

Minutes
Senate Scholastic Standards Committee (SSSC)
April 22, 2014
Hall Dorm, Room 123, 12:00-1:30 PM

SSSC Members (attending in **BOLD**): **Felicia Pratto (Chair)**, Robin Chazdon, **David Clokey, Joseph Crivello, Susanna Cowan, Dipak Dey**, Lauren DiGrazia, **Johann Peter Gogarten, Lawrence Gramling, Katrina Higgins**, Elena Innes (Undergraduate student representative), **Jennifer Lease Butts (ex-officio)**, **Jill Livingston**, John Meyers (Undergraduate student representative), **Thomas Recchio**, Christopher Tomaszewski (Graduate student representative).

1. Review/Approval of minutes from previous meetings
 - a) Review/Approval of minutes from 3-25-14 meeting (postponed at 4/8/14 meeting)

The following revisions were proposed:

- Under agenda item 4: strike the dialogue and instead express the spirit of the discussion, as follows: Make 4.2 the Discussion and 4.1 the Decision (strike everything else).

VOTE: The minutes, with suggested changes, were approved by the committee.

- b) Review/Approval of minutes from 4-8-14 meeting

VOTE: The minutes were approved by the committee.

2. Report from Senate meeting re our By-Laws proposals re addition of Associate Deans for grade appeals and changing name of Office of Student Services and Advocacy to Dean of Students Office (Tom Recchio)

There was no further discussion of this item by the committee.

3. Bunched finals practice and rules (Felicia Pratto)—regarding Section E.12 of the Senate By-Laws

- a) Consider Felicia's/Larry's edits to the By-Laws, Section E.12
The committee considered the proposed changes to the by-laws, as formatted to fit Senate requirements, which shows the original text of the bylaws, followed by revised text indicated struck out words and (underlined) proposed new language.

DISCUSSION

The following further revisions to the by-law were proposed:

[Note: page numbers refer to the pagination of the document created by F. Pratto, not to page numbers in the pdf version of the by-laws]

- In section 12/p.3 (Semester Examinations and ~~Final~~ Assessments), paragraph 3 (“~~In all undergraduate courses...~~”) change the single remaining sentence (after struck out language removed) to this:

“In the case of **assessments in the form of** in class and other proctored final examinations, these examinations must be given in the places and at the times scheduled by the university.”

(bold text reflects the new proposed change not already in the revised by-law)

- In section 12/p.3, paragraph 7 (There registrar shall schedule no more than five...), add the word “final” before the proposed word “assessments” and make both previously proposed instances of “assessments” singular (“assessment”), as follows:

“There ~~registrar shall schedule~~ no more than five ~~examination~~ **final assessments** periods scheduled each day, ~~covering two class periods~~, and each ~~examination~~ **assessment** period shall be two hours in length.”

(bold text shows new proposed addition/strikethroughs not already in the revised by-law. Non-bold strkethroughs/underscores show the previously proposed revisions as they will go to the Senate.)

- In section 12/p.3, paragraph 7 (There registrar shall schedule no more than five...), reverse the order of the words “final” and “scheduled,” as follows (only the beginning of the sentence with the change is reproduced here):

“A student whose schedule includes three or more ~~final scheduled~~ **scheduled final assessments**...”

(bold text shows new proposed addition/strikethroughs not already in the revised by-law. Non-bold underscores show the previously proposed revisions as they will go to the Senate.)

- The sub-section “Final Examinations for Courses Given at Non-standard Times” (end of section 12/p. 4 in document presented) *should be removed in its entirety (heading plus paragraph), as it is not language from the by-laws* (it is a University policy, but not a by-law).

b) Discuss, modify, possible vote on motion to the Senate re: Section E.12 of the By-laws

DISCUSSION:

Although there seemed to be consensus on the above proposed changes, the committee had to move to the next agenda item (an invited guest was expected) before we moved to a vote.

4. Katrina Higgins: “Unclassified students” by-laws issues

It was determined that all changes regarding the outdated use of the phrase “unclassified students” had been approved in the previous meeting):

[quoted language from 4-8-14 minutes]

- a) Change in terms for Sections II.A and II G.2.

“All changes in nomenclature only were approved”

- b) Policies and procedures changes in Section II.A.6

“Additional changes suggested and approved to reflect current practice.”

Remaining for discussion was the outstanding issue of dated language in that section of the by-laws pertaining to minimum admissions requirements (from previous minutes: “It was noted that admissions requirements stipulated in II.A.1.b. are out of date with current requirements. The

requirement for math do not account for middle school students who take high school level math. The requirement for course work in computer skills could be met by preparation in computer skills.”

