

Educational Policy Committee Minutes Sept 26, 2024

Williams 351

Attendance: Kelly Austin, Linda Bell, Lori McClaind, Lucy Napper, Fathima Wakeel, Angela Brown, Ahmed Rahman, Naomi Rothman

Zoom: Nandini Deo, Henry Odi, Tom Hammond, Andreea Kiss, Paolo Bocchini, Derick Brown, Yue Yu, Wenyan Feng, Stacy DeVivo

- A few people missing due to illness.
- This is being recorded.

1. Approval of September 12 minutes (attached)

- Discussion of the last minutes, which were very nicely detailed. An open question arises – how detailed should the minutes be?
- A related question comes up – should we keep names of participating committee members, or should they be anonymized? It is generally agreed upon that specific names should be excluded from the minutes, since this will go onto a public site.
- The committee votes to approve the minutes. Unanimously approved.

2. Update on revision for R&P 3.11.2 (Departmental Honors)

- The Senate has said this will go to the Exec Committee. The Chair of Ed Pol will go to the next Faculty Senate meeting.

3. Discussion about R&P 3.7.1 (Final examinations)

- We had a fairly lengthy discussion in the last meeting about 3.7.1 regarding final examinations. But now if one looks to R&P 3.7.3.1 on the discussion of final examinations, it looks like we do NOT need to revise.
- A committee member asks when the latest version of R&P was amended. It appears to be March 2024. Nothing else was changed (apparently) after March. The last 5 days language is there in 3.7.1. We are adding to the language that papers and presentations are not counted as part of the restriction. The chair will draft a revision of 3.7.1 relating to this and will share at the next meeting.

- On 3.7.3.1 however, there is language on the fact that you CAN have papers and presentations during the last 5 days of classes.

4. Discussion of R&P 1.3.2.1 revision (Educational Policy Committee) – tenure requirement

- On this point we have a fairly lengthy discussion last time. The Chair incorporated the edits we discussed from last time.
- Cheryl Matherly met with the Chair about how study abroad intersects with this.
- We as a committee had considered deleting the 2nd paragraph, but the Chair will wait until her meeting with Cheryl before amending the language revolving around study abroad.
- The Chair incorporated other edits. She asks if we include language suggesting that non-tenured faculty could serve on the committee.
- The person who brought up this issue mentions that the edits as they exist look good. Another asks, do we need the “extenuating circumstances” part of the language? Who determines the circumstances? Another suggests that we should get rid of the sentence altogether, for it just invites deans and other higher-ups to make assistant professors serve. Being explicit about it makes it more likely to happen. But another member counters by saying that the language protects ourselves.
- Another suggests it would be helpful to hear from representatives from the smaller colleges. What are their concerns? What are the numbers? Obviously very small colleges may need to do have junior colleagues serve on the committee.
- A member of the College of Education shares with us that when vacancies in this committee occur, some departments, especially College of Education, will have a tough time filling this in without reaching out to non-tenured faculty. We should just put it to the vote.
- Another member says we could make this more explicit, and rewrite some of the language to make it so. Something related to the special needs of each college, and stating this is not meant to be a loophole for deans to shape the committee. We are writing this expressly with the College of Education in mind.
- What about all the other changes (everything in red)? The Chair asks if this looks OK?
- A member of the committee says that of the two grad students serving on the committee, one should come from the College of Ed. Why make that specific? This is kind of odd, given that there are currently only two graduate students serving. By the way, what is the role of the graduate students in this committee?
- One of the grad students is asked a question, what does she think? She could see it either way.
- Someone suggests that maybe we could rewrite the language to state that the committee will include two graduate students, each from a different college.
- Someone asks if the GRC have any undergraduate reps? The point being raised is that this committee deals mostly with undergraduate affairs, so what is the point of having graduate students serve here?

