

University of Kentucky University Senate
Resolution for an Extended, Careful, and Effective Review of University Regulations
March 11, 2024

Background:

- The Chairman of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees, introducing Chair's Resolution 1 on October 20, 2023, announced a critical need, arising from UK-PURPOSE, the University's 2021 strategic plan, to "link [our students'] UK experience to the Commonwealth's needs." The approved resolution directed that the President create a plan that ensures, among other things, "More Responsiveness" by reviewing policies, procedures, and financing strategies to ensure that [UK] is aligned with the state's needs. The resolution specified review of relationships with public and private agencies and the University's Governing and Administrative Regulations.
- The "More Responsiveness" Workgroup reported to the Board of Trustees, pursuant to this charge, on February 23, 2024. The Report focused not on any of the charged areas arising from the strategic plan, but instead on the University Senate and a flawed and artificial evaluation of its rules, based on reports which the paid authors admitted were "unscientific."
- Based on this Report, the Board, in a Chair's Resolution dated that same day, directed the President to propose changes to the Governing Regulations to:
 - Define a distinction between the policy-making functions of the Board and respective responsibilities of the President and the faculty to administer and implement the Board's policy; and
 - Reaffirm the "primary responsibility" and "substantive role" of the faculty in determining "good educational practice" and "the development and review of academic policies."
 - Define and clearly articulate a "shared governance structure."
- In response, the President has engaged in a series of "listening sessions" on "shared governance" with groups of faculty members selected by the Deans of each College, and on this basis, will make recommendations in response to this resolution later this month.

Our concerns:

- **The fact-finding underlying the President's March recommendations will be inadequate.**
 - The consultant's report relied upon at the February 23, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting was not factual in any meaningful sense. It was clearly biased, unscientific, and untruthful.
 - The President's series of listening sessions, while a valuable and essential step in transparent administration, is only the first step in assuring adequate fact-finding. The sessions are addressing the topic of "shared governance," only one of the concerns which the Trustees have identified. These sessions were not structured to provide an environment where most faculty were able to speak freely about their concerns.
 - A serious examination of the University's Governing Regulations, Administrative Regulations, and University Senate Rules requires careful review by those administrators and faculty who know and work with them.
 - Shared governance requires involving the faculty's governing body – the University Senate – as a trusted partner in developing and approving needed changes to these identified rules.
- **The Board of Trustees has created a false crisis for the University community by directing changes to be formulated by its next meeting.**

- The crises identified in the first Chair’s Resolution of October 20, 2023, were developing trends in workforce, public health, infrastructure, and economic development. We all agree these are urgent matters which require serious attention. But there is **no identified emergency** requiring such a quick and uninformed response.
- The October 20, 2023 resolution required the President to make “significant progress by June 2024” on its directives. The February 23, 2024 resolution required “recommended changes in our Governing Regulations” by the Board’s next meeting, scheduled to begin April 25, 2024, with no reason given for the increased urgency.
- The initial “emergency” was based on important long-term trends, and the directive to hasten was based on, if anything, false information given to the Board of Trustees by its “More Responsiveness” Workgroup.
- **A serious, genuine response to the Trustees’ directive requires more time. A responsible administration must report to the Trustees and provide a realistic timetable for careful work and response.**
 - We recognize and affirm the primary role of the Trustees in formulating policy for the University. We believe that policy must be well-informed to be meaningful and effective. The present approach is not well-informed.
 - The response must be consistent with the University’s strategic plan. This requires us to put students first, take care of all our people, provide transparent and accountable decision making, and bring together our people in one community. The present approach does not do any of those things.

Therefore, it is resolved by the Council of the University Senate of the University of Kentucky, on behalf of the University Senate:

- That the President, in his dual roles as chief administrative officer *and* Chair of the University Senate, immediately recommend to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees that its’ resolution of February 23, 2024, be amended to require any **recommended changes to the governing regulations to be presented no sooner than its September 2024 meetings;**
- That the University Senate, on behalf of the University faculty, stands committed with the President and the Trustees to the guiding principles of our Strategic Plan. **We call on the President to engage University Senate and University Senate Council** in working quickly and diligently, in not only the spirit but the practice of shared governance, to allow its input before any proposals or recommendations are announced to the University community.
- We direct that our Chair of the Senate, the President of the University of Kentucky, forward a copy of this resolution to the Board of Trustees.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY SENATE COUNCIL, ACTING FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE ON MARCH 11th,2024