The committee considered the proposed changes to the by-laws, as formatted to fit Senate requirements, which shows the original text of the bylaws, followed by revised text indicated struck out words and (underlined) proposed new language.

Nathan Fuerst, the Director of Undergraduate Admissions, was an invited guest for this discussion.

DISCUSSION:

[Note: page numbers refer to the pagination of the document created by F. Pratto, not to page numbers in the pdf version of the by-laws]

The following further revisions to the by-law were proposed:

- In section II.A.1.c /p.11, (comprising a single paragraph beginning “~~At least three-fourths of the normal four-year secondary school program...~~”), make the following changes:
 - Add the phrase “or their equivalent,” as follows:
“Those applying for admission to the University as undergraduate students are required to present evidence of successful completion of the following college-preparatory courses **or their equivalent:** three years of...”
 - Add back in “four years of English” as an admissions requirement, which was inadvertently left out of the proposed revisions, as distributed
 - Change the phrase “foreign language(s)” to “second language” in two sentences, and add “or its equivalent” to the first instance, as follows:
 - “two years of a single ~~foreign~~ **second language will be required or its equivalent.**”
 - “...one additional year each of science, mathematics, social science or history, and ~~foreign~~ **second languages;**”
(bold text shows new proposed addition/strikethroughs not already in the revised by-law. Non-bold strkethroughs/underscores show the previously proposed revisions as they will go to the Senate.)
- As indicated in the proposed revisions, as distributed, remove all references to specific dates in the 1980s, as the purpose of their inclusion is long past (this includes the removal of the entire “Tabular Presentation” at the end of section II.A.1.c)

Nathan Fuerst, the Director of Undergraduate Admissions joined the conversation at this point and, upon a reprisal of the above suggested changes (in addition to the changes suggested in the document), he noted that such general language (the language of minimum requirements) was pretty standard across institutions. He further commented that it would be useful to consider the following:

- Admission to UConn is competitive and all decisions ultimately defer to the Director of Undergraduate decisions, who may make judgment calls about a student’s preparedness based on the evidence provided; i.e. the Director of Admissions can waive admissions requirements if he/she deems it appropriate to do so
- Admissions at UConn is a holistic process that considers more than the academic record
- Rules for requiring standardized test scores can be situation/student specific

In addition to these points, committee members brought up the following: the by-laws refer to a non-existent (by that name) Senate Committee on Admissions; it is perhaps relevant that a legal

judgment has created an Age Act Committee at UCONN to protect underage students against discrimination; we may need to check by-laws admissions language against state requirements to make sure there is consistency

After some discussion, three courses of action were proposed:

1. Defer the vote on any proposed changes to the by-laws until the Director of Undergraduate Admissions and other admissions professionals can review the entire SectionIIA of the by-laws (section on admissions) and flag for the committee language that may need revision
2. Vote now on proposed changes (as disseminated and discussed during this meeting) and take proposals to Senate
3. Vote now on just proposed changes to section II.A.1.c (as disseminated and discussed during this meeting), but also have Undergraduate Admissions and others review entire section II.A for further recommendations regarding language revision

VOTE: There was no clear consensus and some dissent among the committee members present about the best course of action, but option 1 was approved by a plurality of votes. Therefore, no further action will be taken on proposed revisions to this section of the by-laws until Undergraduate Admissions (and others) have provided comments and recommendations for changes.

5. Lauren DiGrazia: Changes in course grades to By-Laws Section II.E.9 (proposed changes appended)

Due to time constraints, this agenda item was not discussed. Lauren DiGrazia, Katrina Higgins, and Susanna Cowan had worked on a suggested revision to this section of the by-laws, which will be posted to the committee's site for further discussion, should the committee wish to return to it when it reconvenes in the fall.

Note for future reference/consideration: Lauren DiGrazia did obtain the State of Connecticut Records Retention Schedule, which indicates that there is "no requirement" to retain "Graded Coursework and Final Examinations," defined as:

"This series documents graded coursework and final examinations that were not returned to the student. Including but not limited to: assignments; essays; exams; and other student projects."
(State of Connecticut Records Retention Schedule S5: Higher Education Records. Revised 07/2011 – see

<http://www.ctstatelibrary.org/sites/default/files/publicrecords/S05%20Higher%20Education%20201107.pdf> p. 16)

6. Head's up: Annual report due April 28

This was not discussed during the meeting.

7. Possible items for future meeting agendas (when the committee reconvenes):
 - Changes in Section II.E.9 course grades by-laws language: review proposed changes (see item 5)
 - Changes in Section II.A of by-laws regarding Admissions requirements, pending further input from Director of Undergraduate Admissions (see item 4)