# LCC Logo

# Academic Senate Meeting

# November 5th, 2021, 9-11 Virtual Via WebEx

1. Call to order – 9:01AM
2. Roll Call – 9:01AM
3. Approval of Agenda – 9:02AM
   1. Chief Daryl Gaines in place of Chris MacKersie.
   2. Approved without objection.
4. Approval of Minutes – 9:02AM
   1. Approved without objection.
5. Small Group Discussion – 9:03AM
   1. “How would you define your relationship with students?”
   2. Attendees broke into groups of 5 and discussed.

## President’s Report

* 1. Senate website will not be kept up to date for a few weeks as the website itself is going through updates. Information can be found in SharePoint
  2. Looking for volunteers for Bylaws Team, Senate Charter Team, Teaching Preference Form Team.
  3. Please share senate materials with constituents. Important to get input from areas.

## Provost’s Report

* 1. Projects in infancy, keeping executive committee apprised.
  2. If have department meetings that would like Sally to attend please contact Laura Medina.
  3. This is a rough time of the semester, look for burnout. Self-care is important.

## Student Senators Report – Senator Amalia Gonzalez and Senator Summer Gilliam

* 1. Student Senator Summer Gilliam – Student Mental Health form. Sending it out to students in D2L. Asking Senators to share with their constituents to share with students. [Update your browser to use Google Drive, Docs, Sheets, Sites, Slides, and Forms](https://forms.gle/FRnQRcd2LVv1zvur6)
  2. Student Senator Amalia Gonzalez – Want to reach out to student. Ask that professors offer extra credit or show student the survey. Want to send a mass email to students. Maybe send students LCC swag.
  3. Closes November 17th to report on Nov. 19th.
  4. Senator Rick Williams - How can faculty support struggling students in class time? Do you know of a safe way to do this?
     1. If noticing a student, try to talk one on one. Discuss if there is anything specific or a lot of things. Being asked to stay and talk, send students to counselors.
     2. Senator Louise Rabidoux – There’s several ways. Encourage faculty to acknowledge behavior change or concerns. Refer to counseling. LCC counseling website has a lot of good resources. Available for consultations and will have something at PD days.
  5. Senator Tedd Sperling – Write a short description for others to post in their announcements.
  6. Dean Ronda Miller – Who helped develop the survey?
     1. Student senators took the lead with the executive committee reviewing it. All written by student senators.
  7. Student Senator Amalia Gonzalez – Reminder of Mindful Mondays. Please send to students. Mindful Mondays 10-10:30am and 2-2:30pm Monday Nov. 8th [WebEx Meeting Link](https://lccedu.webex.com/lccedu/e.php?MTID=m10bbcfa47bf1600ec4ac70bd8d66fe7e)

## Standing Committees Report

* 1. Technology Across the Curriculum, TAC – Senator Bruce Farris and Senator Bill Garlick
     1. Working on Plagiarism. See below.
  2. Committee for Assessing Student Learning, CASL – Senator Tim Deines
     1. CASL is continuing work in three main areas: research in equitable assessment; development of the BLUE assessment system, specifically in its formative applications; and development of the Assessment Learning Lab, in which faculty and others revise classroom assessment practices with the aim of making them more ‘performance-based’ and ‘authentic’.

## Consent Agenda

* 1. Curriculum Committee Report
  2. Approved without objection

## Plagiarism – Senator Bruce Farris

* 1. See Appendix I
  2. Instead of punitive approach with students and adversarial relationship, reach out to students and teach study skills and better relationships. Pedagogically make assignments that are more difficult, should not be able to copy and paste. Putting assignments together that involve critical thinking. Plagiarism software isn’t going to stop students. Can’t control what students have access to so need to change our pedagogy accordingly.
  3. Senator Mark Kelland – Constituents agreed that TurnItIn is not a good practice. Would be nice to have further discussion on pedagogical approaches. Maybe it is two issues? Faculty allowing its use warrants further discussion.
  4. Senator Melinda Hernandez – Plagiarism is a huge issue in English. Not a matter of penalty, matter of instruction. Not doing anyone a favor by sending students to other institutions not knowing that plagiarism is a felony.
  5. Senator Mark Kelland – Move to postpone the discussion for further and wider discussion amongst the faculty.
     1. Second Tonya Bailey
     2. Motion approved.

