

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

MINUTES

May 16, 2007

12:30-2 p.m., Kerr Hall RM 307

Present: Heather Bullock, Joel Ferguson, Russ Flegal, David Helmbold, Pamela Hunt-Carter (Registrar, ex officio), Anatole Leikin, Flori Lima (SUA Rep), Roxanne Monnet (ASO staff), Loisa Nygaard, Jaye Padgett (Chair), George Zhang (SUA Rep).

Absent: Sarah-Hope Parmeter (NSTF rep).

Guests: Margie Claxton, Bill Ladusaw (VPDUE), Michael McCawley (Associate Director, Admissions), Stacey Sketo-Rosener

I. Announcements.

It was announced that the Committee on Rules, Jurisdiction, and Elections found CEP's proposed legislative change to the University Extension-related portion of their charge (SCB13.17.6) to be clear and not in conflict with other Senate Bylaws or Regulations. The proposal is set to go forward for the May 30 meeting. The reports to the Senate on progress toward resolution of issues associated with the writing-intensive (W) requirement and regarding the Health Center's planned changes with regard to provision of medical notes have been submitted for the May 30 Senate Meeting. Chair Padgett will attend the Senate Meeting to answer questions related to these three topics. The Committee decided that there need not be an oral report on the W at that meeting.

CEP's letter to departments regarding the W requirement will go out today.

VPDUE Bill Ladusaw reported on a plan to hold class space open for incoming first-year students to accommodate the unexpectedly large incoming class. A number of courses have been identified as possible places to reserve space. VPDUE Ladusaw will be contacting course sponsoring units to get their agreement to hold open space in these classes. AIS options are being considered such as turning off enrollment to continuing students for a couple of weeks during certain gated periods of time in the summer, well after priority enrollment. He will also visit the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid to explain this plan. CEP supports the approach as described.

CEP would like to propose a change to the Senate Minutes from the winter meeting to note that the W resolution passed by voice vote without opposition.

II. Minutes. Minutes from April 25 were accepted as amended.

III. Academic Integrity.

This topic was carried forward due to work in progress on the topic.

IV. GSI next steps.

CEP discussed the feedback that it received to the proposal put out last fall to modify procedures and policies associated with Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) appointments.

The primary push back to the proposal was with regard to the request for annual reporting, especially the need to summarize evaluations. It was noted that some of the information requested can be obtained via data maintained in other campus offices, such as a report of all who were appointed to the relevant teaching titles. VPDUE Ladusaw brought sample reports that could be drawn from the data being collected centrally in order for UCSC to report annually to the UC Office of the President regarding faculty instructional activity and to accommodate public record requests. The Committee supports the idea of collecting as much information as possible from centralized sources rather than from departments.

With regarding to teaching evaluations, if/when UCSC moves to electronic evaluations, CEP should be able to extract the needed information about relevant courses in order to determine the impact that may be caused by the teaching of a significant number of courses by other than Senate Faculty, per CEP's charge SCB 13.17.5. CEP wonders whether the external review is a place to have some level of reporting or whether that is too infrequent. Although CEP must reserve the right to ask for evaluations upon request, the Committee will consider other options to getting the information that they would like without asking departments to do this extra work on a routine basis. It may be that they will wait until electronic evaluations become available.

The Humanities Division asked whether there will be changes to the exemption they had from involving CEP in GSI appointments for core courses, first-year writing courses, and language courses—all of which are lower division courses. CEP does not think that past CEPs intended the exemption to include situations where the qualification criteria were not met. With that in mind, the Committee does not see that anything is changing per this proposal other than the need for annual reporting (which CEP is now looking to take from data available centrally). Instead, CEP sees the proposal as bringing the rest of the campus to the same place as where Humanities has been by not requiring that lower-division courses that either carry a GE or are required for majors come to CEP—as long as the qualifications criteria described in the proposal are met. With the approval of this proposal, there will be no blanket exemptions to the GSI policies.

