

Education Policy Committee Minutes, October 30, 2025

Attendance: Daniel Babcock, Linda Bell, Derek Brown, Christine Daley, Clinton Graham, Michael Gusmano, Tom Hammond, Angela Hicks Hicks, Khurram Hussain, Terry-Ann Jones, Lucy Napper, Kelly Austin, Kylie Mirabile, Marina Puzkova, Mariana Roldan, Naomi Rothman Rothman, Corrie Vakil, Todd Watkins, and Edmund Webb

Agenda and Discussion

1. Approval of Minutes from October 16, 2025

Marina Puzkova asked if everyone could review the minutes from the previous meeting.

Kylie Mirabile asked to correct the minutes to reflect the fact that she is the College of Engineering undergrad representative.

Marina Puzkova agreed to make this correction.

Mariana Roldan also asked for a correction of the spelling of her name. Naomi Rothman was not in attendance, so she asked that her name would be removed. Marina Puzkova will make all these changes to the minutes.

Naomi Rothman moved; seconded and the committee approved the minutes unanimously.

2. Presentation of Recommendations from the Course and Curriculum Subcommittee

Kelly Austin presented the courses. CGH 317 and POPH 108 removed prerequisites. POPH 108 also added a cross list with HMS and added the human experience attribute. POPH 316 also added WGSS as a cross list and this was also vetted and approved by WGSS.

Marina Puzkova asked about the status of the “Calling Bullshit” course, and the course that includes LatinX in the title. The Faculty Senate raised concerns about both.

Kelly Austin explained the history. These courses were already on the books with the same titles and were in the CIM system for other reasons. Kelly Austin is getting additional information from the departments and will then add notes in CIM before sending it to the Senate.

Marina Puzkova suggested voting on them now and then Education Policy would forward them to the Senate when the notes have been added by Kelly Austin.

Khurram Hussain moved, Tom Hammond seconded. The committee voted unanimously to approve the courses.

3. Presentation of Math Department plans to address cheating in summer courses and discussion of possible R&P changes

Angela Hicks from the Math Department gave a presentation about the plan to address cheating in summer courses. She wanted to identify a potential problem with R&P. The math department is trying to address the problem of student cheating in online summer courses. With the use of AI, they have seen a jump in the course in the percentage of students receiving As from 35% to 50% in one summer. It is troubling in mathematics because it is not clear that AI is the right tool for solving problems in mathematics (it does not always give correct answers). It also presents answers in a way that it is harder to identify the mistakes that are being made. Students using this are getting the wrong answers and it is leading to grade inflation. The math department wants to make online courses match the standards of in-person courses. They plan to use an NCTA proctoring group. In effect, the students in certain online courses will be required to take their final exam at a proctoring center. There is a backup for students who are not near one of the centers.

Kelly Austin had encouraged the math department to experiment with solutions. She has been hearing similar concerns from faculty in other departments about online asynchronous summer courses and she thinks the proctoring network may be a solution and will become popular. Angela Hicks explored a number of other possibilities, and this seemed like the best solution and worth trying.

Terry-Ann Jones raised concerns about international students.

Angela Hicks indicated that they have backup plans for those students and others who cannot get to a proctoring center. For students that are sick, they are allowed to come back in the Fall – incomplete in the Fall and allow them to take the exam when they come back. Librarians at local library? Need credit from session 1 for session 2 – might allow them to take the online exam with an oral follow up.

Lucy Napper asked what in R&P would prevent the use of this solution?

Angela Hicks indicated that nothing prevents this, but they are worried about motivating students to take the courses here at Lehigh. As the Math department implements this, they want to keep from discouraging students from taking Lehigh courses. To do so, they would not approve transfer credit for courses that fail to follow similar restrictions. Now, R&P does not allow for that, thus, the university would need to address that restriction. Right now, the Registrar does not interpret the “rigor” standard in R&P as including something like this, so if we want to do so, we would need to clarify that point.

Michael Gusmano suggested that we could clarify the definition of rigor in R&P to include the degree to which courses adopted mechanisms to reduce cheating.

Angela Hicks responded that the challenge would be to come up with a definition of rigor that works in different departments. The approach being tried by Math may not work well for the English department.

Mariana asked whether this would only apply to tests or would also include other assignments?

Angela Hicks indicated that it would only tests because that is what the math department does in their in-person classes.

Terry-Ann Jones raised the concern that the alternatives to the proctoring center seem to place an onus on students who cannot get to a proctoring center. This raises equity issues.

Angela Hicks agreed with this concern, but she pointed out that there is also an equity issue because students who can afford summer courses can pay to get an A by taking the courses in which cheating is easier. Angela Hicks also mentioned that the Math department has talked about the financial piece of this. There are fees associated with using a proctoring center, so they are making sure that there are funds for students to apply to, if the \$50 fee is a problem.

