

**COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION  
MINUTES  
Wednesday, May 11, 2012**

Present: David Smith (Chair), Frank Bauerle (NSTF Rep.), Gabriel Elkaim, Susanna Wrangell (Staff), Eve Zyzik.

Absent: Sarah-Hope Parameter (ELWR Coordinator).

**I. Announcements**

Chair Smith welcomed new member Zyzik from the Language Program.

Members approved the April 13, 2012 minutes with corrections.

The April 27, 2012 UCOPE Meeting Update was moved to a future meeting.

**II. Math Correlated Data from MPE Results**

Mathematics Department Undergraduate Advising Chair Marty Weissman sent correlated data from the online MPE tests for CPE to review. The committee was concerned about the scores for placement in mathematics courses, especially for MATH 19A, some students had lower scores than the set cutoff, but these students were successful and passed the course, so some students, who may actually be able to pass the course are not being allowed in. Mathematics has since sent the scores to the Registrar's Office, where it has been recorded, so no changes can be made to the threshold at this time, but will consider making changes for the next test period. The Mathematics Department .will wait until the data from the current test is available to make sure that the fail rate is only around 10%. Professor Weissman suggested the idea of a 2 credit course to help with students who need Math 19A but their score qualifies them for Math 11A, which would not prepare them for Math 19A, and delay the students progress through a major. The department would like to study whether the primary difference between these students can be detected by trigonometry and other function related questions and offer a refresher course that is taken in concurrence with Math 19A. CPE members want to know what percentage of students will re take the test in fall and place up . For example, students who have taken the test in May, failed to get into Math 19A, then study over the summer, and re take the exam in September, will their new scores place them in Math 19A? If not these students may be allowed in to Math 19A while taking the two credit refresher course concurrently.

CPE will send a response to Professor Weissman asking about student placement for re takes, find out who will be appointed as the Undergraduate Advising Chair for next year, and address concerns about students cheating and skewing the scores. CPE will suggest to Mathematics for the summer offering of the test to define a gray zone if the placement score increases to 80%, this may be an indication of cheating, causing an artificially inflated score, which is harmful to students who may have qualified. If the fail rate remains the same as last year, then there is a mix of students who cheated in the first place and should not be here. The grade in the class would then be an indicator of cheating for a student who received a score of 40 on the MPE and received a grade of D in the class. How many of the top 15% scores fail the course or get Cs or lower, CPE will request data on this next year as a follow up.

## **II. Revised Classroom Time Slot Proposal Version 3**

Committee members felt this issue was not in our purview but would like to make a recommendation as faculty members on the chart of proposals from VPDUE Hughey to update the current class time slots with additional slots by shifting the current schedule. After a long robust discussion, members would like to share the following concerns:

- Option 1 is not an option if we need more large lecture halls to meet class demand.
- While all agree Options 2, 3, 4, 5 are going in the right direction there are too many details missing for us to make a clear choice among them. All seem to have advantages and none seem obviously bad.
- Option 2 seems to have the fewest risks and might therefore be most amenable to running as a pilot.
- We discussed what we called an "option 2A" that would add a minority subset of medium and small rooms to the schedule that option 2 provides for large lecture halls. We thought this might offer significant flexibility without a large disruption, and also be suitable as a first step.
- Option 5 is the most desirable for faculty who would like to only teach twice a week, but over all is very complicated. In addition to the additional conflicts that will result from most of the new plans, and other obvious complications, we wanted in particular to remind the VPDUE and registrar to make sure that final exams aren't impacted. In particular, further pressure on the scheduling of final exams would mean that it will become difficult to schedule overflow rooms for large lectures, forcing students to take their exams in conditions that are both uncomfortable and difficult to proctor. It seems almost certain to us that finals week would have to be extended by one or more days under most of these plans, but particularly under option 5.

We are recommending the time slot changes start as a pilot, option 2 offers the least impact on students and faculty and the old schedule could be resumed without much difficulty. A pilot will help reveal problems that come up with buses, schedules, over-lap, majors whose classes must be taken in series not be scheduled at the same time, etc. Overlaps like this could potentially delay a student's progress to degree.

**So attests,**

**David Smith, Chair  
Committee on Preparatory Education**