## Syllabus Language/ Reading Level – Director of Academic Quality Cheryl Garayta, Academic Affairs Project Manager Rafeeq McGiveron, Director of Academic Operations Mary Ellen Laatch, Accreditation Liaison Officer Mark Kelland

* 1. See Appendix II
  2. Concourse has developed a few new features including a readability report.
  3. Ran course templates. Ran to a reading level of 14 or 15 (entering college level or college sophomore).
  4. Reduce sentence length and words with 3 or more syllables. With this, courses fell in the 12 to 13 level.
  5. Variety of formulas to discuss readability. Only an estimate, not an absolute. Reading level is very complex. Level based on education system (0 is kindergarten 1 is first grade, etc.)
  6. Online calculator can give you an approximate reading level.
  7. Recommending our syllabi should have reading level of 13. Not a 15 or 16 graduate level.
  8. Academic Affairs Project Manager Rafeeq McGiveron – Academic Affairs is responsible for templates. Trying to simplify it. Revisions to Institutional Policies is an example of changing from 15 level to simplifying. Took out language that was extraneous. Tried to take out multisyllabic words.
  9. Senator Mark Kelland – Want to help students read syllabus well, is also an equity issue. If you have courses at graduate reading level, please take a look at them. Courses that you are thinking about changing, now is the time. Look at readability. Don’t have a deadline or timeframe. But think about students. One by one or in batches. Check your syllabi.
  10. Provost Sally Welch – Review material to make adjustments as see fit. Will run readability in January. Will come back and talk to this group again.
  11. Faculty Alex Azima – Can individual faculty members ask for the results of their syllabi?
      1. Mary Ellen Laatch – Wait until January. Can only do course templates.

## New Security – Police Chief Daryl Gaines

* 1. Starting Nov. 15th will be locking most of the doors and making them star card only. Have main buildings front doors open. All others will be star card. Best course of action with campus being this light.
  2. Employees needing star cards can fill out forms. Students will have same access as before. If already had star card before COVID, will still work.
  3. If leave star card at home, can call public safety. There will be signs on locked doors directing to open doors.
  4. There will always be an open door for HHAS, Gannon, TLC, and A&S
  5. Only for Main Campus, not Livingston, West, or East.

## Student Engagement Team – Dean Michael McGinnis

* 1. 4 people. 50 schools in the area that are worked with on a regular basis. Some schools outside greater Lansing area.
  2. Start in Fall with lunchroom or classroom visits. Get to know LCC.
  3. October is applications days. Work with students on applying. Nov, Dec, Jan is scholarships. Feb. March are classroom visits. March, April will be orientation. Get a lot of requests at end of the year from schools for senior nights, etc. Pair up with West campus and do split visits. Regular campus visits twice a week with a presentation on LCC and getting started, and group visits on website.
  4. Depends on the school and what they want. Right now it is mostly virtual and attendance is very low.
  5. Historian Jeff Janowick – What is the pitch and what seems to resonate?
     1. Students services/support and the cost. LCC has a lot of resources including ASC, counselors, advisors. Can get that one on one helps whenever is needed. Cost pitch is good to show will have very low student debt.
  6. Senator Jon Ten Brink - What advice to program that wants to get out and advertise?
     1. Email Michael, promote program on Facebook live or zoom. Your place to talk about your program, your students, and what they are learning. Have audience from 500-1000. Seen interest based on that. Have had police, counseling, University Center, west campus, etc. Want to bring in interest for the programs. Open for anyone, a student club, an office, etc. Also, the videos are always out there so students can reference back. Senator Tracy Nothnagel and Senator Tricia McKay have participated in this.
  7. What is the best way to advertise your team?
     1. [Student Engagement & Admissions Team webpage](https://www.lcc.edu/admissions-financial-aid/student-engagement.html)
     2. [LCC Stars Facebook Page](http://www.facebook.com/lccstars)

## Review Small Group Discussion from 10.22.21 – Senator Jon Ten Brink

* + 1. See Appendix III.
    2. Senator Jon Ten Brink highlighted common concerns and opinions on Marketing.

