

Senate Scholastic Standards Committee 2015/2016

Meeting Minutes 9/3/2015

2.30 – 4.00 PM

Senate Conference Room, Hall Dorm

Members present: Brian Aneskievich, Stuart Brown, David Clokey, Lauren DiGrazia, Hedley Freake (chair), Katrina Higgins, Annelie Skoog, David Wagner, Susanna Cowan, Joe Crivello, Jennifer Lease Butts (ex-officio), Gina Stuart, Ellen Tripp. Larry Gramling was absent with excusal.

1. Committee members introduced themselves, stating their relationship to and history with the committee. Concern was expressed about the ratio of faculty to staff on the committee and the need to ensure a favorable level of faculty representation. While there are good reasons for each of the staff members to be part of the committee, it was felt that scholastic standards was faculty business and that faculty should be in the majority. This concern will be discussed with the SEC.
2. The prime purpose for this meeting was to consider business remaining from last year or that had been brought to the committee over the summer and set the agenda for the semester.
 - a. There are 2 items of business (bylaw changes for University Scholars and for adding/dropping courses) that were completed by the committee in the spring but not brought before the Senate. Senate policy prohibits considering items pertinent to students in the last meeting of the year when they are unlikely to be present.
 - b. Continuing business from last year includes:
 - i. Admissions bylaws. Jill Livingston (previous chair) and Lauren DiGrazia met over the summer with Jill Thorne and Brian Boecherer (Early College Experience) to continue discussion of admissions bylaws as they pertain to high school programs. Changes are ready for the committee and will be considered at the next meeting.
 - ii. Open educational resources are under active consideration, particularly by library staff. The committee will be updated on them by Jill Livingston at a future meeting.
 - iii. Student absences from classes was a major item of discussion last year. While this issue is likely to return, that is unlikely in the short term.
 - c. New items
 - i. Bob Tilton, professor of English at UConn Stamford, raised the issue with Student Welfare of the process required for dropping major programs at regional campuses. While committee members perceived this as an administrative function, it raised the question of the process being followed by the administration in making changes at regional campuses.

Examples given include the downplaying of the availability of majors, the closing of an art gallery at Avery Point and the recent requirement that Regionals follow the same schedule as the Storrs campus. While the latter decision was made some time ago and then adoption delayed for the Regionals, concern was expressed that the administration did not fully appreciate the particular issues for students, staff and faculty (including adjuncts and TAs) at those campuses and that timely consultation did not always occur. This issue will be brought to the SEC.

- ii. Carol Polifroni (before her resignation as SEC chair) asked the committee to consider whether the current minimum of 5 for administration of SET should be reduced or waived. The SET have been under the purview of the Faculty Standards Committee and the SSC decided to defer to that body.
- iii. SSC action last year to update bylaws on readmission of dismissed students occasioned discussion within CAHNR on how that policy should apply to students in the 2-year Ratcliffe Hicks program. Cameron Faustman and his staff have suggested a policy and have asked whether it should be incorporated into the bylaws. It appears likely that the bylaws have little to say about the 2-year program and so changes on this topic should await a review of this larger question. Hedley Freake will discuss with Cameron Faustman.
- iv. Katrina Higgins alerted the committee that changes to the Academic Adjustments policy were in the works. This policy allows some flexibility with Q and second language requirements for students with relevant learning disabilities. The ADA may require changes here that will come to the committee at some point this year.
- v. Stuart Brown raised the issue of the university-wide dismissal appeal committee. He has discussed his concerns with Katrina Higgins and suggestions to the committee may be forthcoming.

3. A number of other items were brought forward

- i. An internal audit of the Student Administration System has raised some concerns that may require action by the committee. Lauren DiGrazia is considering these and will report at a future meeting.
- ii. Use of the terms “primary” and “secondary” instructor as well as other titles by departments for reporting purposes need to be standardized.
- iii. The value of Reading Days remains an active issue, though it is currently under consideration by the Student Welfare Committee.
- iv. Jennifer Lease Butts will bring a proposal for a standard Research Experience course for departments to consider.
- v. The possibility for enabling distance-learning capabilities for the conference room was raised.

- vi. Moving the start time of future meetings from 1 to 2 PM was suggested to better accommodate the teaching schedule of one member. Hedley will poll the committee on this change.
4. The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:45 PM.