

Academic Policies Committee
Minutes
2014-2015

Approved: April 17, 2015

Meeting Notes for April 3, 2015

Members Present: Escobar, Slabinski, Taylor, Murphy, Bradley, Irwin, Li, Gonsier-Gerdin, Blumberg,

Members Absent: Migliaccio, Schmidlein, Van Gaasbeck, Raskauskas, Vogt

Guests Present: Trigales, Malroutu

[Corrections of Titles: Ed Mills (VP, Student Affairs); Don Taylor (Interim Assistant Vice President, Academic Programs and Global Engagement)]

Called to Order: 2:20pm (quorum was achieved)

1. Open Forum: n/a

2. Approval of the Agenda: Approved 2:25pm

3. Minutes March 20, 2015 Approved: 2:30pm

4. Grade Appeals:

Sue checked in with folks to see if anyone had any changes or comments to offer. With respect to the Procedural Appeals Board, Don said that it was good that the workgroup decided to include a student on the Board. While he supported this change, he asked if a university ombudsman could fill the role that the Procedural Appeals Board currently occupies. The Committee discussed the idea of having a position of 'ombudsman' developed at Sac State, since a number of CSU campuses, as well as many others across the country, currently have one. Perhaps this is an issue we can take up at another meeting. In terms of the Revised Grade Appeal Policy, the Committee decided to table for discussion at our next meeting on April 17th until everyone has had a chance to read it and more Committee members are present at the meeting.

5. Excused Absence Policy:

Sue updated the Committee on what had happened in the Faculty Senate. In a nutshell, the Senate did not vote on any of the policies that were at Second Reading and did not get beyond the Excused Absence Policy. A total of 3 amendments were offered (Sens. Johnston and Pinch (Pinch/Sheppard Amendments). All of them centered around a larger concern about the 25% minimum allowable absences under the policy and the 'disciplinary divide,' as Don put it, that exists regarding this number. A second concern in the amendments focused on the specificity of 'making up the work' that was missed, which was also addressed in the context of this 'disciplinary divide.' In other words, programs such as Nursing, Engineering, and the sciences, generally, have particular requirements which need to be met, whether it is for accreditation purposes or the scaffolding nature of laboratory work in which students must complete one lab in order to enter into another one since they build on one another. Ultimately, nothing was decided because the Senate meeting had run its course; there was no vote to extend the meeting by a few minutes. Therefore, this policy will likely appear on the next Senate agenda. At the APC meeting, Sue shared feedback from Todd and Matt regarding their thoughts on these amendments and issues.

The Committee decided that there was nothing more to do and that we have worked on this policy enough. There was no discussion about amending the policy to include the Pinch/Sheppard Amendments; rather, the sentiment rested with allowing the Senate to discuss and make the changes, if they so choose.

Religious Observances: The Committee felt that we should keep the current Religious Observances Policy on the books, if we are required by the California Education Code to have it. In other words, we shouldn't delete the policy; just include the link to it. Kris pointed out that it is beneficial to have the policy in two places because often times, when someone does a Google search, it may not bring up the policy that they need or intended to find. MOTION: Anne moved that we combine 4a and 4b (Appendix C, 4/3/15 APC Agenda, p. 17) and indicate the California Education Code and not delete the Faculty Senate Policy. Therefore, as amended, the changes will read as follows:

4. Major Religious Holidays. Students are responsible for notifying the Instructor of Record in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays. (This policy is in compliance with The California Education Code 89320; see FS 10-54B/Flr.); Jacci, 2nd; M/S/A

[*In light of this change, perhaps the Excused Absence Policy will be presented to the Faculty Senate in a slightly revised format (with the 3 amendments still at stake, since they deal with different issues.*]

6. Progress In the Major: Kris had sent out an email with information prior to the APC meeting requesting that we don't delete or change the Declaration/Change of Major form. She said that if we are considering a policy to allow a chair to drop students from a major for lack of progress, then we could just add something to modify the Deletion of Major/Minor form instead. She suggested that we could modify that form to add a chair's signature line at the bottom of the form along with a reason code or box.

The other issue, related to the 'progress in the major' issue is whether chairs can deny entrance into their programs to students. Currently, only impacted programs or programs with pre-established major declaration/entrance criteria can deny students. If a student is in good standing and applying to get in to a non-impacted major without any pre-established entrance criteria, the chair must let the student into the major. No university policy currently exists to allow chairs to say "no," for whatever reason. An earlier, 2012-13 policy wanted to place the decision in the hands of individual departments to decide; however, Kris's sense is that the chairs want a more uniform policy that would grant them more authority to deny students, in good standing, entrance into their major, in the absence of impacted status or pre-established entrance criteria. Sue offered to work on a draft of this policy; Rusty also offered assistance with it. No vote or decisions were made on this issue or the 'progress in the major' issue, so perhaps we can take it up again at our next meeting.

7. Meeting Schedule for Spring 2015

8. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm

Sue C. Escobar, Committee Vice Chair