

Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee  
Minutes—March 8, 2018

Present (voting): Rodney Bransdorfer, Clem Ehoff, Janet Finke, Dan Lipori, Megan Matheson, Ke Zhong

Present (ex-officio): Lindsey Brown, Gail Mackin, Walter Szeliga

Absent (voting): Eric Bennett, David Martin

Absent (ex-officio): Julia Stringfellow

Guests: Cody Stoddard

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. Minutes of Feb. 22, 2018 were approved with one abstention.

*Chair updates*

The Interdisciplinary Studies policy was approved at the Feb. 21 UPAC meeting. A group led by Martha Kurtz is still working on things related to interdisciplinary programs. This group appears to be a smaller spin-off of the group the provost originally created last year. Dan attended their last meeting.

The Syllabi policy passed Faculty Senate at the March 8 meeting. It will go on to the next level. Kande Cleary agreed with the diversity language. Cody talked to Student Success, and they were fine with the language relating to student conduct. However, some questions and concerns surrounding the policy do exist. Specifically, there are concerns the expectations of student conduct language. As this is currently written, it may open the possibility for faculty to write something into the policy that goes beyond what they are allowed to do. Faculty members could potentially ban something based on the language, but elsewhere in policy there could be something contradictory stating they are not allowed to do that.

The Class Attendance & Participation policy came back from EC. Two policies on foreign language are coming back from Provost Council due to concerns about the AS & AAS degrees being switched. The degrees should be treated differently than they are in the policy language, but there are no issues other than that.

During the first meeting of spring quarter, scheduled for March 29, current charges will be reviewed and re-prioritized. Potential meeting dates for next year will be discussed, as well as the make-up of the committee and the possibility of a new committee chair.

*Old Business*

a. Class Attendance & Participation Policy/Procedure (CWUP/R 5-90-40(34)/2-90-40(34))

The Class Attendance & Participation Policy and Procedure were returned due to concerns from EC. Gail also emailed some suggestions for additional changes.

Gail talked with Lidia Anderson and learned policy is often created without consulting IS

to see if the changes mentioned in policy can really be implemented. Before initiating a policy that can dictate what is going to be done, IS needs to be consulted to determine if it is really possible. Gail suggested making changes to the policy in order to generalize the language and say that students will be dropped. Following that, we would need to work with IS to find out about the specific methods that can be imposed. Lindsey previously looked into working with the attendance roster in MyCWU; only a security change is involved.

There are two parts to the policy: enrollment vs. non-enrollment is one, and financial responsibility is the other. With the intent to make the policy clearer and easier to understand, the first and third sentences of part (C) will be moved to (A), and parts (B) through (D) re-ordered so that (B) becomes (D), (D) becomes (C), and (C) becomes (B). However, these changes do not solve the fundamental issue of faculty notification.

Dan indicated the procedure language was sent back as well; this is because there were issues with the policy and the two need to go forward together. Lindsey discussed the procedure language that was originally deleted related to part (E) of the policy and had to do with university-sponsored activities, such as sports and band. That language needs to remain the procedure.

The following new language will be added:

“Faculty members will take attendance through the third day of instruction or the first day of class. Faculty members must notify the registrar by the end of the third day of instruction, or the first class meeting, or the second day of summer session.

Students who are not registered in the courses after the close of the add/drop deadline will be required to register by the tenth day of instruction or not allowed to attend the course.”

The original deleted part of the procedure will be kept because it refers to part (E) of the policy.

Cody indicated that a complication recently came up again for part (E). The provost received a letter from athletics. This was addressed last year but when working on different items in the same policy, things get written over in policy so it causes confusion. Dan indicated the request to change “will” to “must” would never pass Faculty Senate. The issue is the idea of it being forced on all faculty when it’s only a few who are not doing this. Very few departments don’t allow students to do make-up work; it seems like athletics knows about the English department and schedules classes around that. Gail referred to other institutions in our athletic division and they all have specific policies. Lindsey indicated we are the only university on a quarter system in our division so that complicates matters. Cody suggested the committee work on writing a response to the letter.

Janet moved to accept the changes to the Class Attendance policy and procedure; Megan seconded. Changes to the policy were approved.

#### b. Academic Freedom

The committee has been charged with developing suggestions, policy, and a philosophy about academic freedom at CWU. It is a requirement from NWCCU to have something in

writing. This charge originally stemmed from the attendance policy. EC's question is, does academic freedom extend to the ability to dictate how to teach a class and to the pedagogy? Do faculty have the ability through academic freedom to control how they teach their classes? If the AAC would rather keep what is in place after some review and discussion, that is fine too. Lindsey indicated the BOT policy will probably be referenced for NWCCU unless something else is approved.

Clem indicated that, as far as he found when searching, there is a lot of discussion between academic freedom and the Constitution. Academic freedom is not necessarily free speech but is more of a contractual issue between the faculty member and the institution. When in public faculty are representing the university so they have to be very careful to clarify that their opinions are their own and not the university's opinions. The mechanics of carrying out academic freedom can be difficult sometimes. In the article by Gary Olson, from Idaho State University, it is described as the ability to presume knowledge in your class but you can't do whatever you want.

Cody suggested that academics is ideas and how those ideas are taught. If there is a precedent for that, is it something we want to protect at CWU? Is there a way to put that into policy and define and protect it? Even if the US Supreme Court says this isn't a right, the State can still say that it is. Janet indicated a Supreme Court article saying the university may decide for itself who may teach, who may be admitted as students, etc. Based on that, can we say faculty have the ability to say we decide who we teach and how?

Dan will work on some talking points about this, starting with the BOT statement.

Meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Next Meeting:  
March 29, 2018