

ACADEMIC POLICY COUNCIL (APC)

2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Members:

Council Members (Senators):

Patricia Sohn (Chair), Dorina Avram, Karen Whalen, John Mecholsky, Paul Gader, Hans van Oostrom (also a Contributing Chair.)

Administrative Liaisons:

Chris Hass, Joe Glover, Angela Lindner, Paul Duncan

Contributing Chairs:

Deborah Mayhew, Hans van Oostrom (also a council Senate member), and Heidi Radunovich.

Student:

Derek Ro.

This annual report summarizes major discussions and issues addressed by the Academic Policy Council for 2018-2019, in alphabetical order:

ANIMAL TISSUE EXPOSURE. The question of whether a hazard statement can be put in course websites and/or in the UF course catalogue for courses in which students will be exposed to animal tissues or insects was raised. This issue was presented by Angela Lindner. The option of allowing the curriculum approvals system to vet the level of risk was also discussed. A new policy is being drafted; policy language is pending. A training module is being developed for all students in courses in which there is any exposure to animal tissues or to insects. The launch of specific wording for all salient syllabi is being voted upon by the UCC in Fall 2019. The training module and specific language for syllabi relate to a process through which students will be educated as to relevant risks from exposure to animal tissues or to insects in classroom settings

CHARGE FOR ACADEMIC POLICY COUNCIL. Academic Policy Council Charge in the University Constitution, Article V (3)(A)(1) (p. 16) was discussed. The APC voted to recommend to the University Constitution & Regulations Committee that we change the wording of the APC charge to the following: "Academic Policy: The council's area encompasses educational policy, including the creation, modification, or deletion of academic programs and units; curriculum; academic standing; relationship of academic units to each other; and general policies concerning student instruction, and academic merits for administrative positions of academic significance."

COURSE FORMAT -- FLEXIBILITY. Under certain circumstances, it may be important to change course format officially through the academic curriculum approvals system. Particularly if you are changing Gordon Rule status within your course, it is required to change the course information formally through the approvals system. The course catalog is based upon the information available within the course

approvals system. It is in keeping with best practices to keep the course catalog up to date with what is being offered in the classroom.

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER. The Council heard from Assistant Dean and Director of the Disability Resource Center, Gerry Altamirano. A mutual interest in faculty-student relationship in the disability context was discussed. The DRC has recently shifted from a medical to a social model for supporting students with disabilities. There are over 3,000 students registered with the DRC; 83% are undergraduates; 10% are graduates; and 7% are part of professional programs. The DRC has experienced growth of registered students from 2012 to present. It was estimated that approximately 10% of students with disabilities have not reached out for service.

DUE DATES FOR ASSIGNMENTS ON HOLIDAYS AND WEEKENDS. The Council heard from Angela Linder regarding residential and on-line courses with due dates on holidays or weekends. It was agreed that due dates on holidays would not be appropriate. Discussion regarding due dates on weekends reflected more varied opinions. In the end, there seemed to be a consensus that assignments should be due Monday through Fridays, but that extensions could be offered to dates that fall on weekends.

ENROLLED-WHILE-SUSPENDED POLICY. Angela Lindner spoke about a UF policy that dates to the J. Wayne Reitz period: credit for courses taken at another college or university while suspended from UF. We do not today suspend for academic status. We do suspend for conduct issues. A new proposal is in place regarding students who want to get credit for courses taken at other institutions while suspended from UF. Out-of-state credit can now be petitioned for credit at UF when taken while a student is suspended from UF through the standard petition process. It does not, however, count toward GPA calculations. The APC voted in favor of supporting the new proposed wording on this policy.

LGBTQ AFFAIRS. The Council heard from LGBTQ Affairs Director Billy Huff regarding LGBTQ issues on campus. The question of allowing such students to use a “chosen” name for classroom and some campus records was discussed. A student may not have changed the preferred name legally. However, the name that the student chooses to be called may be significant for reasons of identity and security. Adding a column within the Registrar’s records was raised as a likely option to resolve this issue for students, so that the chosen/preferred name would automatically be used in the classroom setting by instructors. It was mentioned that non-LGBTQ students might also appreciate this option in some cases. The APC voted unanimously to recommend that UF add a chosen or preferred name to the student roster with the idea to see what other Senate Councils think about the question. The recommendation was forwarded to the Faculty Senate Chair and the Senate Steering Committee.

NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY. The Council heard from Chis Haas regarding faculty titles as well as professional quality of life and treatment of non-tenure track faculty. There is an ongoing, campus-wide effort to ensure that non-tenure track faculty are treated fairly and equitably. Next year, there may be a request for faculty input into the question.

QUEST PROGRAM. Angela Lindner updated the Council on the UF Quest Program. Every student will eventually be required to take a Quest course. The Good Life course will become one of the Quest options. Quest 1 (Humanities) is required in Fall 2020. Quest 2 (Natural or Social Sciences) is required with Quest 1 starting in Fall 2021. Quest 1 and 2 are prerequisites for Quest 3 (Experiential Learning).

Quest 3 will be required by all students by Fall 2027. Quest 4 is projected to be available as an optional capstone course offered by the student's home department. It is being proposed that a new General Education designation – Q – be made available to students, as well as to faculty who want to teach the Q courses.

REPEAT COURSE PETITION. A new policy by which students are no longer allowed to repeat a course if they have a grade of a C or better was presented by Angela Lindner. This policy affects students in some introductory science and other courses that are required for certain majors. A petition remains available to students with a grade of C or higher. The APC discussed the petition form that students must complete in order to repeat a course for a new grade and did not find that it causes students an undue burden. The APC recommended adding a signature line for the Undergraduate Coordinator of the student's home department before the student then approaches the Dean of the College offering the course.

STUDENT EVALUATIONS SYSTEM -- NEW. The new student evaluations system was presented to the Council by Chris Haas. The new system is being constructed with reference to peer institutions and best practices to make up course evaluation questions. Class size and gender bias in student evaluations was discussed. There was not gender bias. College bias was reported as greater than class-size bias. The question of encouraging students to be constructive, non-retaliatory, non-violent or threatening, and to engage in civil discourse as part of doing their student evaluations was discussed. The student number is now associated with the evaluation within the evaluations system, although it can only be accessed by higher administration for important academic or other reasons.

SYLLABUS POLICY. The Council heard from Angela Lindner regarding UF's syllabus policy. Faculty and units are expected to have syllabi posted three business days before classes begin each semester. Compliance with this policy ranges across Colleges and units. The goal is to have full compliance.

UF ONLINE (UFO). Evangeline Cummings spoke about the UF Online program. The UF Online degree program was ranked #5 in US News and World Report, nationally, for 2019. The typical on-line student chooses a program within 100 miles of home, or even within 50 miles of home for some students; thus, the makeup of the on-line student body is somewhat different than initially expected. The Business Bachelor's degree is the largest degree by enrollment, followed by Computer Science, and Biology. The program has 30 majors, 6 minors, and 6 certificates. The program has a goal of 30 majors by 2024. The program has expanded since its inception in 2014, when it had 1200 students. As of 2018 it had 3600 students. It is expected that the program will have 8,416 students by 2024.

OTHER ACTIVITY. Patricia Sohn was re-elected to be APC Chair for 2019-2020; however, she had to go on leave for Fall 2019. Thus, Richard Scholtz will serve as APC Chair for 2019-2020.

Thank you to all Members and Liaisons for a great year and for the opportunity to serve as APC Chair!

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia J. Sohn, Ph.D.
APC Chair 2018-2019