

NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY
Office of the Faculty Senate
Academic Policy Committee

January 19, 2021 Minutes

Attendance: Lisa Bass-Freeman (co-chair), Paul Williams (co-chair), Russell Flinchum, Robert Riehn, Intae Yoon, Ken Zagacki, Jonathan Duggins.

Excused: Fikret Isik, Michael Reisdkind

The Academic Policy Committee (APC) of the Faculty Senate discussed the following:

- I. The first issue we discussed at the January 19, 2021 meeting of the Academic Policy Committee was an issue of concern raised by Dr. Herle McGowan. The issue pertained to the problem of academic integrity and the availability of course-help websites such as Chegg. Dr. Duggins, a member of APC was able to explain to us the essence of the concern. Faculty who teach large section classes, which may have hundreds of students, have an excessive burden if they attempt to enforce standards of academic integrity. Because students are able to violate academic integrity standards by improperly sharing information on sites like Chegg, instances of academic misconduct in large classes may involve many students. Currently the procedures for adjudicating violations of academic integrity require that each case be handled student-by-student. If, for example, there are 30 students involved in academic misconduct via a course-help website, the faculty member who chooses to pursue academic misconduct proceedings against those students must commit to 30 such cases. Since the faculty member must be present at each hearing the faculty member must commit 2 – 4 hours of time to each case. This burden on the faculty is too onerous. NC State's process for dealing with academic misconduct is for an age when cheating was more difficult and less socially acceptable. Technology has changed both of those conditions so it is time to review the process of dealing with academic misconduct. Testing on line is more difficult because it is not as easy to proctor. The committee will invite to a future meeting a faculty member who has extensive experience with the problem and an appropriate representative from student affairs to discuss the issue and possible solutions, e.g. adjudicating groups of students ("class-action" lawsuits). APC will then report some recommendations for dealing with academic misconduct.

After discussion of Dr. McGowan's IOC the committee received an update on the status of the faculty Covid survey from Senator Bass. We received over 600 responses and analysis of the results will begin soon.

The last point of our discussions was consideration of Professor Kuznetsov's IOC pertaining to department heads assigning work to nine-month contract faculty during the summer. The issue is what is reasonable for a department head to ask? The committee discussed whether we should survey department heads to find out what is

the consensus on appropriate requests. However, we noted that faculty also have expectations, which would suggest faculty would need surveyed as well in order to be objective. As a member of APC who has experience as a department head, there are unavoidable situations, e.g. grievance hearings, recruiting committees, etc. If we attempted to adopt standards or rules on what boundaries exist, the flexibility department heads need to perform their duties would be unduly restricted. The APC decided that the best course to deal with the IOC is to draft a memorandum informing the department heads that this is an issue. With Katharine Stewart as a conduit, we could communicate the memo to the department heads at one of their regular meetings. We may also ask to attend one of their meetings to convey the concern to them.

- I. Old Business
None
- II. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 4:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Williams
Co-chair Academic Policy Committee