- A member mentions that there are lots of situations where we could reach out to grad students to attend when it would be relevant.
- A graduate student says that this is more like a learning opportunity, especially for those who are going to work in higher ed.
- Someone mentions, what about changing the language to say “MAY?” That is, what if we stipulate that each college MAY have up to one grad student attend?
- By the way, someone asks if these meetings are publicly shared? The videos are not shared. The meetings are in fact open to all members of the academic community.
- The Chair edits R&P to say each college may have up to one non-voting member from its graduate program.
- By the way, the senate is currently voting on their reps. Hopefully by Oct 10 we will know our new reps.
- A member brings up something that might be a bit “nitpicky.” One of the elected faculty members should be chair of the committee, and that position rotates between departments. This rotation should be included as part of the clause, rather than discussions of the timing of the appointment. The Chair edits the passage accordingly...”and the Chair rotates between colleges.”
- The Chair mentions that one thing we need to work on is the rationale for these things. In terms of graduate student representation, we would like to make things more optional as to not put undue burden on the graduate students. We also would like to make it open to all colleges, so that all grad students have the opportunity to serve if they wish.
- It is mentioned that the language revolving around the Chair should be adjusted, articulating the process for selecting a chair-elect clearly (really just cleaning up the grammar). We may need a better pipeline. In discussing the chair-elect appointment process, should we write “by the Dean?” No, we should write “appointed by the committee” (we need to make sure that the chair is already a serving member of the committee). But actually, the chair could indeed be nominated by the Dean, correct? In attempting to move us forward, a member suggests that the language is not perfect, but it is fine.
- Committee members appear to agree that while we do not want the old language, we are unclear about the change. What about including that the chair rotates among “each of the colleges.” [stress each]. BUT, should someone from the College of Education be chair, given this is mainly an undergraduate committee. No, rather the language should suggest the chair rotates between “each of the four undergraduate colleges.”
- After extensive discussion, the Chair edited the passage. We agree that we want to vote on this yet; the Chair would like to have the meeting with Cheryl first. We can look at the language change and vote at the next meeting.
- The Chair also says that this will be put into effect next academic year. So the College of Health might be “in a better place” by then.

5. Check in with committee working on policies relating to 4+1 programs (Michael Dills-Allen)

- Michael is not here. We postpone this discussion.

6. Updates/potential topics for discussion from Faculty Senate

6a) Recommendation for removing ASA from CIM workflow

- The Academic Affairs Subcommittee thought this was redundant. Right now it appears they are simply rubber-stamping things through. A member asks if there's any reason not to do this?
- Substantive changes are viewed by ASA. So it would go from us to Faculty Senate, which are open to anybody. This is important, since then if we miss something, we can show up and voice something in the Senate.
- Is this an R&P change? Apparently yes, so the Chair will look at it.
- It is mentioned that 3.2.1 in R&P is where workflow is discussed. We need to make sure that in the language we keep the Faculty Senate, and we should respect the open forum nature of Senate meetings.

6b) Composition of C&C committee

- This is allegedly our last discussion point. There is a meeting about it next week. There is a Google doc on this which will be shared with the chair.
- Why is it only associate deans that can be part of this, compared with any faculty? An associate dean helpfully says there is a value of having it with just associate deans. They have greater exposure and understanding of many things. They are privy to many discussions that other faculty are not. Someone seconds that.

Their role (the associate deans) is to manage the curriculum. How else would they do it?

- We are urged to remember that associate deans are not voting members at earlier stages; this is the only way the associate deans can provide input. This is where they can have candid discussions.
- In the spirit of "if it's not broke, don't fix it," we are not making any changes here.

6c) Changes in department/program names need to go through CIM/Ed Pol

- Faculty senate states this. A committee member asks, isn't this already true?
- Two departments did in fact change names without the Provost being aware.
- Some clarification follows. You can change the name of a major without changing the name of the department. When you change a program/major name, you need to go through CIM/Ed Pol. If the department changes, all the courses need to have a department change.

6d) Exploratory first semester for students

- This discussion is tabled

7. New business?

- New business may be about undergraduate grading, for next time.

- We adjourn a bit early.

Minutes submitted by: Ahmed Rahman