

Report for the Faculty Senate Meeting, February 14, 2018

Minutes for the Personnel Policies Committee Meeting Thursday, February 8, 2018, 3:00 p.m. in The Faculty Lounge (second floor Russell Building)

Attending: Stan Alluisi, Charles Matthews, Karl Frinkle, Crystal Moore, William Fridley (Moore and Fridley also serve on the Executive Committee). And Executive Committee members Dan Althoff and Chris Moretti.

I. Call to Order

Chair Fridley called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

II. Items

- A. Discuss issues related to *accelerated online programs*: enrollment caps, teaching load, compensation. Senator Althoff prepared a list of possible discussion items that served as an initial framework for the discussion (see below*).

Discussion included the following:

1. What are the appropriate roles of Academic Council and the Faculty Senate, given that many of these issues have both curricular and personnel dimensions? It was agreed that communication and cooperation between the AC and the FS are desired and will be pursued.
2. Questions were raised about scheduling, determining teaching load (and what constitutes an overload), and compensation for courses offered in varied and mixed modalities (e.g. 4-hour lab courses, Graduate courses, online 7-week, 8-week, 16-week, face-to-face). It was agreed that a degree of flexibility by departments to handle departmental, program, and personnel situations is needed, as are some basic guidelines for scheduling, teaching load, and compensation.
3. Questions about enrollment caps were discussed, particularly in regard to the new accelerated undergrad courses slated to begin in the fall of 2018. It was agreed that the faculty of academic departments are best able to judge and determine enrollment caps for their classes. For example, one senator noted the manifest difference between teaching an online Algebra class with 30 vs. 25 students. Freshman composition classes, it was noted, are grading intensive (and the intensity is magnified in the 7-week accelerated format due to the condensed turnaround time for grading and providing feedback).
4. A question was raised about which online courses will be required to convert to the 7-week accelerated format.
5. There was discussion about the Generalized Format (aka the Southeastern Format) for course shells on Blackboard. It was noted that at the last Distance Education Council Meeting (February 1, 2018) that Christala Smith (Director, Center for Instructional Development and Technology) used the word *consistency* to describe the format (rather than *standardized* or *uniform*). It was asked if there are any arguments against requiring the Generalized Format. Perhaps, a senator mentioned, they would be the same type of arguments made against the required use of Bb as the sole Learning Management System (LMS). This led to a related question of the use (and limits to use) of third-party instructional content, particularly in regard to the storing of student grades.

6. The difficulty of predicting future enrollment in order to schedule courses--especially with the unprecedented foray into offering undergraduate programs in the online accelerated format--was discussed. Two possible ways to approach this were offered: (a) set a reasonable enrollment cap for the course (e.g. 25) and then open a new section when the cap is reached. (b) offer one section and then farm out 25 students per instructor.
7. The use of "coaches," which has been the practice for the MBA programs, was briefly discussed. The question was asked, "at what point can a course employing coaches be said to *still be taught* by the instructor of record."
8. Senate Chair Althoff mentioned the need for the FS to obtaining current information on the accelerated online programs. He will be contacting Dr. Tim Boatmun (Dean of E-programming) to ask if he can attend various meetings regarding the accelerated programs, and Althoff can then relay this information to the FS.
9. Senator Moore volunteered to compile a list of the issues discussed, ascertain what we know is the case, to identify questions that need to be addressed, and to make suggestions on how to proceed. The plan is to have this document for review and discussion at the next meeting of the PPC (sometime in March).
10. There were no action items.

B. Discuss the annual department chair evaluations of faculty (for background, see APPM 4.4.2, and the Faculty Development and Evaluation Summary, [Appendix G](#)).
It was agreed that discussion of this item would be postponed to the next meeting.

III. **Old Business**

Updates of the APPM

Chair Fridley reiterated that a list of needed updates and edits to the Academic Procedures and Policies Manual (APPM) from the 2016-2017 academic year was emailed to VPAA Bryon Clark on [October 2, 2017](#) (p. 5). The updates have not been completed. Fridley also mentioned that he informed President Burrage of the delay at a meeting with the AAUP Executive Committee on Monday, February 5.

[After the meeting, Fridley received an email from VPAA Clark requesting a meeting to review what had been done on the APPM. They met on Friday, February 9, 2018. Progress had been made on the APPM by Academic Affairs (particularly in including new administrative positions in Chapter 2, and omitting references to *Deans* in Chapter 4), but the updates are not yet complete. Dr. Clark assured Fridley that he would take care of the changes.]

IV. **New Business**—no new business

V. **Adjournment**—the meeting adjourned at 4:30.

Respectfully submitted by William Lloyd Fridley, chair of the Personnel Policies Committee

*Concerns and Questions Regarding AP Collaboration/Online Courses

- **IN GENERAL: What the heck is going on?** How are ongoing and new developments shared with the university community at large, and in particular with the Faculty Senate? The Faculty Senate is not regularly informed or consulted about this significant and ongoing transformation of the university. Almost all of the information I have gained has been from my department chair.
- Particularly for those teaching 100% online in the new AP collaboration, how will teaching load be determined--by SCH/number of students, or by number of courses?
- How are AP course caps determined--by what criteria, and by whom? Will **all** AP courses be “cookie-cuttered” into having the same caps, or is there room for variations based on the content area and the need for intensive, personalized instructor feedback, such as in English Comp classes?
- Relatedly, will there be a maximum number of students an instructor will be responsible for during a given term or semester?
- How is the need for AP coaches determined--by what criteria, and by whom?

Possible Implications/Consequences of AP Collaboration

- SE has been offering online courses in eight-week blocks as well as for the full semester. The arrival of AP has added the seven-week course. Will eight-week online courses remain an option for the **non-Gen Ed, non-AP** courses? Will eight-week *face-to-face* and/or *hybrid* courses remain an option for students and faculty?
- There are already faculty in the JMSB who are on 12-month contracts, in addition to department chairs who receive a supplement for summer. Will a 12-month contract eventually become the norm for our current “non-AP” faculty as we expand into undergrad degrees—if only for the purpose of consistency in payroll accounting? Moving into a 12-month contract suggests an overall increase in salary for those faculty on the traditional August-May calendar.
- If a 10-month contract remains in effect (at least for some of the faculty), how will summer compensation be determined? Will the existing summer formula remain in effect for AP courses?
- As AP courses and degree programs increase in enrollment, will there be new full-time faculty to meet the demand and perhaps even reduce large enrollment caps in the process?