

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL

Minutes

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

In Attendance: David Bell, Janet Clarke, Brian Colle, Donna DiDonato, Arlene Feldman, Sarah Fuller, Rick Gatteau, Kane Gillespie, Cheryl Hamilton, Ridha Kamoua, Beverly Rivera, Scott Sutherland, Andrea Tyree.

The meeting began at 4 p.m.

The minutes of the March 27, 2007 and April 10, 2007 meetings were distributed, reviewed, and approved with minor edits.

The committee discussed two agenda items:

Southampton Campus:

Brian Colle asked the Council for feedback from Martin Schoonen's April 10 visit. Brian summarized that Southampton is a work-in-progress, and that we would revisit curricular and other issues when we resume meetings in the fall.

Sarah Fuller commented that we need to think through use of library materials, and expressed concern about sending materials back and forth between the Main and Southampton campuses. Beverly Rivera responded that President Kenny wants a stand-alone library at the Southampton campus.

Sarah Fuller stated that we should ask for reports/updates on academic matters, including DEC courses.

Donna DiDonato reported that Martin Schoonen spoke at a recent Arts & Sciences Senate meeting, sharing that he would like major proposals to be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee over the summer. Donna clarified for the group that course approvals go through the Curriculum Committee; programs go through both the Curriculum Committee and Undergraduate Council.

It was noted that Southampton related issues (e.g., provisional majors) can be reviewed in parallel by both the Curriculum Committee and Undergraduate Council.

Questions arose related to proposed timelines for approval. Kane Gillespie reported that in order to have the majors in place for fall 2008, they need to be sent to the Provost, followed by the state, for approval, the latter of which can take several months. There is interest in completing this process by October 2007 in order to advertise and hire Southampton faculty to teach in these majors.

Resolution: Brian Colle will send Martin Schoonen an e-mail asking for a report and update, and communicate the Council's role in providing oversight for academically-related matters.

Academic Overload:

Donna DiDonato reviewed the current policy and procedure regarding academic overloads. Currently, students with no incomplete grades may request an overload through the academic

petition process, regardless of GPA. Overload approvals do not exceed 24 credits (fall/spring semesters).

Donna presented the following proposal:

- Students with a grade of incomplete in any course are not eligible for an overload.
- Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.00 and higher, and no incomplete grades, may submit an overload request directly to the Registrar (no petition required).
- Students with a cumulative GPA between 2.50 and 2.99 with no incomplete grades may petition for an overload.
- Students with a cumulative GPA below 2.50 are not eligible for an overload.
- Overload not to exceed 22 credits (fall/spring semesters).

Donna reported that about 200 students petition for an overload each semester, with the vast majority having over a 3.0 cumulative GPA.

The Council reviewed and discussed each part of the proposal. All agreed that grades of incomplete should make a student ineligible for an overload. It was also agreed that students who have a grade of “Q” for academic dishonesty on their record should be ineligible for an overload.

The Council agreed that students with a 3.00 and higher should be afforded this streamlined and less bureaucratic option, since the current petition process requires visits to several offices. Beverly Rivera reported that professional staff will review students’ academic transcripts at the Registrar’s Office window to ensure the 3.00 cumulative GPA, and that any CAS or COB questions will be directed to Donna, and CEAS questions will be directed to the Assistant Dean in the College of Engineering & Applied Sciences.

One concern arose regarding a student with a 3.00 cumulative GPA or higher, who in the most recent semester earned low grades (less than a 3.00). After some discussion about this, the Council agreed to have the policy stand, but review it again in two semesters. This will allow an opportunity to gather information on students and see if this is indeed a concern.

The Council discussed the “no petition permitted” rule for students with less than a 2.50 GPA. One concern arose regarding a student who has less than a 2.50 cumulative GPA, but earned, for example, a 3.8 in their most recent semester. Others commented that even with a good semester GPA, it is still desirable for such a student to take a lighter course load.

The Council discussed the proposed reduction in credit overload from 24 to 22 credits. Some argued that with the simplified process of getting an overload, more students will “shop” for classes they don’t intend to complete, thus supporting a reduced credit limit to 22 credits. Others argued that some students (e.g., engineers) may need the maximum credit limit based upon the demands of their academic program. The Council comprised on a limit of 23 credits.

The Council also summarized existing policies and procedures, which are reflected in the statement below.

Recommended Academic Overload Policy and Procedure for Fall and Spring Semesters:

- Students with a grade of incomplete or Q in any course are not eligible for an overload.
- Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.00 and higher, and no incomplete or Q grades, may submit an overload request directly to the Registrar (no petition required). The Registrar's Office reviews students' transcripts; any questions go to the respective Academic Affairs Office.
- Students with a cumulative GPA between 2.50 and 2.99 with no incomplete or Q grades may petition for an overload.
- Students with a cumulative GPA below 2.50 are not eligible for an overload.
- Overload not to exceed 23 credits (fall/spring semesters).
- Students are permitted to make overload requests (>3.00 cumulative GPA) and file petitions for overloads (2.50-2.99 cumulative GPA) beginning the day the credit limit is raised from 17 to 19 credits through the end of add/drop.
- Students must have completed one semester at Stony Brook (fall or spring) in order to be eligible for consideration of an academic overload.
- For Winter Session courses, the maximum credit limit is 4; no overloads permitted.
- For Summer Session courses, the maximum credit limit is 9 per session; students who wish to register for an additional course submit a petition for review to the respective Academic Affairs Office (includes all students regardless of GPA).

Resolution: The above policy and procedure revision was approved with all in favor, except one "no" vote.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the effective date for this change; specifically, whether the Bulletin supplement's printing date (currently twice a year) should drive when policy or procedural changes may take effect OR whether the Council has the right to make policy or procedural changes (and effective dates) at times outside of the semi-annual publication schedule. The Council agreed to revisit this matter at a future meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Gatteau