

Faculty Senate Minutes
February 20, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. All departments were in attendance except Academic Student Development, Computer Science, Government & Political Affairs and Physics.

I. Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the February 6, 2007 meeting of the Faculty Senate were approved as corrected.

II. Report of the Faculty Senate Chairperson

Vice Chairperson Rosenthal indicated that Chairperson Börger-Greco was unable to attend due to illness.

III. Report of the Student Senate President

Student Senate President Andrew Moyer encouraged attendance at the Creating Caring Communities dialogue event on February 26. He also reminded faculty to encourage students to consider serving as Orientation Leaders this fall. Applications are available from the Student Programs Office. Mr. Moyer also shared that information about the SMC renovation will be brought to Senate at upcoming meetings.

IV. Report of the Graduate Student Association

Graduate Student Association Representative Ensminger announced an upcoming symposium for graduate students. She distributed an information sheet for the conference to be held April 19 at the Dixon Center in Harrisburg. Ms. Ensminger asked faculty to encourage their graduate students to participate. She indicated that information is available on the Graduate Studies website.

V. Report of the Administrative Officers

Associate Provost for Academic Administration

Associate Provost Burns announced that the University Theme Committee is requesting proposals from faculty related to the new theme, Reason & Hope in an Age of Uncertainty. These proposals are primarily to identify campus events and activities that may be linked to the overall theme. Submissions may be made until March 20.

Dr. Burns also indicated that a number of faculty and administrators have been attending an FYE conference where Dr. McNairy gave the plenary talk. He noted that Millersville is recognized as a leader for our activity and progress in the area.

Senator Mowrey shared that the Wellness Department Chair spent a great deal of time resolving errors in the new electronic schedule. She also noted that advisors must now correct students individually because students only checked the information as originally posted and did not think to look again for posted corrections. She requested that the Registrar consider giving chairs an opportunity to review scheduling information prior to making the information available to students. Other departments agreed that this is a problem that needs to be addressed. Dr. Burns indicated that he would contact the Registrar regarding an appropriate solution.

VI. Reports of the Faculty Senate Standing Committees

UCPRC

Senator White asked senators to remind faculty that course proposals must be submitted to UCPRC soon to be reviewed in time for the fall semester.

First Readings

(1) NEW UNDERGRADUATE COURSE

GOVT 361: The Politics of Race and Ethnicity, 3 credits, G3. Proposal to create a course to examine the role of racial and ethnic minority groups in American politics.

APC

The APC proposal discussed previously regarding Withdrawal End Dates was approved without dissent.

Senator West distributed a recommendation for revision to the Graduation Honors Policy. [see Attachment #1] She indicated that this is not required for the Commonality process but that Millersville has one of the lowest GPAs needed to earn *cum laude* honors and one of the highest for *summa cum laude* among PASSHE schools. In fact, the current levels allow students never named to the Dean's List to be awarded graduation honors. APC recommends revising the graduation honors GPA levels, raising the *cum laude* level to 3.50 to match Dean's List. A question was raised about whether this proposal would impact the Honors College since the current 3.35 GPA level correlates to that required for students in the Honors College. Senator Schaffer indicated that he would bring the issue to the Committee but did not think it would be a problem.

Another issue addressed was whether to continue including transfer credits to calculate an honors GPA that is different than the Millersville GPA. Senator Luek noted that the Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society bases its GPA calculations on all post-high school credits. She expressed concern that transfer students would have an advantage if their transfer credits were not counted. She noted that grades in transferred courses are often lower than work done at Millersville and disqualify students for honors when included in the honors GPA. Other departments noted that their transfer students tend to bring in higher grades than they subsequently earn at Millersville and are more likely to earn

honors than students completing all their work at Millersville. The proposal to use only Millersville credits is consistent with awarding honors based only on the academic performance as assessed by Millersville faculty. It was pointed out that the proposal also recommends an increase in the minimum credits that would need to be completed at Millersville, from 30 to 60, to be eligible for graduation honors. Senator West noted that the committee discussed these issues at length but additional feedback from departments would be welcome.

It was also proposed that students completing a second degree would not be eligible for graduation honors and that Academic Amnesty students would not have their pre-amnesty grades included in the honors GPA. The proposal includes a modification in the Academic Amnesty policy that reflects the proposed changes in the Graduation Honors policy. A concern was raised about the GPA listed to qualify for Academic Amnesty. It was questioned why these grades would not be counted. The response was that Academic Amnesty has a very specific application and this would be consistent with the philosophy of the policy. It was also highlighted that the changes would make it easier for students to be aware of their standing for honors since the Millersville GPA is what they regularly see on their DARS.