## Representing the Academic Senate – Senator Jon Ten Brink

* 1. Power of the Senate is not in the meeting, the power of the senate is all the things we are involved in. We have a whole lot of people who are involved in various committees.
  2. We want to hear about the work you are doing around the college. Especially if you are specifically representing the senate. We want to know where we can connect the dots and find intersection.
  3. Asking for short written report we can distribute so we don’t have large reporting meeting.

## Public Comments

* 1. Director of Assessment Karen Hicks – See PPT. Students did cardio before a test. After tests, students asked to take a survey about how it went. Half respondents report increase in test score after cardio assignment. Finding consistently is students report more focus, less anxiety. Fitness and kinesiology faculty are happy to share this assignment. Short and easy. Reach out to them or Karen. Supportive videos as well. Have website with short mini brain breaks, particularly for online learning environment. [Activities for Success - A Fit Body Creates a Fit Mind](https://www.lcc.edu/hhs/activities-for-success/index.html)
  2. Senator Rick Williams - Dear Academic Senate and Friends, I believe Senate President, Dr. Jon Ten Brink, to be one of the best Academic Senate presidents. He has great leadership abilities. However, I have some points of his I wish to rebuttal from his report. He suggested that some public comments were inaccurate. I would encourage anyone who thinks my comments to be so, to bring them to me. I would be more than happy to discuss them with you. You might see facts you have not seen from CNN. But we don’t really go deep with controversial issues here. As a result, we do not have ideological diversity here on campus; this also forces us to react rather than being proactive on issues of equity here. One comment he suggested was that commenters use the executive committee as fact checkers before they comment. As you may know, fact checkers with kitty cats have their own bias and have been wrong. Similarly, our excellent executive committee are subject to the same mistakes as anyone else. For example, the inclusion of gender identity protection they put in the non-discrimination policy for LCC, which threatens the livelihood and education of some, is not based on biological scientific facts, but on emotions. I have shown repeatedly why this is a concern to curriculum, offered solutions, but facts are stubborn things, and it will come up again. In addition, the president said politics should be left out of the discussion. Yet, politics do not seem to leave us alone. All week-long liberal politics tell us what to say, do, or think in education. For example, the critical race theory which is racist, is pushed on students and faculty alike. And even what to put in our arms to keep our jobs or education. So much for “my body my choice.” “No jab no job” they say. This is called coercion. Parents are called terrorist for speaking up against the educrats who allowed boys in girls bathrooms and then covering up rape. This is called intimidation. These are all political ideologies that could affect us here. I think all curriculum is influenced by someone's politics or religion. Can the president really draw a line of distinction where politics or religion have no place on the floor of the academic senate? I do not think so. Finally, He also hinted that public comments might be squelched if misinformation continues to be commonplace, yet who decides what misinformation is? Is it liberal oligarchs? They believe they are the sole arbiters of truth and science, and even go as far to censor any opposing viewpoints, to make it appear that way. Is this where we are headed in the senate? Censorship? I hope not. Thank you for your consideration, Senator Rick Williams.
  3. Senator Veronica Wilkerson Johnson – Cesar Chavez learning center is provided a comfortable atmosphere to have faculty office hours and mobile tutoring.
  4. ACCESS Program Coordinator Danya Thomsen-Orellana - New this week we are hosting learning commons professional tutors, TWTH afternoons. Same services, new location. Invitation to have office hours, meet with colleagues, at Cesar Chavez Center. Also have smaller private cubicles. Open TWTH 9-5.
  5. [ACCESS Scholars Program](https://www.lcc.edu/services/access-program/index.html)

[Cesar Chavez Learning Center](https://www.lcc.edu/diversity/cesar-chavez.html) [Office of Diversity & Inclusion](https://www.lcc.edu/diversity/)

* 1. CTE Office Coordinator Annescia Dillard – Today is deadline [for PA Days proposals](https://forms.gle/ypkGjcsK4YeSWjBC6), thank you to all that have submitted.
  2. Senator Jon Ten Brink – Clarification, at no point did I say executive committee will fact check or stop public comment. We will help connect dots or perhaps make agenda items.

## Potential Future Agenda Items

* 1. None.

