

To: Emily Butler, Chair of Faculty Council
From: Committee on Academic Policies (CAP)
Re: CAP report, 2017-18 academic year
Date: May 11, 2018
CC: Nick Santilli, Provost; Margaret Farrar, CAS Dean; Al Miciak, Boler Dean.

1. Review of Proposals.

During the 2017-18 academic year, Faculty Council charged CAP with reviewing one new program proposal: a new program in Substance Abuse Counseling. This sequence of five courses prepares students to acquire a license in chemical dependency counseling. CAP reviewed the proposal, worked with Anne Kugler, the administrative liaison, held open hearings and Canvas comment boards, and consulted frequently with Cecile Brennan from the Department of Counseling. This proposal was approved by the faculty.

CAP also reviewed a proposal from the University Core Committee on revising the administrative structure of that committee. The Core Committee sought to eliminate its core subcommittees, which had outlived their usefulness. They were primarily charged with reviewing new course proposals. Because a roster of new (integrative) core classes has been established, and the number of new course proposals has slowed to a pace that the whole committee can easily handle, the Core Committee sought to eliminate the subcommittees. CAP agreed, and the faculty approved this proposal.

2. Other stuff.

Faculty Council charged CAP to work with the University Committee on Academic Policies (UCEP) on a number of proposals originating from that body. UCEP recommended that the grades FA, X, HP and P be eliminated; that the Undergraduate Bulletin definition of a B grade be redefined from "superior" to "good;" and that a D- grade be added to the scale of assignable grades. These recommendations were approved by the faculty. UCEP also recommended revision to the University's incomplete grade policy. Their revision would have made students responsible for initiating the request for an incomplete, established OnBase as the new platform for applying for an incomplete, and would have required the student to submit documentation to explain the need for an incomplete. CAP received comments via a Canvas discussion board on this proposal. Those conversations exposed serious concerns with this proposal. CAP's collaboration with UCEP on this issue will continue into the 2018-19 academic year.

Faculty Council charged CAP to review a proposal from the University Registrar to establish a four-day final exam period. It also charged CAP with reviewing final examination regulations and with exploring the possibility of pushing back the date on which final grades are due. CAP solicited feedback via Canvas on these issues and also reached out to the associate deans of CAS and student leaders. Serious reservations emerged from those consultations. The very real possibility of "final exam pileup" (students having two, three, and even four exams on a single

day) came up frequently. Students seemed to like the idea, although the leadership of student government gathered student opinion in a way that can only be characterized as extremely unscientific. Regarding final exam regulations, faculty raised questions about the rules governing final exam periods (required) and when papers may **not** be assigned. Conversation on all of these issues will continue into the 2018-19 academic year.

2017-18 was to be the year that the faculty voted on whether to formally adopt the current structure first-year advising, commonly known as “cohort advising.” Faculty Council charged CAP with making a recommendation in anticipation of that vote. CAP based its recommendation on the fall 2017 survey by the Office of Academic Advising which was open to all faculty, not only those who had participated in first-year advising. It was clear from that survey that the faculty, especially in the Boler School and the sciences, were in favor of the model (in the Boler School’s case, they were enthusiastic about their modified model, which included a full-time advisor who handled the basics of first-year advising). Other faculty were ambivalent but moderately in favor. CAP’s report, recommending formal adoption of first-year advising, reflected that general lack of enthusiasm. CAP informed Faculty Council that, regardless of the outcome of the faculty’s vote, the Office of Academic Advising was preparing a report that would recommend the hiring of full-time advisors across the University and that CAP would review that report and issue a recommendation. Faculty Council reasoned that the hiring of full-time advisers might change the faculty’s opinion on first-year advising, so it declined to move forward on the matter until 2018-19.