

# COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY MINUTES

November 28, 2007

Wednesday, 11:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m., Kerr Hall, Room 307

Present: Jamal Atiba (SUA Rep), Joel Ferguson (Provost Rep), Russ Flegal, David Helmbold, Pamela Hunt-Carter (Registrar, ex officio), Roxanne Monnet (ASO Staff), Loisa Nygaard, Jaye Padgett (Chair), Sarah-Hope Parmeter (NSTF), Kip Tellez, Jack Vevea.

Guests: Margie Claxton (Associate Registrar), Elaine Kihara (Academic Preceptor Designee), Bill Ladusaw (VPDUE), Michael McCawley (Acting Director, Admissions). Divisional deans: Steve Isaacson (Acting Dean, Engineering), Sheldon Kamieniecki (Dean, Social Sciences), Margaret Morse (Acting Dean, Arts), Steve Thorsett (Dean, Physical and Biological Sciences), Georges Van Den Abbeele (Dean, Humanities).

## **I. Announcements and updates.**

VPDUE Bill Ladusaw gave CEP an update on the status of available seats for frosh for winter 2008. The situation is so serious that he is asking CEP to authorize that the Registrar hold seats in targeted lower-division courses for frosh only. Seniors have already had an opportunity to enroll for GE needs during their open enrollment window. Although this would be in consultation with departments, it would not be the department's decision. The majority of CEP supports authorizing the Registrar to hold seats in targeted lower-division courses for frosh only.

Chair Padgett gave a report of the GE subcommittee which recently met. CEP gave feedback to a draft letter planned to go to departments. CEP wants department feedback through individual meetings with departments in winter quarter. It is planned that these would be followed by divisional meetings with chairs and undergraduate (faculty) directors. The duration of the presentation was discussed. Although an hour may be needed, CEP will do what it can to work with less time if they are not provided with an hour of faculty meeting time. By Monday, the GE subcommittee will provide a synthesis of the educational objectives members provided a few weeks ago and a draft presentation for the department visits. The draft letter will be re-circulated by email later this week.

**II. Minutes.** The October 31, 2007, minutes were accepted as amended.

## **III. External Review Response to review Documents.**

**Anthropology:** The Committee was provided with a draft letter of response reflecting last week's discussion. Changes were offered and discussed. The letter was approved for sending.

**Environmental Toxicology:** The Committee discussed the external review report and responses for Environmental Toxicology. This is a graduate program only department. Nonetheless, the department provides many undergraduate courses with connections to several other departments. The faculty are proactive in supervising undergraduate research project in their labs. Russ Flegal recused himself from further discussion. CEP will provide a positive response to Environmental Toxicology's role in

undergraduate education. The Committee will receive a draft response via email for response by next Tuesday.

**Ecology and Environmental Biology:** This is the first review of this department as separate and distinct from the formerly combined Biology Department. The external review committee (ERC) and dean said that the department had no strategic plan, with regard to both research and undergraduate majors. The ERC said no data was provided so there was no measure of success or sense of how things are going for the majors. The department says it has the highest teaching workload and faculty to student workloads (of any Biology department?) in the UC system. Concern for the high attrition rate of students was expressed by the ERC. The ERC recognized a problem in advising given workload. However, there is a stark contrast between the large over-subscribed lower-division courses and the department's decision to maintain small upper-division classes at the same time. CEP agrees that they need to come up with a strategic plan at least for advising. A draft letter will be circulated by email. CEP will add a question for the closure discussion about the proportion of courses taught by lecturers since the ERC did not have the data needed to respond to that part of their charge.

The question was raised of how our 5 credit courses compare in workload to the 4 credit courses of the other UCs that are also on the quarter system. UCSC's is called an accelerated quarter system, in which a semester is compressed into a 5 credit course. The 5 credit courses give UCSC an advantage in maintaining a 1.0 "conversation factor" between student headcount and FTE.

