

MINUTES OF THE STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO
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Fresno, California 93740-8023
Office of the Academic Senate
Ext. 8-2743

February 20, 2008

Members Present: C. Edmondson (Chair), C. Coon, D. Helsel,
M. Lowe, K. Goddard (student).

Members Absent: A. Fiala (excused), K. Fugelsang (excused),
F. Padilla (excused).

The meeting was called to order by Chair Edmondson, at 10:00 a.m., in the University Center, Room # 203.

1. Minutes. MSC to approve the Minutes of 12/5/2007.
2. Agenda. MSC to amend the Agenda as follows:

Insert item #6, "System wide policy on course withdrawals" and renumber subsequent items accordingly.
3. Communications and Announcements.
 - a. College Anxiety Screening Day is 3/27/08 from 9:00 - 4:00 at the University Health and Psychological Services, Area E.
 - b. Upcoming National Coalition Building "Welcoming Diversity" Workshops March 8th 8:30 – 4:00 University Center #202 and April 12th 8:30 – 4:00 University Center #202 - free to faculty, staff, and students. Registration 278-6946.
 - c. C. Coon provided an update on initiatives and activities regarding the student leadership program within the Student Affairs Department of Student Involvement. Discussion: The initiative is creating very exciting opportunities for students. The committee will invite a representative from the student leadership development committee to a meeting for further updates.
 - d. C. Coon provided an update on the activities associated with the NCAA recertification process.
 - e. C. Coon announced that Deans and Vice Presidents will participate in a NCBI Welcoming Diversity workshop in May.

4. Policy on Ordering of Accessible Instructional Materials.
 - a. Chair Edmondson provided a summary of the policy's impetus, current status as an interim policy, and content.
 - b. Disabled students and SSD staff are very frustrated about late textbook orders. To make textbooks accessible, books have to be submitted through a CSU system wide accessibility initiative unit and this 8 weeks. Book orders that arrive less than 8 weeks before the beginning of the semester can be manually scanned; however, scanning is time and labor intensive and cost ineffective. Late textbook orders have adverse effects on students. For example, if students do not have access to books until the 3rd or 4th week of the semester, they miss opportunities to read the text to prepare for class activities, complete assignments, or prepare for tests. If faculty comply with the deadlines there would be positive consequences for the entire student body. For example, the bookstore will know which versions of texts to buy back for use in the upcoming semester, students will be able to have more time to shop and order texts from on-line resources.
 - c. Concerns about the policy as written:
 - "Accessibility of textbooks" is not defined. Faculty need to be educated about what accessibility means when it comes to the ordering of text books.
 - "Equivalence of textbooks" is not defined and the authority to determine the equivalence of textbooks is not assigned. The instructor is the best person to determine the equivalence of textbooks.
 - Is it appropriate to consider financial cost as a "guideline" for insuring the accessibility of texts?
 - Perhaps address this issue in another policy or another section. Students pay attention to the cost of textbooks and at times cannot afford to purchase texts. Faculty may not realize the importance of students' financial concerns. If they did they may be more willing to consider cost as they select text books.
 - d. Implementation concerns – there is a need to support faculty in evaluating the accessibility of textbooks. There are websites that could be used to assist instructors with this evaluation (i.e., www.tsbvi.edu/textbooks) but it is likely that instructors are not aware of these resources.

- e. Action – Memo
 - Important to address the issue.
 - Request clarification of the meaning of “accessibility” and “equivalent”.
 - Make recommendations about the faculty education regarding resources for evaluating accessibility (i.e., perhaps a memo to faculty that directs them to a bookstore link).
 - Summary of the discussion of cost of textbook issue.
5. APM 231 - Interim Policy on Adding and Dropping Classes.
 - a. Chair Edmondson provided a summary of the policy’s current status as an interim policy and content. She also summarized the CSU system wide “course withdrawal” policy.
 - b. Repeating courses with grade averaging presents a significant implementation issue for the registrar.
 - c. Discussion of the definition of “serious and compelling reason” for withdrawing from a course. Current wording is too limiting. Perhaps an appeals process is needed for situations in which instructors and/or deans deem the students situation as failing to meet the “serious and compelling reason” criteria. Discussion of the reasons that students withdraw from classes: a) changes in a employment, work responsibilities, and/or work schedule, b) death or illness of family members, c) changes in childcare arrangements, d) underestimation of the difficulty and/or amount of work required by the course. Student work responsibilities are a very compelling issue for students, which become very serious for them when they interfere with classes. Students work to pay for their education and thus, it is reasonable for their work obligations to be considered as serious and compelling. Rationale for limits on “W” grades is retention and timely graduation – failure allow changes at work to be considered as serious and compelling reasons may inadvertently result in barriers for retention and graduation of students. Reconsider allowing withdraws for poor academic performance. There is a difference between protecting one’s GPA and supporting a student who is struggling in his/her coursework. Students often do not have a sense of the difficulty of a class until after the third week of instruction. Dropping a failing course early in the semester, may allow a student to not only perform well in the

remaining courses, but also to learn and retain the course material for application in other courses and/or the community. Consensus that there should be reasonable consideration of a specific student's situation when evaluating a request for a course withdrawal (i.e., history of academic performance). Solutions to problem with definition may be to change wording: "other condition" changed to "other situation." Specifying that the other situation as a "circumstance to which the student has been subjected to." Discussion to be continued at the next meeting.

6. System Wide Policy on Course Withdrawals.

Postponed.

7. Draft System Wide Policy on "Course Repeats".

Postponed.

8. Honor Code and Policy and Procedures on Cheating and Plagiarism.

Postponed.

MSC to adjourn at 10:55 a.m.

The next Student Affairs Committee meeting will be Wednesday, March 5, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in the University Center, Room #203.

Agenda.

1. Approval of Minutes of 2/20/2008.
2. Approval of Agenda.
3. Communication and Announcements.
4. Review Memo to Mike Botwin and AP&P regarding Policy on Accessible Instructional Materials.
4. Implications of System Wide Policies for the Revision of the Interim Policy on Dropping and Adding Courses (APM 231).
5. Implications of System Wide Policies for Repeating Courses.
6. Honor Code and Policy and Procedures on Cheating and Plagiarism.