***Purpose****: The purpose of the Academic Senate will be to provide faculty input and advice to the administration concerning issues of College-wide educational philosophy, College-wide academic policy, and priorities in the College-wide deployment of capital or financial resources, except as covered by the scope of collective bargaining. The Senate will be proactive and collaborative in its approach, seeking consensus whenever possible, and will foster and support effective and transparent communication with the college community. Student learning is the ultimate goal of this body.*

Respectfully submitted by Academic Senate Secretary, Eliza Lee.

Appendix I

# TAC draft statement on plagiarism software

The TAC committee discussed the acquisition and use of plagiarism detection software (most notably Turnitin) either incorporated into or outside of D2L. The Committee’s discussion was primarily concerned with Turnitin, which matches texts and determines plagiarism by searching it against other texts in its database, although it is applicable to other similar forms of plagiarism detection software.

## Recommendation

The recommendation from the TAC Committee is that the College does not adopt such software for wholesale use and that faculty do not require that students use it. The committee had several concerns with adoption or required use of the software, including:

1. **Ownership of student intellectual property.** Turnitin incorporates student writing into its database by default (students must opt out rather than opt in). Therefore, if used by instructors for required assignments, students are led, with a degree of coercion, into contributing to Turnitin’s database with no compensation.
2. **Potential for false positives.** False positives are a concern. Students are just learning citation, and errors in citation could get them flagged for plagiarism. Additionally, there are only so many ways to explain some topics. Students could potentially be flagged for legitimately drawing conclusions that have been drawn before.
3. **Equity issues.** Some of our students are from cultures where quoting passages or ideas without explicit citation is acceptable or even positively regarded.
4. **It contributes to a culture of mistrust between faculty and students.** It sends the message to students that they are all suspected of dishonesty until proven innocent. Students will feel as if they are being policed.This feeling would likely persist despite efforts by faculty to mitigate it.
5. **Instructors already have existing tools to look for plagiarism.** Google searches and instructor experience in what to look for can accomplish plagiarism checking now, and many instructors are already using these tools. Spending additional funds for acquisition and implementation of software to do this may not be a good use of the College’s resources.

## Pedagogical approaches to plagiarism

The committee takes academic honesty seriously and discussed at length pedagogical approaches to the problem of plagiarism. Points discussed and Committee recommendations include:

1. In many cases students may plagiarize not out of a desire to cheat, but because they are overwhelmed. We should be addressing plagiarism and other academic dishonesty by investing in students’ mental health, writing skills, and study skills. Insulting them, suspecting them of cheating, and setting up an adversarial relationship may ultimately do more harm than any benefits provided by the software.
2. **Adjustment of assignments to minimize potential of plagiarism should be encouraged.** Some assignments may be constructed in a way that encourages students to copy and paste. Improvements to assignments to avoid this situation include requiring students to write papers in module form or in multiple drafts, and small, formative assessments that students can do on their own. Faculty should be encouraged to develop writing assignments that promote description of critical thinking connections and minimize incentive to plagiarize, and the College should support faculty and help them with professional development in the areas of assignments and instruction of writing if warranted and desired.
3. **Addressing plagiarism through pedagogy and teaching should be encouraged.** Professional development for faculty on handling plagiarism when it does occur could be used in lieu of detection software. Instructors giving writing assignments should be having good conversations with students about what writing requires, writing in various disciplines, and what writing looks like in “the real world”.
4. **Remembering that plagiarism software will not stop students from Googling and YouTubing as their primary sources of information.**

The Committee recommends the Senate and College encourage and support faculty professional development and efforts for the above pedagogical approaches to plagiarism.

## What other colleges are doing

Colleges are taking different approaches with this. Some colleges are using plagiarism software; some have banned its use. The University of Louisville is an example of an institution with a [policy against the use of such software](https://louisville.edu/english/composition/policy-against-the-use-of-plagiarism-detection-software.html).

## Voluntary use of plagiarism software by individual students may have a place

The Committee recognized that some students might benefit from using plagiarism software as a tool (some students might feel it helps their writing and citation skills, and gives them peace of mind). Also, some instructors might want to make students aware of the availability of the tool. Students do have the option of using such software if they wish. If this is the case, the Committee recommends the following:

1. It be **completely voluntary** for the student, with no credit or incentives offered to the student for use or no penalties for students choosing not to use. Faculty should only mention it as an optional tool students could use to check their work before submitting it.
2. Faculty should make students aware of the intellectual property concern.
3. Faculty should make students aware of other resources including the Writing Center and the Library which could offer them similar help.

