

Faculty Senate Academic Policy Committee (APC) Minutes
September 11, 2012 - 3:00 pm in 206 Mann Hall

Senators Present: Co-chair Warren Jasper, Co-chair Dimitris Argyropoulos
Jeannette Moore, Roy Borden, Jane Lubischer, Ann Penrose, Beverly Tyler
Unable to attend: Richard Spontak, Harald Ade

1. Approval of the minutes from the August 21st, 2012 meeting

Minutes of the August 21st meeting were distributed to the committee electronically by Senator Jasper. Corrections/suggestions were noted and minutes were approved.

2. Advising of student athletes IOC1208e,f (Date entered: 120828)

The issue: Recent athletic scandals have brought into focus the opportunities for improper actions in programs designed to support and assist student athletes. What kind of support do student athletes get? All Sports? All reporting to the academic side of the university (ie. Provost)? In addition, the issue of incomplete grades and if they were being properly given to student athletes in accordance to University Policy was raised.

Action Item: Carrie Leger (Academic Support Program For Student Athletes Director/Associate Athletics Director for Academics) attended the meeting to discuss these issues. Her group consists of 8 full time staff who track the progress of 560 student athletes. Ms. Leger reports directly to Dr. Picart (Vice Provost Academic Programs & Services) who reports to Dr. Mullen (Vice Chancellor and Dean, Division of Academic and Student Affairs). Funding for Carrie's group, however, comes from the Athletic Department. In addition, the ASPSA is the primary advisor for student athletes in FYC, which ranges between 45-60 students. These advisors go through the same training as the other advisors for FYC. Once a student matriculates into a major, his/her advisor is a faculty member or professional advisor in the major.

Changes to each student athlete's Automatic Degree Audit (ADA), which includes course changes, grade changes, and program changes, are tracked daily. Of the 560 student athletes, 10 received incompletes (IN) in the Spring/Summer sessions. About half were for courses, and about half were for internship/co-ops that were done over the summer. Ms. Leger will email the committee exact numbers over the past 5 years for incompletes, the final grade as a result of an incomplete, and comparison with the entire NCSU student population. If on average a student athlete took 3 classes, the number of incompletes constitutes less than 0.3% (5 out of 560×3).

The Academic Support Program for Student Athletes (ASPSA) tracks student progress. Data tracked might include excessive absences from class, low test scores, or incomplete homework, the same data that is entered for all students on the SIS system. However, Ms. Leger mentioned to us that except for FYC athletes, she did not have access to reports sent via SIS that go to each student's academic advisor. For

that reason, they have a parallel/duplicate system to track this information. This system has undergone changes in the past few years, primarily due to poor faculty input. Some on the committee noted that faculty input was not solicited on this issue, which may have contributed to the poor response by faculty to yet another duplicate task. It was suggested that reports sent via SIS to advisors also be sent to Carrie Leger's group to avoid duplication and to improve faculty efficiency.

Status: The APC is satisfied that proper oversight is in place, and considers this Issue of Concern to be closed, pending the requested information on incompletes noted above.

3. Low submission rates by students for CLASSEVAL IOC1204a (Date entered: 120425).

The issue: The statistics from CLASSEVAL are taking on more and more weight in evaluation of teaching, promotion, and teaching awards in some departments. If a small percentage of students fill them out, are the data statistically relevant? Can one evaluate the course, the instructor, or the program with a low turnout? Should the data be compared by level (all 100 level courses) vs. department averages or college averages?

Action Item: Senator Tyler reported that she had contacted Karen Helm as requested and was sent a copy of the Evaluation of Teaching Committee's (EOT) Working Group Recommendations (April 16, 2010) for the ClassEval Instrument as well as a summary of the online evaluations from Spring 2007 (when NCSU first began online student evaluations) to Spring 2012. These copies of were shared with the committee. Senator Tyler brought to the committee's attention that the average percentage of students completing all closed-ended questions had dropped from 50.4% in spring 2007 to 38.8% in Spring 2012. She also noted that there is a distinctly lower average response rate for undergraduate compared to graduate students. The low response rates suggest the evaluations may not be statistically relevant and have become less relevant over time. She also said given the cost of paper student evaluations and the administrations choice to use an online system, she was even more concerned about the meaningfulness of the departmental and college comparisons given along with individual faculties evaluation scores because these averages combined large and small classes, required and elective, as well as 100- to 400-level courses. She said that in conversations with Senator Moore (EOT Liaison last year), she understood that the changes proposed by the EOT had not taken place until spring 2012 so there was no way at this time to tell if the changes made in the instrument would have an effect on student participation.

Other faculty noted other trends in the data, such as the fact that females were more likely to complete the survey than males and undergraduate students with good grades were more likely to complete it than those with poor grades, although no empirical analysis of differences could be done. Senator Moore brought the committee up to

date on what the EOT was now working on. Senator Tyler asked her to please encourage the EOT to consider requesting other forms of comparative data that could be provided to faculty that were being evaluated for tenure, promotion or teaching awards. The committee agreed that administrators should be discouraged from making the student evaluation data the primary focus of teaching effectiveness, given the empirical lack of rigor in the calculations and comparisons. Several members noted other metrics that should be considered when assessing teaching effectiveness, such as outcomes based assessment.

Status: This Issue of Concern continues to be one that will be discussed by the APC as more information is received from the Evaluation of Teaching Committee.

4. Issue of Concern: Ref Trip to Australia.

The Issue: Prof. Morgan Morrow of Animal Science was informed by the Study Abroad Office that his faculty led course would not be continued.

The study abroad office states on their website that approved courses need enrollment of at least 10 NCSU students the first year and 15 NCSU students in subsequent years. Dr. Morrow had declining enrollment as follows:

2009 - 18 (13 NCSU, 5 non-NCSU)

2010 - 10 (10 NCSU, 0 non-NCSU)

2011: 11 (10 NCSU, 1 non-NCSU)

2012: 11 (6 NCSU, 5 non-NCSU)

These data were supplied by Kim Priebe, Associate Director of the NC State Study Abroad Office. The numbers for the study abroad course did not meet the minimum threshold for many years prior to the course being discontinued as an NCSU Study Abroad course.

Status: The APC is satisfied that proper regulations are in place and were followed by the Study Abroad Office. The APC considers this Issue of Concern to be closed.

5. Updates from APC members on University Standing Committees

Jeannette Moore, Richard Spontak: **EOT (Evaluation of Teaching)**

No Report. EOT has not met yet this semester

Roy Borden: **UCCC (University Courses and Curricula)**

No Report. UCCC has not met yet this semester.

6. Adjourn 4:30 pm

Future Fall Semester APC Meetings (3:00 to 5:00 pm in 206 Mann Hall):

Sept 25

Oct 9

Oct 23

Nov 6

Nov 20

Dec 4