

Minutes of the Meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee
University of Kentucky
Monday, December 12, 2022

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASAC) of the University of Kentucky (UK) Board of Trustees met on Monday, December 12, 2022, in the Harris Ballroom of the Gatton Student Center.

A. Meeting Opened

Chair Rachel Webb called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

B. Roll Call

The following members of the ASAC answered the call of the roll: Aaron Cramer, Brenda Gosney, Andrew Laws, Lance Lucas, Paula Leach Pope, Derrick K. Ramsey and Rachel Watts Webb. Cathy A. Black attended the meeting via Zoom.

C. Approval of Minutes

Chair Webb reported that the minutes of the September 15, 2022, ASAC meeting had been distributed. Trustee Cramer moved approval of the minutes and Trustee Lucas seconded the motion. Hearing no discussion, Chair Webb called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

D. ASACRs 1 – 3: Candidates for Degrees: May and December 2022 and In Memoriam December 2022

Chair Webb stated ASACRs 1 – 3 would be considered at the full Board of Trustees meeting since the University Senate's recommendation for approval would occur later that day, after the ASAC meeting.

E. ASACR 4: Suspension and Closure of Degree in Merchandising Apparel and Textiles

The recommendation was that the Board of Trustees approve the closure of the Bachelor of Science in Home Economics in Merchandising, Apparel and Textiles within the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, effective in the Fall 2023 semester. By way of background, this degree program underwent a name change in Spring 1991 and the degree was replaced with the Bachelor of Science in Merchandising, Apparel and Textiles. At that time, the old program was suspended in practice but never officially closed. The official closure of the program did not impact past, present or future students. The proposal had the approval of the program faculty, the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, and the University Senate. The provost of the university supported this recommendation.

Director of Planning and Accreditation in the Office of Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Rae Ann Pearson was present to answer questions regarding ASACR 4.

Trustee Pope moved approval, which was seconded by Trustee Lucas. Hearing no discussion, Chair Webb called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

F. ASACR 5: Suspension and Closure of Degree in Engineering

The recommendation was that the Board of Trustees approve the closure of the Master of Engineering degree program within the College of Engineering, effective in the Fall 2023 semester. By way of background, this degree program had been inactive since 2005 and was under-enrolled years prior. A formal request was never made official. The official closure of the program did not impact past, present or future students. The proposal had the approval of the program faculty, the College of Engineering and the University Senate. The provost of the university supported this recommendation.

Dean of the College of Engineering Rudy Buchheit was present to answer questions regarding ASACR 5.

Trustee Gosney moved approval, which was seconded by Trustee Cramer. Hearing no discussion, Chair Webb called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

G. Provost Report

Provost Robert DiPaola discussed two key areas on which the Office of the Provost is currently focused, including:

- Progress on the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) reaffirmation; and
- Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

Provost DiPaola provided an update on SACSCOC reaffirmation, stating the 631-page Compliance Certification report was submitted on September 8 and the off-site peer review visit occurred November 1 – 4, 2022. The SACSCOC vice president visited campus November 21 – 22, 2022. The next steps include submission of the QEP on February 6, 2023, followed by an on-site review scheduled for March 20 – 23, 2023.

The QEP is required by SACSCOC. It is an extension of the university's mission and strategic plan with the sole goal of improving student learning outcomes as aligned by the university's educational efforts. The QEP developed is titled Transdisciplinary approaches of Education for Kentucky (TEK). TEK is being developed to help provide students with soft skills, as well as many other initiatives.

The three goals of the QEP are as follows:

- Goal 1: Enable students to acquire essential workforce skills through real-time learning and active engagement in transdisciplinary environments with transdisciplinary mentors and colleagues;
- Goal 2: Engage students to leverage transdisciplinary activities that produce innovative and relevant solutions to address critical issues for Kentucky; and
- Goal 3: Link and align students' skills and experiences with the Kentucky workforce.

Provost DiPaola reviewed the QEP preliminary implementation timeline covering Spring 2023 through Spring 2024, including introductory seminars and offering TEK 200: Discover and seek approval for TEK 300: Engage.

