FACULTY SENATE SCHOLASTIC POLICIES
Faculty Senate Report for April 8, 2014

Year End Summary 2013-2014

Committee Members:
John Leininger, Chair (BBS)        Jane Clark Lindle (HEHD)
Wayne Goddard (E&S)               Lance Howard (del) (AAH)
Catalina Marinescu (E&S)          Sherry Biggers (del) (E&S)
Mark Hosler (AAH)

1. **Student evaluations**
   The report of how department chairs are using Student Evaluation of Instructors surveys was summarized and distributed to the Faculty Senate. Clearly the Department Chairs are putting the survey results up as their primary evaluation tool for faculty. The committee felt that the Faculty Senate should work with the Office of Teaching Effectiveness and Innovation to help department chairs understand the additional options available to evaluate faculty at various ranks. The recommendation was for the Faculty Senate President along with one or two Scholastic Policies Committee members meet with the Provost. *It was decided to wait to see what changes take place in the Provost Office and follow up on this over the summer.*

2. **Whitepaper from Dr. Murdoch on new general education tracks**
   This topic came up after the white paper was forwarded to the committee. It died in University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, but in further discussion in the Scholastic Policies Committee we discovered one of the reasons behind the proposal was that there are many programs that do not specify any General Education classes in their curriculum plan. They leave it completely up to the student to pick and choose and we agree that if there is no direction the student should have some guidance on how to round out their plans. The committee felt this could be included as an optional plan for students in the freshman orientation booklet. This issue was brought before the EAC and there was no support to bring it to the Faculty Senate. The feeling was that it would confuse the students.

3. **Developing an interdisciplinary curriculum committee**
   With the input of Pam Mack, the committee decided that the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UUCC) and the Honors Committee should continue to be responsible for approving interdisciplinary courses, since this system seem to be successful. Keeping the task as a sub-committee of the UUCC makes the most sense at this time.
4. **Students not being allowed to graduate because of e-Portfolio, etc.**
This may be an on-going debate as to whether it can be a graduation requirement when it is not part of the curriculum. In the few instances that were cited, the students had ample opportunity to fix the issues and were not unduly denied graduation. The committee did not feel it was part of our role to follow this up any further.

5. **Grad students being asked to evaluate rigor of graduate content in 400/600**
This issue was brought up by a concerned faculty member who felt as though the Graduate School was making decisions on what they considered acceptable content. After meeting and discussing this with the Dr. Karen J.L. Burg, Interim Dean of the Graduate School, she felt it was a misinterpretation of the activities and effort by the Graduate School. Clearly it was just a point of discussion in a meeting and was not a policy they were trying to implement. We had an open dialog and Dean Burg was very open to keeping the Scholastics Policies Committee in the loop.

6. **Changes from course redemption to course forgiveness**
iRoar required the change from course redemption to course forgiveness. The committee discussed these issues and although there is a thought that technology is forcing us to adjust our approach to managing the process when we all felt it should be technology helping to change the way faculty feel what is best for student success. That being said, there was no real objection to the changes.

7. **New articulation agreement for 3000 level courses with 2-year schools**
Stan Smith reminded the committee of the requirements regarding 3000-level courses contained in the catalog. While Clemson does not accept 3000-level course from two-year college programs, there has been some discussion regarding some bio-science classes at Tri-County Technical College that are 2000 level but virtually cover the same material in Clemson’s 3000 level class. When asked if it would be a problems with SACS Stan Smith actually said SACS would like to facilitate transfer work from 2 year schools to 4 year schools. *The 2014-2015 Scholastic Policies Committee should address this issue.*

8. **Report on performance of Bridge students**
The committee has discussed this at virtually every meeting and there are concerns that the Bridge Students are not comparing well with traditional students. In the end the committee felt the best option was to have Dr. Whorton, Director of Transfer and Bridge to Clemson Programs, to speak to the Faculty Senate as one of the Special Order of the Day speakers. Dr. Whorton spoke to the Faculty Senate and reported on the academic performance of Bridge students compared to the performance of the Clemson student body in general. Faculty Senators had a chance to ask questions and it seemed to satisfy the concerns of the faculty.
9. **Drafting a Policy statement for Addressing the Dean of Undergraduate Studies Overriding Chairs and Department Curriculum Committees on Course Substitutions.**

During the fall semester, the committee discussed an instance where the Dean of Undergraduate Studies overruled the decision of a department chair and curriculum committee regarding a course substitution. After discussing this with the office of Undergraduate Studies the Scholastic Policies Committee agreed the Dean of Undergraduate study had reasonable cause and the faculty or department chair would need to file a grievance to address this issue. It was also felt that the Dean of Undergraduate Studies should have been communicating with the faculty and department chair better. The 2014-2015 Scholastic Policies Committee needs to work with Jeff Appling to draft a policy statement on course substitutions decisions to present to the committee when there is a situation where the Dean of Undergraduate Studies will override the faculty and/or chair.

