

Senate Scholastic Standards Committee

Agenda 11/14/2023

Co-Chairs: Karen Bresciano, Jamie Kleinman

A. Welcome and Introductions

- ***Karen Bresciano, Co-Chair**, The Graduate School
- ***Jamie Kleinman, Co-Chair**, CLAS, Psychological Sciences, Avery Point
- *Maureen Armstrong, Dean of Students Office
- *Kelly Burke, Engineering, Chem & Biomolecular
- *Robin Coulter, Business, Marketing (*absent*)
- *Carrie Fernandes, Financial Aid
- *Holly Fitch, CLAS, Psychological Sciences
- * Gavin Kuebler, USG (*absent*)
- *Morty Ortega, CAHNR, Natural Resources and the Environment
- *Sharyn Rusch, CLAS, Advising Center, Biological Sciences
- *Lawrence Walsh, Office of Admissions (*absent*)
- Erin Ciarimboli, Office of Undergraduate Advising
- Sarah Croucher, Provost's Office, Academic Affairs
- Lindsay Cummings, SFA, Dramatic Arts (*absent*)
- Kamara Nyahuma, Undergraduate Student
- 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 10/31/2023

- a. Minutes approved unanimously as written

C. Announcements

D. Updates

- a. Calendaring
 - i. Juneteenth holiday: **Karen Bresciano** shared that we are working together to put through a motion on this as discussed during the last SSC meeting.
 - ii. Election Day: this was raised during a recent SEC meeting by request of the USG, and was sent to SSC to discuss. **Karen Bresciano** shared that Brian Rockwood has done some research on this. **Brian Rockwood** shared a report, sharing bylaws and offered some potential solutions. The options presented were either to start the semester earlier, end later, or lose a day of instructions. Each potential solution presented different issues and discussion ensued. He shared that the semester is 14 weeks and there are an equal number of instruction days except for Monday, due to the Labor Day holiday. The group discussed the different options and also removing days from the Thanksgiving holiday was proposed and debated. If the term were to start earlier, it would affect summer term, financial aid disbursements, move-in, and other important logistics during

that period of time so it was not discussed as a viable option. **Holly Fitch** shared concerns about her ability to teach a full course if there is any further loss of instruction days during the Fall semester and expressed interest in allowing faculty to offer a remote teaching day on election day if it suits their course as a way to offer additional flexibility to students on this day. **Jen Lease Butts** shared that current university policy states “If the University has not announced a delay or cancellation of classes, faculty are expected to hold their classes as scheduled in the modality originally advertised.” **Morty Ortega** shared concerns about students going home on the weekend to be there for Tuesday, and also effectively missing classes on Monday.

Fall Semester Bylaws:

- ▶ Fall Semesters will adhere to the following principles:
 - ▶ a. Classes shall begin on the Monday preceding Labor Day.
 - ▶ b. Residence Halls shall open no later than the weekend before classes start.
 - ▶ c. Classes shall not meet on Labor Day.
 - ▶ d. Classes shall not meet on the week of Thanksgiving.
 - ▶ e. No regularly scheduled final examinations shall be held on the first Thursday of final examination week, which shall be known as a Reading Day.

Current Fall 2024 Schedule

- ▶ Classes Start Monday 8/26
- ▶ No Classes on Labor day Monday 9/2
- ▶ Thanksgiving break Sunday 11/24 to Saturday 12/1
- ▶ Last day of classes, Friday 12/6
- ▶ Reading days Saturday 12/7, Sunday 12/8, and Thursday 12/12
- ▶ Final Exams Monday 12/9 through Sunday 12/15

- b. Bunched finals: **Jamie Kleinman** reopened discussion on this topic and summarized the issue. **Kamara Nyahumana** shared feedback on behalf of students on this issue. Discussion ensued on the issue and the timing of when this would be appropriate to move forward, considering the new CourseLeaf software and how professors will need to opt-in to offering a final when entering their course into the new system (starting Spring 2024), which should reduce the number of occurrences/conflicts. The committee will report to the SEC that the committee would like to wait until there is more data

available from CourseLeaf before making a decision or official recommendation on this topic.

- c. Drop/Add: **Jamie Kleinman** summarized previous discussions on this topic – splitting add/drop from each other is a nonstarter and moving the add/drop period up (fewer than 10 days) would also be problematic, particularly for disadvantaged students, financial aid and students requiring accommodations. **Karen Bresciano** shared that there does not appear to be a consensus about what happens in the first two weeks of classes, regarding what professors cover and how they can accommodate students who add courses late/during this period and that in lieu of this committee proposing a bylaw change on the dates, could further guidance be issued on what both students and instructors should expect during those initial weeks. **Lauren Schlesselman** shared that CETL does not currently have resources on this topic and added that additional work will be needed to ensure faculty are aware of and use any resources created. Discussion also ensued on the [syllabus repository](#) – this may be for online courses only; there is a lack of clarity. Brian Rockwood shared that he was a part of the creation of this repository and shared that there has been a lack of communication on this. **Jamie Kleinman** asked the group if the committee would like to propose a bylaw change that would require professors to allow students to do makeup work so that work from the first two weeks does not necessarily harm a student’s grade. **Karen Bresciano** said she would not be interested in a bylaw change, but that it would be a good idea, if this committee comes to an agreement, to share some communication on this matter outward to faculty. **Maureen Armstrong** emphasized the importance of educating faculty and students rather than making a bylaw change. **Karen Bresciano** proposed that members of this committee form a subcommittee to write guidance to students and faculty to be sent to both the Office of the Provost for communicating with the faculty, the Registrar’s office for students and faculty, and others. **Karen Bresciano** collected names and will be in touch with the group (Holly Fitch, Maureen Armstrong, Sarah Croucher, Kamara Nyahuma)
- E. New Business
- a. There was no new business
 - b. **Holly Fitch** asked a question about the status of the SEC’s work on setting up a committee on CSD. **Christine Wenzel** confirmed that she has met with Laura Burton, SEC Chair. **Maureen Armstrong** added that things are moving forward, and **Jamie Kleinman** said she will bring this up to the SEC during this Friday’s meeting (11/17).

The meeting was adjourned at 11:22 a.m.