Chair Webb called for questions:

- Trustee Swanson inquired about the substance of the comments by the SACSCOC off-site peer review team. Provost DiPaola stated those comments are being reviewed. Most of them related to providing additional data or connecting to data available currently for further clarity within the focus report.
- Trustee Cramer requested the off-site peer review team's feedback on the QEP. Provost DiPaola stated the QEP made great sense strategically speaking based on where UK has been and where it is going.

H. Student Government Association Update

Student Government Association (SGA) President and Trustee Andrew Laws provided an update regarding the student body and recent SGA activities, including:

- Allocated \$143,000 to 136 students via child care, prep book and professional development grants;
- Allocated \$52,000 to 55 student organizations;
- Hosted first-ever student success fair, involving 15 campus partners and hundreds of students, to discuss basic needs and academic, financial and professional development resources;
- Held Coats for Cats program which enabled the distribution of free winter coats to more than 300 students, with more to be provided in January and February; and
- Hosted Cold Brew Chiller event on the first day of finals, which provides free coffee to students.

I. Response to Campus Incident

President Capilouto opened with remarks on the racist assault that occurred in a

residence hall on November 6, 2022, and the trauma it caused the community, particularly Black students, faculty, staff and community members. He emphasized the importance of the university's commitment to be a community of belonging for everyone. He invited the following leadership to provide an overview of responses to the incident after the fact and plans for the future:

- Vice President for Student Success Kirsten Turner and Dean of Students Trisha Clement-Montgomery to discuss the institution's immediate response and the support offered to students;
- Vice President for Institutional Diversity Katrice Albert and members of her team to discuss the institution's broader community outreach and sources of support offered as well as ongoing efforts to ensure that every college and unit have access to the people and tools they need to help create a more diverse and inclusive environment;
- Provost Bob DiPaola to briefly review the response of academic leadership, how faculty were supported and how to ensure full understanding of the feedback received for an effective collective response;
- Student Government President and Trustee Andrew Laws to discuss student perspectives; and
- Chief Communication Officer Jay Blanton to review the communication response.

Vice President for Student Success Kirsten Turner discussed the protocol used for responding to the critical incident. Safety was the primary concern, followed by effective, accurate and transparent communication. Care and concern for the impacted victims and investigations are also at the forefront. Dr. Turner's role is one of coordination with UK's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and communicating with Trustees and deans. Dr. Clement-Montgomery's role is one of management on the ground with students, as well as serving as the point person for the campus with the student victims and their families.

Dr. Turner noted the following as it pertained to the incident:

- Once situational awareness was established, investigations began. The three investigations currently underway are as follows:
 - Student Conduct;
 - Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity; and
 - Lexington Police Department;
- Interim suspension of the assailant was invoked almost immediately although not made public;
- Support was provided to the following:
 - Victims and their family;
 - Family of the assailant; and
 - Classmates of those directly involved in the incident, e.g., members of a group assignment and/or fellow members of a student organization;
 - Greater campus community, parents and families

Dr. Clement-Montgomery summarized the ongoing engagement to enable healing for the community. She highlighted the following:

- UK case managers have been assigned to the identified victims and remain in constant contact with the victims and their families and friends;
- Frequent communication with residence hall staff, UK Police Department and several on-campus units within auxiliary services;
- Internal and external audits of residence hall safety measures;
- Intentional connection of student organizations by the associate dean for student engagement via a campus march with members of the Phi Beta Sigma fraternity, part of the UK National Panhellenic Council, the day after the incident occurred; and
- Creation of different healing spaces to foster conversations to discuss needs and share campus experiences, as well as convey to the student community the process for dealing with such events, what the Student Code of Conduct is, who it protects, and the rights and responsibilities administered by it.

Dr. Albert stated the Office of Institutional Diversity connected with colleagues in response to the incident to serve as an institutional brain trust in supporting the community as it dealt with this crisis. She reviewed a timeline of engagement spanning November 7 through November 22, 2022, involving the following:

- Employee Affinity Group Advance;
- My Brother's Keeper and Sister Circle community check-ins;
- Meetings with the provost, deans and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Officers;
- DEI Implementation Plan Project Leads; and
- Follow-up DEI meeting with the provost and deans.