Honors College

Senator Schaffer distributed a proposal recommending that 3 credits of study abroad experiences be allowed to fulfill the Honors Perspective requirement for General Education. [see Attachment #2] The proposal matches the policy for students not in the Honors College, allowing the P requirement to be satisfied by an international study experience. The change is necessary because Honors students must take a P course with an Honors designation. It was clarified that this would apply to any course taken during regular semesters or summers. Although, courses in the major would still be excluded, and courses taken online from an institution in another country would also not qualify. It was noted that the Honors College Committee discussed various implementation options at length but found many too complex. This proposal allows for broad application.

VII. Reports of the Faculty Senate Special Committees

Ad Hoc Honor Code Committee

Dr. Kathleen Schreiber distributed a summary and a ballot for Senate review. [see Attachment #3] She then addressed questions and concerns from Senate regarding the upcoming vote on the proposed Honor Code System. It was noted that the ballot should have a line added for an abstaining vote before being sent to the Chair of Senate for distribution. Senator Kevorkian expressed concerns from the History Department that the voting mechanism planned by Senate did not match standard practice. It was pointed out that this format was approved as a way to garner maximum faculty participation in this decision since faculty buy-in is critical for an effective Honor Code System. It was stated that voting at a centralized location generally draws only 40-100 faculty members out of more than 300. It was clarified that there is no voting procedure specified by the CBA.

Concerns and suggestions about the integrity of the voting mechanism were discussed. It was noted that this seems to be an issue of trust among colleagues. A DeCaria/Kevorkian motion that votes on the Honor Code System be collected anonymously by each department from all eligible faculty members, sealed in an envelope and submitted to the Secretary of Senate to be counted by two faculty members was approved without dissent.

A question was raised about the role of accusing faculty in the Honor Code Court. The response was that they attend but do not vote. The advantage of this approach over individual faculty determining their own sanctions was questioned. It was pointed out that students respect the potential of severe repercussions for infractions.

Another question raised was related to the application of the system to graduate students. Dr. Schreiber indicated that specific details of implementation have not been resolved but would be considered over the next three years.

Discussion was held regarding the fact that signing the honor pledge would be a requirement for admission. It was noted that legal implications were considered but should not be an issue. Again, it was stated that these details would be deliberated in detail once the proposal is passed.

The specification that religious conflict constitutes an exemption for signing the honor pledge was discussed. It was suggested that removing the reference to this as a pledge or oath should eliminate the need for this allowance. Another idea shared was that the statement could be included as part of the agreement already signed by students on admission.

A question was asked about how an issue would be handled for a student at the point of graduation. The response was that the student would need to be given an I grade until the issue was resolved.

Concern was expressed about the difficulty of approving the proposal without knowing how some of these issues will be resolved. A suggestion was made that the vote ballot should specify that approval of the Honor Code System would be dependent on further approval of an implementation plan. Dr. Schreiber indicated that an implementation plan would be brought to Senate in the future for approval.

Off Agenda

Dr. Rosenthal requested that someone be identified to replace her during the rest of the meeting. A Wismer/Saunders motion to appoint Dr. Mowrey to lead the remainder of the meeting was approved without dissent.

VIII. Proposed Courses and Programs

None

IX. Faculty Emeritus

A Wismer/Blazer motion that Dr. Jan M. Shepherd be granted the honorary title of Associate Professor of Chemistry Emeritus was approved without dissent. [see Attachment #4]

X. MU Online

Senator Edeh Herr informed faculty that an Instructor Preparation List and the Guidelines for Reviewing DL Courses are available online at <http://www.millersville.edu/~muonline> to assist faculty in developing online courses. [see Attachment #5] She noted that these materials have been approved by Deans' Council and that training is also available for interested faculty. A note was made to highlight the fact that the CBA specifies that faculty teaching online are required to report to their department about the experience.

XI. Policy regarding "Incomplete" grades

Since this issue appears to be mostly one of implementation, it was questioned whether the new campus management system would be able to automatically assign default grades specified by faculty on the I grade contract. Dr. West noted that the policy would likely be reviewed by APC in the near future as part of the commonality issues.

