

Senate Scholastic Standards Committee

Agenda 10/17/2023

Co-Chairs: Karen Bresciano, Jamie Kleinman

A. Welcome and Introductions

- ***Karen Bresciano, Co-Chair**, The Graduate School (absent)
- ***Jamie Kleinman, Co-Chair**, CLAS, Psychological Sciences, Avery Point
- *Maureen Armstrong, Dean of Students Office
- *Kelly Burke, Engineering, Chem & Biomolecular
- *Robin Coulter, Business, Marketing
- *Carrie Fernandes, Financial Aid
- *Holly Fitch, CLAS, Psychological Sciences (absent)
- * Gavin Kuebler, USG (absent)
- *Morty Ortega, CAHNR, Natural Resources and the Environment
- *Sharyn Rusch, CLAS, Advising Center, Biological Sciences
- *Lawrence Walsh, Office of Admissions
- Erin Ciarimboli, Office of Undergraduate Advising (absent)
- Sarah Croucher, Provost's Office, Academic Affairs
- Lindsay Cummings, SFA, Dramatic Arts
- Jennifer Lease Butts, Honors and Enrichment Program (Ex-Officio Member)
- Brian Rockwood, Registrar's Office
- Lauren Schlesselman, CETL, Academic Program Assessment and Learning Initiatives
- Christine Wenzel, Center for Students with Disabilities

B. Approval of Minutes 9/19/2023:

- a. The meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

C. Announcements

- a. If you are an instructor of a 1000 or 2000 level course, make sure you enter mid-term grades for all students by the end of this week if you have not already done so. It is recommended that you enter grades for all students in any class, but the requirement, passed last year by this committee, is all students of all grades in 1000 or 2000 level classes.

D. Updates

- a. Current Working Groups
 - i. Temporary Grades and Academic Engagement: Erin Ciarimboli is not able to join this meeting until later, so **Jamie Kleinman** reported on her behalf. They are working on policy documents and are not planning any motions or bylaw changes. **Carrie Fernandes** added that work on academic engagement is complete and now is the time for implementation. She shared details of recent meetings and a formal procedural document focused on overall grading, and a piece about how to enter the last date of attendance, is being developed. The focus for the next month or so will be getting the procedural document ready and working with key stakeholders to launch the procedures in Spring 2024.

Robin Coulter raised concerns about N vs F in grading, particularly citing a lack of clarity in the by-laws. The goal is to ensure these new procedures are in alignment with the bylaws and if the bylaws are unclear, they need to be updated. **Brian Rockwood** added that a development database has been designed for F/U/N grades for last date of attendance, but it is not yet live. He described that there is a new field that appears for students who have an F/N/U field that requires a date to be entered in this field in order to move forward with grading. **Maureen Armstrong** added that there is often a misuse of I or X and referred to the bylaws. **Jamie Kleinman** stated she will confer with Karen Bresciano and come back to the group with more information now that it seems a bylaw change may be in question on this issue.

b. New Working Groups

- i. Calendaring (Juneteenth holiday): **Jamie Kleinman** introduced this topic stating that the addition of the Juneteenth holiday indirectly impact Summer I and alt Summer I. Welcome **Brian Rockwood** to the floor. **Brian Rockwood** presented a series of slides on the Summer 2024 program dates. He stated that these sessions do not overlap with each other except Alternate Session I and Alternate Session II. The issue with adding Juneteenth is you lose an instruction day, which is difficult when a course is a short duration. He shared proposed date changes for Summer Sessions to mitigate this loss of an instruction day due to the holiday. However, the sessions would now end on a Monday rather than a Friday, which is awkward, and the following sessions would start the Tuesday following (no gap between sessions for students doing multiple sessions). **Jen Lease Butts** asked about final exams for these courses and **Brian Rockwood** clarified that there are no final exam periods for these courses, but there could be final assessments on the last day of class, which in the new proposed schedule would be on a Monday. **Morty Ortega** asked about online synchronous numbers and **Brian Rockwood** reported that most classes are synchronous online, but some are asynchronous, and that about 50-60% would be online synchronous. **Morty Ortega** shared that he doesn't think this would be an issue from his perspective as an instructor who teaches online synchronous summer courses. **Kelly Burke** spoke in support of this change to allow Juneteenth to be a non-instruction holiday. **Robin Couter** suggested the addition of an online asynchronous component to a summer class to get enough instruction in without adding the Monday. Discussion ensued around different holidays on the academic calendar when instruction takes place and how the scheduling works in those cases, particularly for fall break. **Jamie Kleinman** brought the conversation back to the question at hand – whether we leave the calendar as-is understanding that Session I students would miss two instruction days (one for Memorial Day, the second for Juneteenth), or we can shift the schedule to mitigate this loss of instruction days. To move the conversation forward, **Jamie Kleinman** encouraged committee members to refer to resources in the MS Teams site and that this topic will be raised again at the next meeting.