## If it is used despite recommendation

The committee recognizes that some instructors or programs may choose to use plagiarism software despite this recommendation. If that is the case, the Committee strongly recommends the following:

1. Instructors make students aware that their data and work may be collected, used, and added to a database.
2. **The software is not used as a punitive surveillance tool.** Ultimately, itis up to instructor how to use the info given by the software. We need to avoid its use as a “gotcha” tool or punitive surveillance.
3. Faculty should have pedagogical training on how to use plagiarism software as well as training to help avoid plagiarism and help students learn the tools and skills they need to avoid it as well.

Appendix II

Concourse Readability Report

There is a new report in Concourse that provides estimated reading levels and total word counts for the syllabi. The report includes the Gunning-Fog readability index which estimates the grade-level equivalency of reading materials. The index looks at sentence length and at the number of words with three or more syllables, which are flagged as complex words. The rationale is that higher numbers of complex words combined with longer sentences increases the difficulty-level of the reading material.

A report was generated of the reading levels for our course templates. The report did not include the section syllabi, only the templates that are used to generate your section syllabi. The report showed that the majority of our syllabi had a reading level of grade 14 (College Sophomore) or 15 (College Junior).

The Provost and Academic Affairs staff discussed the report, what the reading level should be for the average course, and how we can begin to work on getting our syllabi at a reading level that is more appropriate for our students.

For the majority of our syllabi, the reading level should not be higher than grade 13. Knowing that many of our students do not place at that level when starting out at LCC, targeting below that level is helpful. Our goal should be for all students to be able to read and comprehend the content in the syllabi.

As a first step, the Academic Affairs team worked to revise the wording on the institutional policies in the syllabi. We kept the intent of the policies but revised them in a way that reduced the reading level for the institutional template, which then impacted the scores on the course templates.

Below is a table summarizing the levels before and after those changes to the institutional policies.

| Reading Grade Levels | Number of Course Templates before Changes | Number of Course Templates after Changes |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 10 – HS Sophomore | 2 | 10 |
| 11 – HS Junior | 7 | 58 |
| 12 – HS Senior | 24 | 494 |
| 13 – Entering College Level | 201 | 536 |
| 14 – College Sophomore | 639 | 218 |
| 15 – College Junior | 398 | 44 |
| 16 – College Senior | 90 | 20 |
| 17 – Graduate School | 23 | 1 |
| 18 – Graduate School | 8 | 1 |
| 19 - Doctorate | 2 | 0 |

Note: the total numbers do not match because a dozen courses were cancelled between the dates of the first and second report.

# Readability

## Definition

The ease with which a reader can understand written text.

## Readability Formulas

A formula that estimates the grade-level equivalency of written texts. Formulas use combinations of sentence length, total number of words, and word length to calculate an approximate level of reading difficulty using our grade levels (0-20 or Kindergarten through completion of a doctoral degree).

## Gunning-Fox Index

The Gunning-Fog index is a readability formula that uses a combination of sentence length and complex words, defined as words of three or more syllables, to estimate the readability level of the text. Here are the steps in the formula in case you’re interested:

1. Select a passage (such as one or more full paragraphs) of around 100 words. Do not omit any sentences;
2. Determine the average sentence length by dividing the number of words by the number of sentences.
3. Count the words consisting with three or more syllables. Do not include names, familiar slang, or compound words. Do not include common suffixes (such as -es, -ed, or -ing) as a syllable.
4. Add the average sentence length and the percentage of complex words; and
5. Multiply the result by 0.4.

## Online Readability Calculator

Here is an online calculator that allows you to cut and paste in a section of text to generate a Gunning-Fog readability level: [Gunning-Fog Calculator](https://www.webfx.com/tools/read-able/gunning-fog.html).

{\displaystyle 0.4\left[\left({\frac {\mbox{words}}{\mbox{sentences}}}\right)+100\left({\frac {\mbox{complex words}}{\mbox{words}}}\right)\right]}