XII. General Education Proposal

Dr. Warmkessel noted that GERC is addressing questions and language revisions to the proposed revisions to writing courses. She indicated that the intention was to make the guidelines broad, but perhaps they felt prescriptive in some cases because of unique departmental interpretations of appropriate writing criteria.

Discussion was held regarding the specification of a 3500-word minimum of revised prose. Dr. Warmkessel noted that this number reflects similar requirements from other institutions. The need for assigning a numerical value was questioned. It was suggested that 3500 words is too high, particularly in courses where enrollments are high. Senator Kevorkian noted that the History Department teaches many of these courses and expressed that 3500 words would be a burden in large classes. In response, it was pointed out that some courses currently designated W may not fit the revised guidelines. Doubt was expressed about the effectiveness of the guidelines with no standard given regarding word number. This would make it difficult to maintain the integrity of an approved W course when the faculty teaching it changes. It was suggested that the 2500 word level from the 1998 guidelines might be a more appropriate benchmark.

It was also noted that courses with other types of writing revision may not fit well with the wording of the guidelines. It was stated that the committee reviewing W designations would be willing to consider alternate interpretations of "revised prose" relevant within specific fields. Another concern raised was that students transferring in credit for a course that is designated W at Millersville receive that credit regardless of whether the course

they took was writing intensive. Dr. Warmkessel reminded Senate that the faculty response last fall was very strongly in support of setting and upholding standards for W courses. However, the question is whether the proposed guidelines and recommendations are sufficient.

XIII. Other/New Business

Senator Schaffer distributed a proposal from the Sociology & Anthropology Department regarding deadlines for final grade submissions. [see Attachment #6] He requested that senators review the document for discussion at the next meeting.

XIV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aimee L. Miller
Faculty Senate Secretary

Action Summary:

The minutes of the February 6, 2007 meeting of the Faculty Senate were approved as corrected.

The APC proposal discussed previously regarding Withdrawal End Dates was approved without dissent.

A DeCaria/Kevorkian motion that votes on the Honor Code System be collected anonymously by each department from all eligible faculty members, sealed in an envelope and submitted to the Secretary of Senate to be counted by two faculty members was approved without dissent.

A Wismer/Saunders motion to appoint Dr. Mowrey to lead the remainder of the meeting was approved without dissent.

A Wismer/Blazer motion that Dr. Jan M. Shepherd be granted the honorary title of Associate Professor of Chemistry Emeritus was approved without dissent.

Attachment #1

To: Faculty Senate
From: Lillie West, Chair of Academic Policies
Date: February 20, 2007

DRAFT: Revision of Graduation Honors Policy **2/15/07**

Revised text:

GRADUATION HONORS for a baccalaureate degree

Students who have earned consistently superior grades in their course work at Millersville University are recognized for their achievements at graduation with the designation of graduation honors. The student's diploma and University record carry the appropriate honors designation:

Cum laude for a cumulative GPA between 3.50 and 3.74

Magna cum laude for a cumulative GPA between 3.75 and 3.94

Summa cum laude for a cumulative GPA between 3.95 and 4.00

~~Graduation Honors for Students with Transfer Credits. Millersville credits and grade points are combined with accepted transfer credits and grade points when determining graduation honors.~~

Eligibility for graduation with honors is ~~calculated~~ determined based on the ~~combined~~ Millersville grade point average (CGPA) of all MU and transfer grades posted to the academic record. Neither transfer work nor in-progress courses are ~~not used~~ included in the ~~calculation of the~~ honors CGPA. For students who have been awarded academic amnesty, the pre-amnesty work is not included in calculating the honors GPA.

Changes in the eligibility for, or the level of, honors following the posting of grades for the final semester at MU will be reflected on the student's diploma and MU transcript.

To qualify for graduation honors, students must:

- ~~1. Earn an honors average (minimum 3.35)~~ a GPA of 3.50 or higher in work done at Millersville, and;
- ~~2. Complete at least 30 60 credits with grades A through D- at~~ of Millersville course work, ~~and;~~
- ~~3. Earn a combined honors average of at least 3.35 in all work done at Millersville and in accepted transfer credit courses.~~

~~Graduation Honors for Candidates for a Second Baccalaureate Degree. To qualify for graduation honors, second degree students must earn an honors average in work in the second degree program. The entire previous academic record is combined with second degree credits and grade points when determining graduation honors.~~

~~Students who are completing a second baccalaureate degree program at Millersville are not eligible for graduation honors.~~

Graduation Honors for Associate's Degree Candidates. To qualify for the designation "with honors" on their diploma and University record, associate degree candidates must:

1. Earn a GPA of 3.50 or higher in work done at Millersville, and;
2. Complete at least 30 credits with grades A through D- at of Millersville course work.

