

SCHOLASTIC STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES

Attendees: Veronica Makowsky (Chair), Greg Bouquot, Karen Bresciano, Stuart Brown, Jennifer Lease Butts, Robin Coulter, Susanna Cowan, Joseph Crivello, Holly Fitch, Larry Gramling, Robin Grenier, Jill Livingston (recorder), Jean Main, David Wagner

Absent: Brian Aneskievich, David Clokey, Hedley Freake, Katrina Higgins, Ellen Tripp

I. Introductions

II. Information Items:

- A. Kent Holsinger, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of The Graduate School, provided information to the SSC about use of A+ grades by the graduate school.

Discussion: A+ are used for two reasons: 1) students are required to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0, thus they can have few grades below a B. Using A+ slightly expands the grades available; 2) to reward exceptional performance that exceeds the standards required for an A grade. A recommendation was made that SSC examine the undergraduate grading scale, which does not include A+.

Actions: The undergraduate grading scale will be discussed in the future.

- B. SEC will assign student representatives to SSC sooner than in past years.
- C. No other information items were proffered.

III. Action Items

A. Representative needed:

1. Growth and Development: Katrina Higgins was suggested.
2. Honors Board: Susanna Cowan volunteered.
3. Suggestions for names of faculty to serve on Academic Integrity Hearing Board.

Discussion: Robin Grenier serves on the Board and provided information. The Board, which usually consists of 2 faculty and 2 student members, hears infractions of policy. It meets whenever necessary--as hearings are requested by students. The majority of cases are heard in the beginning of the fall and late spring due to the high occurrence of accusations related to final tests/assignments. Board members are notified which faculty are involved in a case, and at that point can recuse themselves.

Actions: Joe Crivello volunteered. Veronica Makowsky will send an email with a reminder to solicit more names. The names put forth do not need to be members of SSC.

- B. Proposal to revise the Senate By-Laws: Rules to reflect UConn practice/policy Regarding Summer & Winter programs and other non-semester courses: Ready for the Senate?

Discussion: This motion was previously approved by SEC and will be on the September Senate Agenda.

Actions: Susanna Cowan will present this motion to the University Senate and field questions from the floor.

- C. Finals and Reading Days: Do we need a subcommittee since all these issues are related and the disposition of one affects the others? If we need a subcommittee, what is their charge?
1. Reading Days
 2. Report on Final Assessments on Syllabi from CETL
 3. Bunched Finals: Karen Bresciano
 4. Instructor Survey on Finals Rescheduling; Also ask students?
 5. Possible Calendar Changes: drop one week of classes? Push commencements to weekdays?
 6. Do nothing at all.

Discussion: Adjusting the semester schedule to accommodate more Reading Days or Final Assessments is a fraught undertaking, as there no scenario that will not cause negative impact for some parties. SSC should consider the fundamental problems, or lack thereof, created by current schedules.

It may be necessary to form subcommittees to examine these issues from various perspectives. Subcommittee(s) can include individuals who are not on SSC. Student representatives should be appointed, as appropriate.

SEC also wants SSC to look into the issue of final exams being given the last week of classes.

Some of the finer points discussed include:

- It may be necessary to redo the student survey administered in Spring 2017 to improve the wording. However, SSC must exercise caution in doing a survey if we are unable to impact change.
- Look at peer institutions.
- Regionals have a reading date that occurs when most finals are complete.
- There is no reading day in the Spring because UConn did not have reading days in the past, but held graduation in December. When UConn ceased offering a winter graduation ceremony, it put the reading day in.
- Subcommittees could include a joint subcommittee between Student Welfare and SSC, or several subcommittees could be established to look at different parts of the issues. E.g. Student Welfare could examine students' impact, while SSC could focus more on the faculty perspective.

- Registrar's Office does not track whether final assessments are administered. It collects information about who opts out of room usage.
- Final assessments given during finals week are protected by the Bunched Finals Policy. Examinations (if not finals) given during the last week of class are not bound to policy. Further, students can withdraw from exams up until last day of classes. Students who take all assessments prior to finals week can actually withdraw after all assessments. What differentiates between a final exam given during the last week of classes versus finals week?

Actions: Jen Lease Butts will facilitate an identification of the issues, as we perceive them to be, at the next SSC meeting. Karen Bresciano will contact Wayne Locust to learn whether shortening the semester duration will impact financial aid. She will also provide information about what her office knows about the issue.

D. Double Majors across schools/colleges: from SEC.

Discussion: SEC requested SSC consider the issue, brought forth to them by Professor Gustavo Nanclares (LCL) that the University Senate revise and eliminate the extra 30-credit requirement that is currently compulsory for dual degree students at UConn. SSC agreed with the change.

Actions: Jill Livingston and Robin Coulter will draft a By-Laws change for SSC review.

E. Prioritize or Drop Issues for the AY 2017-2018. Renumber or delete items below (no meaningful order below):

1. Rules on first-semester dismissal for students with 0.0 GPA
Discussion: Years ago we had a policy to dismiss students after poor first semester academic performance. Now we do not dismiss students after first semester for academic reasons.
Decisions: Lower priority.
2. Academic Integrity: Is a subcommittee needed? If so, what is their charge?
Discussion: Some faculty are not following current policy, which is the impetus for examining this issue. What does SSC think about the policy itself? Does the process pose an undue burden on faculty—considering both process and legal implications? Who should administer the policy? No one has responsibility to teach students how to not engage in misconduct or to help faculty reduce risk of misconduct. Can CETL fill this role? CETL will offer a PD this year on academic integrity. Who is the appropriate owner--Student Affairs or Academic Affairs?
Decisions: Prioritize for the Spring. Discuss in December to consider how the issue will be approached.
3. Policy on Academic Accommodations? Visit from CSD?
Discussion: Who has control over making academic adjustments? It is sometimes possible for a student to withdraw from class after the end of semester?
Decisions: Prioritize for Fall. Ask the General Counsel's office to explain to SSC their understanding of the law, so SSC can consider what needs to be done.
4. Clarification of by-law language on Final Assessments
Discussion: Though final assessments are not required, this is unclear in the By-Laws. All finals changes should be presented to the SEC and Senate at once.

Decisions: Roll this into finals discussion.

5. Various prohibitions on course transfers. Is a subcommittee needed; if so, what is their charge?

Discussion: Currently UConn does not accept online labs or online languages as transfer.

Decisions: Lower priority unless urgent issues arise.

IV. In-Process/Elsewhere (no immediate action):

- A. Research Experience Course Proposal): at C&C (back to us, then to SEC)

Jen Lease Butts and Hedley Freake met with C&C and were asked to hold additional meetings with departmental C&C's. They will look into this request.

- B. Honors Program Revisions

The Task force finished its work in the spring and will present them to the Honors Board in September. Discussions will run through or beyond October. Once passed by the Honors Board, revisions will be presented to SSC for discussions and potential revisions. This will happen in November at the earliest.

V. Any New Business?

At the recommendation of Robin Coulter, Veronica Makowsky will ask Cheryl Galli to investigate using a Husky non-class site to store/share documents.

VI. Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 19; 3:30-5:00 PM, Senate Conference Room, Hall 123