

Educational Policies Committee
Minutes
4/23/2009

Members Present: Thaine Stearns, chair, Carmen Works, John Wingard, Sharon Cabaniss, Karen Grady, Lynne Morrow, Robert Eyler, Sheila Cunningham, Dolly Freidel, Lillian Lee

Liaisons Present: Elaine Sundberg, Robert Coleman-Senghor

Guest Present: Art Warmoth, Wanda Boda, Julie Greathouse, Chuck Rhodes, Michelle Jolly, Nathan Rank, Sally Murphy (CSU East Bay, External Reviewer for GE Program Review)

Meeting called to order at 11:00 am.

Agenda approved with postponement of business items 1 (CALs 432) and 4 (Saturday University Proposal) and 5 (MA Concentration in Bioengineering).

No minutes to approve.

No reports

Business Items:

University 238 New Course Proposal, 2nd reading.

TS clarified that the vote for today was to approve a course already on the books that had not previously gone through faculty governance. Wanda Boda explained that other CSU's with similar courses house and administer the courses in a similar fashion to current practice at SSU. Chuck Rhodes explained that 238 is a graded course because it is academically rigorous and grades, compared to C/NC, set the bars for measuring student success. There was further discussion of the need to think structurally about the course as we move forward, considering where it might be housed, how it can be supported. TS reiterated that support of the course by faculty governance is an important message.

SC moved that University 238 be approved as a graded, 3 unit course for baccalaureate credit. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

University Standards Subcommittee, 3 policy revisions, 2nd reading.

Michelle Jolly went over the changes made to language in the policy based on feedback and questions from the 1st reading.

Discussion of Revised Course Repeat Policy:

CW pointed out that the language in the third bullet point under #1 is confusing—about the grade that would allow a student to repeat a course in which s/he initially received an Incomplete. RE suggested reordering the bullet points so that sequence of action is clear. The bullet regarding conversion of incompletes should precede the bullet point on not being able to repeat a course in which the student has earned a C or above. RE also

requested that Section B. Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate Repeat Policy be revised to be parallel in structure to #1 in Section A. Undergraduate Repeat Policy.

It was moved to amend the Course Repeat Policy to read:

Section A:

1. Eligibility to Repeat a Course:

- A student may repeat a course ONLY if the first attempt resulted in a grade of C-, D+, D, D-, F, WU, NC, or IC.
- A student may not re-enroll in a course for which he or she has received an “I” until that “I” has been converted to a grade other than “I”, such as A-F, IC, or NC.
- No course in which a student has earned a grade of C or above may be repeated.

Section B: Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate Repeat Policy

- A student may not re-enroll in a course for which he or she has received an “I” until that “I” has been converted to a grade other than “I”, such as A-F, IC, or NC.
- Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate students may petition the appropriate academic program to repeat courses in which they have earned a grade of B- or lower, or WU, or IC for grade replacement and may repeat only with departmental approval and in accordance with departmental policy.
- A course may be repeated only once, and no more than two courses may be repeated within a program of study or while in Post-Baccalaureate study.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Discussion of Course Withdrawal Policy

A motion was made and seconded to approve the policy without any further changes. The motion was approved unanimously.

Discussion of Academic Probation, Disqualification, and Progress Policy

ES expressed concern that point #3 is the most problematic piece of the policy. The language could allow for that part of the policy to be used as an enrollment management tool.

It was moved that point #3 be amended to read:

Academic Disqualification of Students Not on Probation: A student not on probation may be disqualified if a) at the end of any term, the student has a cumulative GPA below 1.0, AND b) the cumulative GPA is so low that, in view of the student's overall educational record, it seems unlikely that the deficiency will be removed within a reasonable period, as determined by the registrar in consultation with the University Standards Committee. Such disqualifications may be appealed to the University Standards Committee.

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

GE Program Review

Discussion with Dr. Sally Murphy began with Art Warmoth explaining the role of APC in regard to the GE program. AW suggested that the program review might take up the alignment of GE with the three goals of Diversity, Sustainability, and Community Engagement from the Strategic Plan.

Sally Murphy asked, “What do you hope to see come out of the program review?”

RC-S: What are salient and signature features of the program? Does it promise to achieve what it set out to achieve?

JW: Feedback on deficiencies of the program.

AW: Ideas for best practices in realizing the goals of diversity, sustainability, and community engagement.

CW: A critical look at the program and consideration of the barriers to changing GE

LM: From the perspective of more GE being better than less GE, how to achieve breadth in GE.

NR: We hope for the program review to be a living, breathing document that will help the GE program move forward.

TS: Rumors have circulated for some time about GE being broken. Is this actually true? Would it be appropriate structurally to have an academic unit responsible for university-wide programs given the current territorial issues associated with GE?

SC: How good is the fit? I would also like comments on the number of units required and advice for how to address faculty ambivalence regarding assessment.

Please mention the resources that are needed.

WB: If you have seen structures that work well, please advise. We need information.

RC-S: There is the issue of flexibility. What is appropriate regarding a GE course that has the identical outcomes with a course that does not receive GE credit.

AW: Should we have a university policy about distribution of resources?

LM: What do students need at a liberal arts university?

SC: [Could you] address the issue of double counting of courses?

SC: How can the library best support GE on this campus?

Sally Murphy commented that the issues just brought up are similar to issues being discussed at other campuses. She stated that she was surprised to not hear anyone bring up assessment. This is what she was expecting to hear based on the WASC report.

SC explained that there was faculty buy-in on the drafting of learning objectives.

ES explained that the assessment work was set aside when GE was going to be reformed. Because the reform didn't happen, there are now several holes in the program. Decisions need to be made about the direction GE will take and demonstrable progress needs to be made by the time of the WASC visit in October 2009.

There was further discussion of resistance from some faculty toward drafting learning outcomes and assessment. TS discussed the culture of the Senate playing a role in what has happened with the GE program. Some faculty supported a top-down taskforce approach to changing GE while other faculty supported reform of GE through a program review process. The program review process underway will need explicit links to how to change GE.

NR: We want assessment that does more and that does it better. We want your input about how to move forward and how to get buy-in.

Sally Murphy mentioned she was intrigued by the amount of control individual departments have in decisions regarding GE. This is not common at other CSU's or at other institutions Sally knows.

ES explained the history of SSU as a transfer campus and how this influenced the decentralized model for the GE program.

AW: The departmental autonomy is the strength as well as the weakness of GE.

Meeting adjourned at 12:50.