Proposed Policy:

GRADUATION HONORS for a baccalaureate degree

Students who have earned consistently superior grades in their course work at Millersville University are recognized for their achievements at graduation with the designation of graduation honors. The student's diploma and University record carry the appropriate honors designation:

Cum laude for a cumulative GPA between 3.50 and 3.74

Magna cum laude for a cumulative GPA between 3.75 and 3.94

Summa cum laude for a cumulative GPA between 3.95 and 4.00

Eligibility for graduation with honors is determined based on the Millersville grade point average. Neither transfer work nor in-progress courses are included in the honors GPA. For students who have been awarded academic amnesty, the pre-amnesty work is not included in calculating the honors GPA.

Changes in the eligibility for, or the level of, honors following the posting of grades for the final semester at MU will be reflected on the student's diploma and MU transcript.

To qualify for graduation honors, students must:

1. Earn a GPA of 3.50 or higher in work done at Millersville, and;
2. Complete at least 60 credits of Millersville course work.

Students who are completing a second baccalaureate degree program at Millersville are not eligible for graduation honors.

Graduation Honors for Associate's Degree Candidates. To qualify for the designation "with honors" on their diploma and University record, associate degree candidates must:

1. Earn a GPA of 3.50 or higher in work done at Millersville, and;
2. Complete at least 30 credits with grades A through D- of Millersville course work.

The General Amnesty policy will need to be changed to reflect the changes in the Latin Honors policy.

Revised text:

Academic Amnesty

Former Millersville University students applying for readmission following a minimum absence of five years since the end of their last semester are eligible to petition for academic amnesty if their cumulative grade point average (CGPA) was below 2.0 at departure. The petition must be in the form of a letter of appeal to the Academic Standards Committee, sent in care of the registrar's office.

In order to be eligible to petition for academic amnesty, the former student must complete an application for readmission to undergraduate degree status. If academic amnesty is granted, the calculation of the CGPA is restarted with the new matriculation semester.

Under academic amnesty, all previous course work and grades remain on the permanent record but are not included in the calculation of the MU CGPA after amnesty is granted. Students may use courses taken in the preamnesty period to fulfill general education requirements, only if a grade of C- or higher was earned in the course. ~~Graduation with honors will be determined on the basis of a minimum post amnesty CGPA of 3.35, after which all transfer work and preamnesty MU course work with grades of C- or better will be included to determine honors eligibility.~~ Preamnesty course work is not included in determining eligibility for graduation honors.

Attachment #2

**To: Dr Ana Börger-Greco, Chair, Faculty Senate
Faculty Senators**

From: Dr Scott Schaffer, Chair, University Honors College Committee

Date: February 20/2007

Re: Perspectives Proposal for Honors College Students

The University Honors College Committee has passed the following policy change, which requires the approval of Faculty Senate before it becomes official.

The University Honors College will count 3 credit hours of study abroad experience as meeting the Honors Perspectives requirement in the General Education curriculum. A total of 30 Honors credits are still required for graduation with University Honors.

The University Honors College has in the past granted Exceptions to Graduation Requirements to this effect; however, we believe that it makes a stronger statement on behalf of incorporating the study abroad experience into the Honors curriculum to have an official policy to this effect.

