

Summary Update Number 15, May 20, 2005

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Recommendations from Faculty Council

Three recommendations from the Academic Standards and Policies were passed at the May 10th meeting of the Faculty Council.

Total Hours in a Curriculum:

The Council recommended to the President that OSU acknowledge that the Faculty within each academic department are responsible for determining curricular requirements for each degree offered and that no administrative officer of OSU impose arbitrary maximum limits on the number of credit hours in any degree program. The recommendation further stated that it should be understood that the Faculty of each department or academic unit bear the primary responsibility for standards, curriculum, and numbers of credit hours that support proficiency in the subject matter, meet OSU General Education requirements, meet appropriate program accreditation requirements, conform to the policies of the State Regents for Higher Education. The Rationales listed in support of the recommendation point out that this recommendation is in accord with the AAUP policy statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.

The exact wording of the recommendation is

The Faculty Council Recommends to President Schmidly that:

There be acknowledgement that the Faculty within each academic department are responsible for determining curricular requirements for each degree offered and that no administrative officer of OSU impose arbitrary maximum limits on the number of credit hours in any degree program. Included in this responsibility is the understanding that Faculty of each department or academic unit set forth the standards, curriculum, and numbers of credit hours that support proficiency in the subject matter, meet OSU General Education requirements, meet appropriate program accreditation requirements, conform to the policies of the State Regents for Higher Education. Within the context of these requirements, it is the responsibility and obligation of the Faculty of Oklahoma State University to ensure curricula that meet the high standards of performance expected of a comprehensive university.

Default Attendance Policy:

At the April meeting of the Council, the Student Government Association presented a recommendation to the Council that there be no grade penalty when students fail to attend class. In response, the Academic Standards and Policies Committee drafted the following compromise recommendation:

The Faculty Council Recommends to President Schmidly that:

It be noted for the record that the authority to establish an attendance policy belongs with the faculty and that the university adopt a uniform default attendance policy regarding the relationship between the course grade awarded and the attendance of the student. Moreover, it is specifically recommended that this default attendance policy shall be: "No penalty will be assessed for class absences." It is further recommended that this attendance policy would be in force in the absence of a written policy provided to the student within the first three lectures of a semester. If this recommendation is passed by Faculty Council and accepted by the Administration, the Academic Standards and Policies Committee will work with the Administration to draft an appropriate Policies and Procedures letter.

The recommendation passed on a show of hands.

Changes to University Policy and Procedures Document 2-0821, Academic Affairs, March 2001. APPEAL OF FINAL GRADE NOT INVOLVING ALLEGATION OF DISHONESTY OR MISCONDUCT

This recommendation suggests several important changes to the procedures under which students can appeal their final grades in a course. The most important changes are summarized below.

At present, University Policy and Procedures Document 2-0821 does not provide for appeal of the decision of the Academic Appeals Board (AAB) either by the professor or the student. The recommended policy would alter this by allowing written appeals within five business days. Such appeals would be filed with the Provost's office. To be heard, the appeal must show that the AAB failed to follow its own policies and procedures or that new information related to the original decision has become available. The Appeal Board would comprise four members, Chair of the General Faculty (Chair, non-voting), the Provost, the Chair of the Faculty Council's Academic Standards and Policies Committee, and either the President of the SGA if the student is an undergraduate or the President of the GPSGA if the student is a graduate student. The appeals board would be empowered to either uphold the AAB's decision, nullify the decision, or return the case to the AAB for rehearing.

The recommended changes allow the professor in charge of the course to bring academic integrity charges against the student if he/she feels fraudulent information has been presented to the AAB. In the event of such charges, the case will be transferred to

the Academic Integrity Board (yet to be formed). As in all cases involving academic integrity charges, the burden of proof would rest with the instructor.

All appointed members of the AAB would have to attend an orientation session conducted by the Chair of the AAB. This session will stress regulations for hearing or not hearing an appeal and all processes associated with a grade appeal.

Each party to a grade appeal will be permitted to have present one silent observer of their choosing. Each party will also have the right to call a short recess to consult with the observer outside the hearing room.

The recommendation passed on a show of hands.

General Faculty Vote on Rank-In-Class (RIC) Evaluation Proposal:

The RIC proposal was defeated by vote of the General Faculty with 174 voting in favor of the proposal and 213 opposed.

The Rules and Procedures Committee identified some voting irregularities in that eight ballots were clearly duplicated. These ballots were not included in the final count. During the next year, the Rules and Procedures Committee will be working on ways to avoid this problem in the future.

Council Vote on Appendix D Revisions:

The Faculty Council will vote on the suggested revisions to Appendix D at their June 14 meeting.

The original revisions were made by the Appendix D Committee appointed by the Provost. This committee had both faculty and administration representation. When the first draft was ready, a series of five or six open forum discussions were held. Input and additional suggestions were collected. The Appendix D Committee met again to incorporate these comments and ideas. The second draft was referred to the Faculty Council in December of 2004. After discussion in the Executive Committee, the document was referred to the Faculty Committee. While under consideration by that committee, two committees comprising regents professors suggested changes to the sections of Appendix D dealing with appointment, reappointment, and criteria for selection of regents professors. The reports of these two committees were submitted to the Provost who made changes that were approved by the committees. These suggestions were then given to the Faculty Committee. In addition, the Faculty Committee had the

recommendations from the Research Committee on research professorships and from the committee dealing with the establishment of clinical professorships.

The recommendations from the Faculty Committee were received by the Executive Committee of the Council in April. A panel of three comprising the Chair of the Faculty Committee, the Chair of the General Faculty, and the Provost then met to resolve the differences between the various groups that had had input to the document. The document that emerged from all these discussions can be viewed on the Academic Affairs webpage. It is this document that the Council will consider on June 14. If the Council votes to approve, the question will be submitted to a vote of the General Faculty early in the fall of this year.

Acknowledgements:

This will be final Summary Update that I will write as Chair of the General Faculty. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Faculty, the Administration, and the Board of Regents for their support where it was provided and for their constructive criticism and suggestions when there was disagreement. To the extent that we achieved objectives of value to the University, this could not have been accomplished without this support. It has been a privilege to serve.

I would like to take this opportunity to relate a series of incidents that I witnessed at the OSU undergraduate commencement this year on May 7th. While waiting with Professor Bob Darcy to lead the platform party processional, the OSU graduating seniors filed past to take their places on the floor of the arena. Again and again, one of the seniors would step out of the ranks to shake Professor Darcy's hand or embrace him warmly while expressing their gratitude for his guidance and instruction during their undergraduate studies. In several cases, the students requested that Professor Darcy present them with their degrees when they marched across the stage. As these students approached the stage, Professor Darcy honored each of their requests. He stepped forward as the Dean of Arts and Sciences stepped back allowing Dr. Darcy to present the degree cover to the student.

I cannot imagine a better recommendation for the man who will assume the position of Chair of General Faculty on June 1. The position is in good hands.