104 or 250 as a prerequisite for COMM 301 mischaracterizes MATH 250. Specifically, MATH 250 does teach students to use a statistical software package and therefore would be an appropriate prerequisite for COMM 301. Professor Namjin Lee (Communication) replied that the instructors in his department believe that they can handle teaching the data analysis skills necessary for COMM 301. They don’t deny that the math courses are helpful, but they believe the prerequisite is too burdensome for students and often delays their progress toward the degree.

Senator Bob Mignone (SSM) said that while he is not opposed to the proposal, he believes that having MATH 104 as a prerequisite encourages students, most of whom take MATH 104 as their general education requirement anyway, to take it earlier in their careers, specifically before taking COMM 301 --- which is advantageous. Prof. Lee said that his department would continue to advise students to take MATH 104 even when it is no longer a prerequisite.

The proposal was approved by online vote, 29-13, with 5 abstaining.
17) MGMT/MKTG: new minor, major, and course change:

https://cofc.curriculog.com/agenda:177/form

Approved by online vote.

b. Committee on Graduate Education (Sandy Slater, Chair)

1) Arts and Cultural Management Certificate

ARCM 570: course change

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2977/form

ARCM 571: course change

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2984/form

ARCM 572: course change

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2983/form

ARCM 573: course change

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2981/form

ARCM 574: course change

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2982/form

Approved by online vote.

2) Computer and Information Sciences, MS

CSIS 698: course change


CSIS 699: course change

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2806/form
Program change: reduce required hours in each emphasis area from 12 to 9, increase required elective hours from 9 to 12

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2796/form

Approved by online vote.

3) Creative Writing, MFA

ENGL 569: new course – Special Topics in Creative Writing

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2911/form

ENGL 708: new course – MFA Thesis

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2685/form

Program change: add new courses, update required and elective courses for Studio emphasis

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2689/form

Approved by online vote.

4) Data Science and Analytics, MS

DATA 510: course change

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2963/form

DATA 534: course change

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2964/form

Approved by online vote.

5) Mathematical Sciences, MS

MATH 561: course change

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2941/form

Approved by online vote.
6) Science and Math for Teachers, MED

SMFT 514: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2851/form

SMFT 523: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2853/form

SMFT 524: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2854/form

SMFT 529: new course - Coastal and Marine Science for Educators
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2855/form

SMFT 535: new course - Topics in Ecology and Conservation Biology
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2856/form

SMFT 537: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2857/form

SMFT 538: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2858/form

SMFT 540: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2859/form

SMFT 570: new course – Introduction to Environmental and Sustainability Education
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2863/form

SMFT 611: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2849/form
SMFT 618: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2850/form

SMFT 639: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2861/form

SMFT 645: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2862/form

SMFT 697: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2958/form

SMFT 698: course change
https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2880/form

Program change: change program name to *Science and Math Education*, reduce degree hours from 32 to 30, update required and elective courses, add new courses, reduce all 4-hour courses to 3 hours, replace word “teachers” with “educators” in course titles

https://cofc.curriculog.com/proposal:2847/form

*Approved by online vote.*

c. Senator Todd Grantham (HSS): Motion to adopt a statement of commitment to curbing gun-violence.

*The motion was approved by online vote, 41-3, with 3 abstaining.*

6. Constituents’ General Concerns

Senator Ashley Pagnotta (Physics and Astronomy) asked if faculty have permission to continue teaching online, beyond this week, without requesting accommodation. Associate Provost Mark Del Mastro replied that he could not speak for the Provost on that question.

Citing a change in the language on DHEC’s webpage, Senator Tom Ivey (Mathematics) asked for clarification on whether we will be included in phase 1B of vaccine distribution. No one present could directly answer Senator Ivey’s question.
Referring to a recent email from Provost Austin and John Morris, Vice President for Facilities Management, Professor Gorka Sancho (Guest) asked what effect moving the Office of Sustainability to Facilities Management would have on student internships associated with sustainability. Associate Provost Deanna Caveny pointed out that the Sustainability Literacy Institute (our QEP) will remain within Academic Affairs. Otherwise, there was no one present who could directly answer Professor Sancho’s question.

7. The meeting adjourned at 6:53.