10. **e-Portfolio**

In a discussion regarding e-Portfolio, the timing of reviews and how the e-Portfolio coordinators might better communicate with faculty their expectations was discussed and passed on to Dr. Ring. There is discussion of pulling out the Critical Thinking and Ethics Competencies out of the e-Portfolio review and leaving that up to the department. Money has been set aside by the Provost’s Office to hire graduate students to evaluate student work rather than undergraduates scoring the assignments submitted for the e-Portfolio. The committee suggested bringing Dr. Ring in to clarify some issues with the faculty, but the EAC felt there were to many open ended questions and concerns at this point and did not want to bring her to a Faculty Senate meeting at this time. *Clearly this will continue to be a topic for the next academic year.*

11. **Graduate student +/- grading**

A faculty member requested that the committee explore the issue of plus/minus grading for graduate students. He presented compelling evidence, which suggests that this might be more easily accepted at the Graduate level when it was not enacted for the undergraduate students in 2002–2004 after a two-year trial period. John Leininger had a conversation with Dr. Felder, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, on March 20, 2014. Dr. Felder is chiefly responsible for the analysis and revision of academic policies and procedures for the Graduate School. Plus/minus grading has been considered, but not independently of plus/minus grading for undergraduate students. Dr. Felder stated that the Graduate School would be open to the conversation. *The 2013-2014 Chair of the Scholastic Policy Committee requests that the 2014-2015 Scholastic Policy Committee follow up on this discussion.*
12. **Summer tuition changes**
   John Leininger met with Blake Snider to discuss some faculty concerns with summer school classes. Dr. Snider shared some thoughts from a preliminary report on summer school numbers and promised a report to the committee when it was complete. To date, we have not received the report. Stan Smith commented that Clemson has some control over summer school tuition, and Jeff Appling noted that the Board of Trustees was opposed to the idea of having lower tuition for courses taught in the summer. Any changes to the tuition structure for summer classes would have to be approved the Board of Trustees, not the SC Commission on Higher Education or the VP of Finance. John Leininger felt if we were to make a suggestion for a change we need to prepare a more structured proposal. *The 2013-2014 Scholastic Policies Committee Chair believes this is one of the most important items to be addressed by the 2014-2015 Scholastic Policies Committee.*

13. **Revisions to academic integrity second offense policy**
   Jeff Appling, Associate Dean for Curriculum, proposed a change in the to address how some people have interpreted the policy to allow for less than a semester (ex. a 10 day suspension) to be an option. The changes made it clear that the minimum is one full semester.

14. **Refund of Academic Fees for Students Withdrawing:**
   The committee review the current policy for refunding academic fee for withdrawing and the committee recommended that the current university policy remain in effect, and it stressed the importance of the bursar’s office enforcing the current rules. While some exceptions may be appropriate, those should be negotiated on a case-by-case basis instead of changing the rule.

15. **Unpaid Internships.**
   Jeff Appling informed that students had to pay tuition to receive credit for unpaid internships. This situation has resulted in serious complaints from students. The committee discussed how to make internships more economically feasible for students. The committee will continue to investigate this issue. *This needs to be address by the 2014-2015 Scholastic Policies Committee.*

16. **Understanding the process of approving honor stoles for graduating students.**
   Stan Smith, registrar, reported to the committee that the only approved stoles were issued through the Omicron Delta Kappa honor society, and that all other stoles or decoration of regalia were unapproved. The committee decided to work with the CUSG Academic Affairs Committee to determine the best way to ensure that only approved groups work honor stoles. *The 2014-2015 Scholastic Policies Committee needs to follow up on this.*
17. **Mid-term Grades Deadlines**
   The committee discussed inconsistencies in deadlines for mid-term grade deadlines. Dr. Smith informed the committee that the deadline for posting mid-term grades had been changed to allow sufficient time for students to consult with the advising center to determine if they should drop the class. The committee determined that the Section IX, Part D of the Faculty Manual needed to be changed to reflect that mid-term grades were due earlier than is stated in the Manual. The committee agreed that probably the easiest way to ensure that the Manual is an accurate representation of University policy would be to refer readers to the Undergraduate Announcements. This issue should become a topic for the Policy Committee.

18. **Faculty Expectations for Missed Assignments because of Inclement Weather**
   Because of the recent days missed due to winter weather, the Scholastic Policies Committee was asked to consider requiring students to complete assignments when the university is closed. Dr. Appling, who serves on the Crisis Management Team, informed the committee of Clemson’s need for improved policies in this area. He suggested that at the onset of an emergency the Provost should release a statement clarifying the university’s expectation for completing assignments while the campus is closed. Dr. Appling emphasized that there needs to be better communication in this area. Since Crisis Management does not necessarily deal with academic concerns, Dr. Appling proposed greater involvement in this area by Undergraduate Students. *This needs to be addressed by the 2014-2015 Scholastic Policies Committee.*

19. **Scholastic Policies committee members were represented the Faculty Senate throughout the year on the following committees:**
   - University Scholarship and Awards Committee update
   - Council on Undergraduate Studies
   - University Admission Appeals Review Committee
   - University Academic Appeals Review Committee
   - Clemson Online Faculty Advisory Board