- ii. Bunched finals: **Jamie Kleinman** summarized the issue, which was raised by student committee members during the September meeting and introduced **Brian Rockwood** to present data on this potential change. **Brian Rockwood** shared a slide showing scheduled conflicts and its important to bear in mind that sometimes finals are scheduled and do not take place due to alternate final exams (i.e. final papers in lieu of an exam). **Maureen Armstrong** shared a data document of Storrs-based data of the changes that are approved for three finals in one day.
- iii. **Data shared by Maureen Armstrong:**

Bunched Finals Rescheduling	Fall 2022	Fall 2021	Fall 2020	Fall 2019
2 Exams at the Same Time	33	50	190	154
3 in 1 Day	115	104	121	288
3 in consecutive time blocks	3	0	1	2
4 in 1 Day	16	6	24	28
4 in 2 Days	14	17	21	86
5 in 1 day	0	0	3	0
5 in 2 Days	2	2	10	13
Total	183	179	370	571

Bunched Finals Rescheduling	Spring 2023	Spring 2022	Spring 2021	Spring 2020
2 Exams at the Same Time	49	39	77	51
3 in 1 Day	130	80	87	129
3 in consecutive time blocks	1	0	0	3
4 in 1 Day	6	6	13	20
4 in 2 Days	11	13	18	24
5 in 1 day	2	0	3	0
5 in 2 Days	2	2	5	6
6 in 2 days	0	0	0	0
Total	201	140	203	233

- iv. Discussion ensued on the numbers and proposed change, particularly around the impact that this change would have on the administrative work involved in making these changes if the number of eligible students were to go up. **Maureen Armstrong** said that doing what is in the students' best interest is the priority and that educating faculty on what is put on the list as a final is key to reducing the administrative labor of this change, citing an example when a "final" is listed on the scheduled but is actually just when a final paper is due. **Brian Rockwood** shared details about CourseLeaf, which is a new system for scheduling classes. This system puts the departments in control of inputting course scheduling information into the system. When departments are scheduling a class, they are always asked if they need a final exam to be scheduled or not. It used to be that finals were automatically scheduled and faculty would have to opt out. The expectation is things will hopefully be more

accurate moving forward with CourseLeaf, but it's possible that numbers of finals are still inflated due to a variety of factors. **Jamie Kleinman** thanked **Brian Rockwood** and **Maureen Armstrong** for their reports and summarized that if we switch from 3 in a calendar day from 3 in 24 hours that it could potentially double the number of eligible requests. She confirmed with **Maureen Armstrong** that if requests doubled, her office could accommodate that increase in requests. Because student representatives are not present during today's meeting, this discussion has been tabled to a future meeting. **Jamie Kleinman** will reach out to the student members of this committee, so they are aware of the conversation and data presented.

E. New Business

- a. Review Academic Programs Glossary of Terms Document from Provost's Office: **Jamie Kleinman** introduced the document and opened the floor for discussion, stating that feedback must be sent to the Provost's Office with feedback by November 1st. **Sarah Croucher** added additional background on the source of this document, which was put together by herself and Gladis Kersaint. She also requested that editors differentiate in their comments, which of their edits are key clarifying points or those that are just suggested edits, so that they can prioritize edits and comments easily. **Lawrence Walsh** asked a clarifying question about the intended audience for this document. **Sarah Croucher** clarified that this is intended to be an internal document focused on undergraduate programs. **Kelly Burke** asked a clarifying question about some items listed in this document and whether they are already defined in the catalog, and asked for clarity on who this document is intended to help. **Morty Artega** raised concerns about this document and its potential to be used against the university in a legal fashion, citing that nowhere in the document does it say "draft." **Sarah Croucher** clarified that it is clearly marked as a draft and added that this document is intended to help academic faculty and staff in clarifying confusion particularly around course coding and course development. **Robin Coulter** raised the question whether a glossary is an appropriate vehicle for all that this document is trying to communicate.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Next meeting: 10 – 11:30 a.m. October 31st