Dr. Albert highlighted the following:

- My Brother's Keeper and Sister Circle, both of which have a national presence, promoted initiatives for people of color in professional settings within academia. The groups met on November 8 to serve as both healing and learning spaces in response to the incident on November 6, 2022;
- Advice was sought from Dr. Candace Hargons of The Center for Healing Racial Trauma and Lisa Higgins-Hord to understand best practices when having difficult conversations regarding the incident; and
- College and Unit DEI Officers hosted open forums between November 8 and November 29, 2022, to create a sense of calm within the UK community.

Dr. Albert provided a preview of the February meeting, slated to include updates on the 17 projects of the DEI Implementation Plan, highlights about the Committee on Responsible Speech and Student Gathering Space projects, and DEI project lead introductions.

Provost DiPaola summarized actions taken among colleges to address needs that arose in response to the incident. Those actions included the following:

- Hosted an urgent meeting with deans on November 7, 2022, to provide them with background information and a status update about the incident, as well as an overview of resources available to the university community for communication throughout the colleges;
- Provided process outlines for the next 24 – 48 hours with guidance about future communications;
- Requested internal feedback on the incident from students, staff and faculty; and
- Relayed the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching's instructional tips for supporting students of color during moments of racial trauma.

SGA President and Trustee Andrew Laws reviewed the following actions taken by SGA leadership to support students impacted by the incident:

- Assailant to be held accountable for actions and justice served for the victim and students impacted by the incident;
- Requested transparency from the university about the incident;
- Began working with the Office of Student Success, the Dean of Students and Student Employment to ensure support resources are provided; and
- Requested students receive comprehensive DEI education.

Chief Communication Officer Jay Blanton reviewed the actions of public relations staff and the framework used in response to the incident. The following were highlighted:

- Supported partners across campus in answering questions, addressing concerns and sharing accurate information that stemmed from a video of the incident posted by a UK student that garnered more than nine million impressions and approximately 700,000 engagements between November 6 and 12, 2022;
- PACT:
 - Principles (looked to):
 - Preserve the mission of UK;
 - Health, safety and well-being of the campus community are top priorities;
 - Thrive as emerge from crisis; and
 - Communication clearly and transparently;
 - Actions (deployed):
 - Activated crisis communications through social media, emails and media statements;
 - Stopped other communications unrelated to the crisis;
 - Provided talking points to campus communicators and leaders;
 - Informed campus and shared messages to broader audiences on social media;
 - Monitored and responded to hundreds of questions via social media, email and phone calls; and

- Sent news releases to local, state and national outlets;
- Communications (utilized):
 - Condemned behavior;
 - Support resources provided;
 - Forward thinking; and
- Transparency (open and responsive community engagement):
 - Clear, consistent and frequent communication;
 - Prioritized internal campus communications before notifying external stakeholders and media;
 - Shared conduct process; and
 - Readily available updated information.

Chair Webb called for questions. They are as follows:

- Trustee Daniels asked if experience level and training are considered when assigning a student employee to the night shift at the front desk of a residence hall. Dr. Turner stated that in response to the incident, a training was conducted on November 8 with all resident advisors (RA) and residence hall staff regarding safety and night clerks. Two clerks will now work the front desks at night. She also stated one-on-one meetings with RAs and residence hall staff have occurred to create partnerships with Campus Housing and the Office of Residence Life. They continue to conduct safety audits to see if student labor should continue being used at the front desks. Panic buttons have also been installed at the front desks.
- Trustee Swanson asked for clarification if the victim was a freshman. Dr. Turner confirmed that one of the victims was a freshman. Trustee Swanson asked if the experience would be reconsidered. Dr. Turner stated that has not yet been discussed because a longer-term solution that may or may not involve students is being considered.

President Capilouto thanked the leadership who presented and the countless others who worked with them to address this matter. Chair Webb echoed his sentiments.

I. Meeting Adjourned

Hearing no further business, Chair Webb adjourned the meeting at 2:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Rachel Watts Webb
Academic and Student Affairs
Committee

RW/sjr