CEP's primary goal with the proposal is to let go of what are more cut and dry requests, and allow department/divisions to make the appointment decisions. Systemwide Regulations require CEP's involvement for upper-division coursework. CEP will continue its discussion of how to minimize the work for those cases as much as possible.

The Committees see this discussion as an opportunity to invite departments to articulate how they mentor graduate student instructors or how they deal with associated problems. CEP wants minimal involvement for cases that meet the qualifications.

Both the Humanities Division and the Graduate Council responded in ways that show lack of clarity on CEP's role in the appointment of GSIs. Chair Padgett will draft a letter to respond to their questions, explaining CEP's charge.

The Committee was reminded by VPDUE Ladusaw that the University must be able to track GSI decisions and report to systemwide for requests that may be associated with AHR, labor contracts, etc. However, the required data should be available through central sources.

Chair Padgett will circulate a revised proposal to the Committee via email, particularly considering changes that may be implemented in the near term.

V. Consult with Divisional Deans

Deans from the Divisions of Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Physical and Biological Sciences, and the School of Engineering visited CEP to discuss GE reform, and progress on the W course shortfall.

The deans were provided with an update on progress regarding review of the W requirement, including the idea of broadening its definition to include other forms of disciplinary communication. Although the main focus would continue to be on writing, it could include other things such as posters, debate, oral communication, etc. The hope is to get departments to nurture what is already happening in their departments and to take intellectual responsibility for their majors. CEP's idea for a pilot program was discussed with the deans, preferably including one department per division that is not currently meeting the needs of its majors for the W. Via letter, departments will be asked by CEP what they think their majors should learn in disciplinary communication, what they are doing currently toward that goal, how that is working, and what is needed to meet their goals in this area. The deans will be copied on the letter. In asking what are the department's objectives for their students on this topic, it is hoped that each department will write a brief abstract of what is happening already and what they could do better, assuming they had the necessary resources. It was reiterated that although departments should be responsible to define and assess what is best for their majors, they need not be the ones to teach the courses.

It was discussed whether or not the W should be allowed on the senior theses/projects, acknowledging that this exists in a number of departments already. It is thought that at a minimum, UCSC should hold to the value of students acquiring a certain level of writing skill before they leave UCSC.

When asked how each division will react to increased numbers of students versus faculty, each dean responded that unless certain needs were met (such as space or more faculty), they would need to consider actions such as becoming more selective, having impacted status, or capping certain degree programs. The comment was made that students may need to be redirected from the majors that they want.

One dean expressed that UCSC needs to stop comparing itself to its former, smaller self since that is a thing of the past. Baselineing to the past (size) prevents coming to terms with the present.

UCSC CAN teach the students that it has but not at the ratios of the past. It is hoped that the Senate will re-enforce quality of teaching rather than the numbers in the classroom. A CEP member pointed out, however, that class size does in fact affect quality of teaching and learning.

The obstacles associated with lack of large lecture space were noted.

All agreed that the current teaching assistant situation is very serious. Even when the funds are available for these positions, there is a lack of graduate students to fill them.

Data provided by the Office of Institutional Research related to the number of class offerings at the undergraduate versus graduate levels was discussed. The data shows that the number of undergraduate course offerings has not increased in proportion to university enrollment, while the number of graduate course offerings has increased at a greater pace than would be expected given enrollment.

The misconceptions created by looking at budgeted faculty FTE rather than filled faculty FTE were discussed. All think the reality is that student to faculty ratios are up, despite what the budgeted faculty FTE figures may indicated. The anecdotal decrease in writing assignments in the upper-division curriculum was mentioned as one way faculty survive the increased workload.

In closing the deans were informed of CEP's plan to team up with the Committee on Planning and Budget and possibly with the Graduate Council (as relates to support for graduate students in ways that could make the W more successful) to work toward the resource argument for the W requirements as discussed in CEP's winter 2007 report to the Senate on the W requirement and associated Senate Resolution.

Both the deans and CEP expressed their appreciation for this quarter's collaborations and the desire to continue this into the coming academic year.

So attests,

Jaye Padgett, Chair
Committee of Educational Policy