#### **IV. Honors letter for departments.**

CEP reviewed and discussed a second draft of the letter to departments regarding honors at UCSC. The Committee approved it for sending.

#### **V. Consultation with Divisional Deans.**

CEP welcomed the divisional deans and indicated their desire to discuss GE reform in general and progress regarding the writing-intensive (W) requirement. Chair Padgett gave the deans a summary of the ideas coming out of their departments as a result of meetings he had with some departments. Although a pressing problem with the W requirement is available seats, CEP thinks that it is important to look at the requirement from an educational standpoint than to solely deal with the capacity issues. Chair Padgett visited at least one department per division, generally a sizeable one that has not been providing for the W needs of their majors. These departments were asked to articulate objectives, assess how they are meeting them, and provide a picture of what they would need budgetarily, within reason, to meet their objectives. Preliminary proposals have been provided by Computer Science, MDC Biology, Philosophy, Psychology, and Politics. Chair Padgett also met with the Art Department and is awaiting their preliminary proposal. The deans will see the proposals, if they have not already, after departments respond to preliminary feedback from CEP. CEP will work with the Committee on Planning and Budget next quarter to develop a campus proposal for the funding of the W requirement shortfall in seats, as discussed when the Senate Resolution to fund the W was passed by the Senate last year. It was noted that Philosophy would like to move their W from senior capstone level to midway through the degree. Dean Kamieniecki described the Social Science program which he calls specialized TA assignments. He indicated that this could be reserve used for writing-intensive courses on an experimental basis in a future year.

CEP asked the deans for advice about the GE reform process. They were asked if they agree with the idea of meeting with department faculty followed by divisional meetings with the dean, department chairs, and undergraduate directors. Although the plan sounds good to the deans, CEP was asked to keep resource limitations in mind with regard to GE proposals. In particular, managing to have sufficient teaching assistantships for GE needs while maintaining the needs of major programs is very challenging. CEP was asked to describe what is wrong with the current GE system. In a brief response, CEP indicated that 20 years of drift has led to the point where the educational objectives are unclear even to CEP at this point.

The Committee invited the deans to respond at any time in or out of this meeting to the following questions: What outcomes for GE reform might they wish for? How is GE reform relevant to their particular divisions?

CEP expressed its concern about the number of impacted and large classes at UCSC. The deans were asked if they agree that UCSC should have “trigger points” (points beyond which UCSC will not go for educational reasons)? If they agree, how do they think UCSC should determine these and what would it be that gets “triggered”? Dean Thorsett expressed the importance of first asking programs what they are trying to accomplish in order to understand their priorities with regard to expenditure of instructional resources. The Physical and Biological Sciences Division has a goal that all students will have a path to which they could do research. All of their programs have such opportunities now, whether or not students opt for or are selected for one. [It was noted that some have GPA thresholds for participation]. The deans encouraged that UCSC first look at the objective (improve Retention, for example) then ask whether small class opportunities are the best way to meet the objective. Dean Kamieniecki thinks that the Social Sciences Division is still very enrollment driven with regard to allocation of resources and thinks there needs to be some amount of a shift away from that direction. The other deans added their thinking that UCSC has been overly enrollment driven. Nonetheless, they think that there needs to be expectations placed on departments and divisions that they are to train a certain percentage of the campus undergraduates, staying as close to the UC norm of faculty to student ratio as is possible. The comment was made that allocation of ladder-rank faculty FTE has not been driven by enrollments per se, rather, instructional resources overall have been affected (including TAS and TAs).

CEP asked the divisional deans to make a point to draw the attention of External Review Committees to look at the questions added to their charge by CEP and noted the lack of ERC response in some reviews this year.

## **VI. Instructional Workload.**

CEP began its discussion regarding the draft policy on instructional workload provided by VPAA Galloway to the Senate for input. The conversation will continue next week.

So attests,

Jaye Padgett, Chair  
Committee on Educational Policy