Mariana agreed that it is unfair for students from wealthier families to take classes in the summer or winter that make it easier to get a better grade

Corrie indicated that the ability to cheat on summer courses also encourage students who may be struggling during a Fall or Spring semester to give up on courses and just take things over the summer.

Kelly Austin noted that, because math classes are sequenced, students may be hurting themselves in the long term because if they cheat in calculus I, they will be harmed in calculus 2.

Angela Hicks agreed and said that this may benefit people in the short term but will hurt them in the long term. The proctoring center requirement is designed to make the short-term incentives match the longer-term reality.

Marina Puzkova thanked Angela Hicks for her presentation and asked the committee to move to the next item of business.

4. Discussion of proposed changes to R&P Section 6.6 focusing on provisional courses and special topics.

Lucy sent a draft of the definition of special topics (e.g., additional changes to R&P 3.6). Marina Puzkova thanked Lucy Napper for working on a draft and shared the document with the committee. She noted that all the changes in red are new additions that the committee needed to review.

Lucy Napper indicated that the first two sections in read were from the previous meeting, but the rest of the material was new. Lucy reviewed how other universities address this. The ones that have two types, like us, generally divide them between courses being offered on a trial basis that are intended to become a permanent part of the curriculum and special topics are not intended to become permanent. Special topics are one-off courses that are seen as menu options that could change every semester. In the proposed changes, Lucy tried to make a distinction between special topics taught by Lehigh faculty vs. those taught by an adjunct. These may be offered several times, but with no intention of making it part of the permanent curriculum. This may be

done because the department cannot be certain that the adjunct will be available to teach the course again.

Marina Puzkova asked for reactions to the proposed language.

Kelly Austin asked whether a special topics course that is being taught many times should be reviewed? She said that she is not sure we should distinguish between Lehigh faculty vs. other instructors. A lot of half semester courses are taught by Lehigh faculty – but the departments would not want it to be in the catalog because they will rotate the special topics. So, she suggested that we may want to focus on the number of times taught rather than who is teaching it.

Terry-Ann Jones asked about faculty with joint appointments with limited ability to teach things regularly. These faculty often teach special topics when they can. This may be the case for many other faculty. Where is the line between what is permanent and what is not?

Lucy Napper indicated that these scenarios seemed like something that should be added to the catalog because you'd like to teach it again.

Todd Watkins asked, "What is the real problem we are trying to solve? I understand that some departments don't want things on the books – but why?"

Kelly Austin said that she would not want 2 credit courses on the books because they may not be offered regularly. May depend on budget because people are overloading. This could lead to confusion among students if courses are in the catalog even though they will not be offered regularly.

Todd Watkins asked why we could not change the rules about what needs to be published? Right now, if a course proposal is put into the CIM system for review, it must end up in the catalog if it is approved. With these courses, we need to review them, but couldn't we set up a review process that does not automatically lead to publishing in the catalog?

Marina Puzkova: Who reviews these courses now?

Kelly Austin Aust indicated that, in CAS, she reviews all of these. Michael Gusmano indicated that he conducts a similar review with the department chairs in the College of Health.

Lucy Napper mentioned that she has created an overarching special topics introduction with a breakout of the two types of courses.

Todd Watkins asked whether we should publish winter courses? Can't we do so and make it clearly that these courses are only offered during Winter or Summer?

Linda Bell offered to review this situation and investigate whether it is possible to go through CIM and not end up being published. She will find out if a workflow could be built and will try to get an answer to the committee within the next two weeks.

Marina Puzkova asked if the committee wanted to vote on the first change about the number of times a provisional course could be offered.

Naomi Rothman suggested that three times is more reasonable because it often takes that much time to get a course right before you are certain you want it in the catalog.

Daniel Babcock suggested that the text in the comment box next to the proposed change reads more clearly and should be incorporated.

Marina Puzkova asked whether the committee should wait on voting until we have the additional language for the other parts of 3.6. and she asked whether there were any additional changes that were made to this section?

Lucy Napper indicated that she also edited the language to make it broader to cover “units,” with the intention that this will also apply to ICs. She pointed out that the term “unit” is used in another place in R&P.

Marina Puzkova suggested that we change this to “academic units,” and Lucy Napper agreed to this change and asked whether we needed to include anything about transfer credits in section 3.6.2 of R&P.

Kelly Austin suggested that this material should be in a separate section.

Marina Puzkova suggested that the committee should review and vote on these changes at the next meeting. By that time, the committee will see if Linda Bell is able to address the question about CIM and changing the workflow to allow for review and approval without leading to publication in the catalog.

Marina Puzkova adjourned the meeting.