

Faculty Senate Academic Policy Committee (APC) Minutes

February 11, 2014 - convened at 3:06 pm in 125 Polk Hall

Senators Present: Jeannette Moore, Co-chair; Montse Fuentes, Co-chair; Jim Knopp, Patricia Morgado, Nancy Penrose, Beverly Tyler.

Unable to attend: Harald Ade, Roy Borden, Rich Spontak.

Guests: None.

1. Minutes from the last meeting

The January 14 minutes were approved via email and were posted at:

http://ncsu.edu/faculty_senate/faculty-senate-committees/faculty-senate-committee-academic-policy.php

2. First Year Writing Exemption Policy

Warren Jasper had raised an Issue of Concern about the First Year Writing policy for AP credit (indicating folks in his college think the requirements are too strict for students to get ENG 101 credit).

Nancy Penrose directed the ENG 101 program for 6 years and initiated the placement criteria that Warren's concern is about. Nancy explained what the criteria were based on, the rationale behind them, and the exhaustive campus approval process English went through when the criteria were introduced.

Nancy commented that ENG 101 is not a remedial course. It is college-level academic discourse, and ENG 101 is now the only required writing course Warren's anecdotal evidence is not correct; Duke does not exempt students. Those who aren't prepared to enroll in ENG 101 sign up for ENG 100. Even the best students coming out of high school need ENG 101, as it is designed to introduce them to the range of roles that writing plays in academic disciplines at the college level and to lay the foundation for further writing development in their majors.

English placement at N.C. State University has been thoroughly researched and vetted. The committee looked at peer institutions, evaluated the available exemption measures, and presented to the Associate Deans.. The exemption measures that are used carefully match the ENG 101 course goals. The Advanced Placement assessment criteria were evaluated against the ENG 101 learning outcomes.

There is a public website that shows a sample ENG 101 syllabus. You can also see program policies on the web: http://english.chass.ncsu.edu/undergraduate/first_year_writing/

Discussion ensued on incorporating writing at higher levels in departmental courses. Nancy said the Campus Writing and Speaking Program (<http://www.ncsu.edu/cwsp/>) helps faculty who would like to incorporate writing into courses.

Status of this Issue of Concern: Closed.

Action: Senators Fuentes and Moore will forward this information to Warren Jasper after the minutes are approved.

3. Dropping Courses Not Taught in Five Years

Michael Pendlebury had raised an Issue of Concern about the requirement to drop courses that have not been taught recently. The question is if courses could go into hibernation if a department thinks they will be offered again in the not too distant future. This would mean the courses would not show in the catalog, but would not be officially dropped.

The APC discussed the pros and cons of dropping courses that have not been taught in 5 years. The consensus was that a course not taught for 5 years should be re-evaluated rather than having automatic re-activation of the old course. However, the APC agreed that it is a problem for a course to be visible to students in the catalog when the course is not being taught. The APC agreed that it would be desirable to allow a course to hibernate for up to 5 years, and at that point it would be dropped unless the department requested and was granted an extension. A hibernating course would still exist and could be re-activated, but it would not be visible to students.

Status of the Issue of Concern: Closed.

Action: Senators Fuentes and Moore will share the hibernation recommendation with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and (if supported) will forward the recommendation to Registration and Records with a cc to Michael Pendlebury.

4. This Semester's Schedule

Hans Kellner had raised an Issue of Concern about this semester's schedule. Why did it start so early? Why do the last two weeks of the semester not have Thursday and Friday classes? Why are the Reading Days at the beginning instead of the middle of final exams? Is this semester's strange schedule related to the implementation of a "Maymester" here at NCSU?

The APC agreed that this semester's unusual schedule is very inconvenient. The Academic Policy Committee was discussing the hardship the weather is causing because the current calendar only has 13 Thursdays and 13 Fridays. Patricia Morgado looked up the number of class days for Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 during the APC meeting, then sent more information immediately following the meeting:

		M	T	W	TH	F
Fall	2012	14	15	14	14	14
Spring	2013	14	15	15	14	14
Fall	2013	14	15	14	13	13
Spring	2014	14	15	15	13	13
Fall	2014	14	15	14	13	13
Spring	2015	13	14	14	14	14

Even without the weather issues, this creates a problem. Two examples that came up at the APC meeting were classes that only meet on Fridays (Animal Science has one, as does Statistics) and classes that have labs or problem sessions on two consecutive days with unequal numbers of each weekday (such as Jim Knopp's Biochemistry class); to be fair to all students, the number of labs or

problem sessions needs to be the same for the Wednesday students as it is for the Thursday students. There are also labs that only meet on Thursdays, and this semester's crazy schedule is making professors with Thursday labs give the lab practical in early April (because the last two weeks of the semester do not have a Thursday or Friday).

The Academic Policy Committee discussed and recommends that we stop having days off for Good Friday and the Thursday before it; that would help at least in Spring semesters. There was also a recommendation to have one reading day in the middle of exams instead of two reading days taking up the last two days of what should be class time.

Status of the Issue of Concern: Ongoing.

Action: Senators Fuentes and Moore will share this recommendation with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

5. University committees APC senators are on:

Harald Ade - (senator absent)

Roy Borden - University Courses and Curricula (UCCC) (senator absent)

Montse Fuentes - Budget - No report

Jim Knopp - Council on Undergraduate Education (CUE) - CUE is considering the proposal to combine Global Knowledge with U.S. Diversity to make the requirement be for one or the other. Still in discussion. A recommendation was made to separate Foreign Language and PE (now HES) from General Education; that way Associate Degree students would be under the same rules as Freshman admits.

Jim Knopp: University Common Reading Committee - The book has been selected and an announcement will be made soon. It is hoped there will be better integration of the common reading with First Year courses. The book selection starts 15 months in advance.

Jeannette Moore - Evaluation of Teaching - The only change in the instrument for this year is the structure (Instructor comment section to follow the Instructor questions) and the re-wording of one question (to change "course readings" to "course materials").

Patricia Morgado - the Council on the Status of Women - No report

Nancy Penrose - Admissions - The committee meets tomorrow.

Rich Spontak - Commencement; Evaluation of Teaching (senator absent)

Beverly Tyler - was on sabbatical Fall 2013

6. The meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

Future meeting: The APC is still waiting to see if there will be a committee formed at the university level to evaluate a multidisciplinary or General Studies undergraduate degree at N.C. State.