Attachment #3

Summary of the Honor Code Committee Recommendation to Faculty Senate

1. Upon admission to MU, undergraduate and graduate students sign an honor pledge (required except for cases of religious conflict). Prior to the signing, students will be given background information on academic dishonesty and how to avoid being charged with it. Resigning of pledge on classroom work is at the option of the course instructor, but the pledge is in effect regardless.
2. An Academic Honor Council is formed which promotes honesty education throughout students' program at MU. Possibilities for education exist in Freshman Orientation, Freshman-Year Experience, common freshman courses, all course introductions, and out-of-class workshops and activities. Resources/support will be made available to both students and instructors. Student members of this council play a major role in its function.
3. The following procedure takes place for alleged cases of academic dishonesty:
 - The course instructor meets with the student and decides whether the case should be pursued. The instructor has the option of reporting the case to Honor Council for further action, or not reporting the case (APSCUF requires choice). Completion of an academic dishonesty form is recommended (but not required) in any case for record-keeping purposes. Faculty who wish to fill out the form but drop all further action will indicate on the form that no further action is desired. Instructors who choose not to report the incident and have a hearing may then only impose minor sanctions on a student (verbal/written reprimand, lowering grade for assignment/test, requiring student to redo assignment/test). This last policy is consistent with our present academic honesty policy.
 - If further action is recommended, Academic Honor Council will form an honor court consisting of 2 faculty members, 3 students, and the Associate Provost for Academic Administration (non-voting member). Evidence is heard, and three of five votes are required to find a student guilty of an act of academic dishonesty.
 - The sanctions schedule classifies acts of academic dishonesty according to their severity and provides recommended sanction(s) for each class of offenses. This is to provide consistency in handling similar cases of dishonesty. For this reason, the schedule should generally be followed, but an instructor who provides justification may request a different sanction. Generally, the request will be followed, unless the court provides compelling justification for not granting the request. Sanction for least offenses: failure for assignment. Sanction for worst offenses: XF grade and suspension. XF indicates course failure due to academic dishonesty. For one-time offenses only, this XF grade can be converted after two years to a grade of F. An appeals mechanism is defined to consider new evidence, irregularities in the conduct of the hearing, and excessive severity of a particular sanction.

4. Student reporting of observations of academic dishonesty is encouraged, but no penalty will be applied for failure to report observations of academic dishonesty.

How is this system different from our current academic honesty program? The proposed system adds the following elements which are now not part of the honesty policy: signing an academic honesty pledge upon admission, provision for greater education/support for both students and faculty in preventing academic dishonesty, a sanctions schedule, creation of the XF grade, and greater opportunity for students to participate in the honesty system, thus allowing students greater ownership of the program. The literature suggests lower incidence of dishonesty occurs where clear and frequent communication related to dishonesty is coupled with high student involvement in the program, careful monitoring of dishonesty, and strong sanctions for offenses.

What benefits would we expect to see if the proposed honor system is implemented? The literature suggests: significantly fewer cases of cheating, greater consistency in addressing dishonesty, promotion of law/ethics-related careers of student honor members, greater community/employer respect of MU as an institution promoting ethics, advancement of general education objectives and parts of the university mission dealing with development of student values and ethics, and benefits to society as students carry away learned moral norms.

Millersville University Ballot for the Proposed Academic Honor System

I approve the creation of an Academic Honor System at Millersville University as detailed in the *Proposed Millersville University Academic Honor System Constitution* (available under Detailed Honor System Constitution and By-Laws at <http://muweb.millersville.edu/~kschreib/honcode.htm>) and as summarized in *Summary of the Honor Code Committee Recommendation to Faculty Senate* (attached). I understand that if the new Academic Honor System is not adopted, the current Academic Honesty Policy (http://muweb.millersville.edu/~campus/Academic_Honesty_Report_of_Violation.PDF) will remain in effect.

_____ yes

_____ no

Attachment #4

DATE: 20 February 2007
TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: Chemistry Department
RE: FACULTY EMERITUS FOR DR. JAN M. SHEPHERD

The Chemistry Department unanimously approves the following resolution to Faculty Senate:

WHEREAS Dr. Jan M. Shepherd, Associate Professor of Chemistry, has faithfully served the Chemistry Department, Millersville students, and the Millersville community for 32 years with honor and distinction, and

WHEREAS Dr. Jan M. Shepherd contributed to the education of nearly all chemistry majors for 32 years in the classroom, instructional laboratory, and undergraduate research, including teaching Introductory Chemistry for two years in part to know well the background students receive before Organic Chemistry, and

WHEREAS Dr. Jan M. Shepherd maintained high standards while effectively instructing close to two hundred students annually (including during summers) in Organic Chemistry, Advanced Laboratory I, and Advanced Organic Chemistry, and

WHEREAS Dr. Jan M. Shepherd developed the initial curriculum for Advanced Laboratory I and II, and was one of two faculty who initiated instruction in Biochemistry at Millersville, and

WHEREAS Dr. Jan M. Shepherd served as department chair for four years, and continues as the department's "conscience," maintaining our focus on many issues including curriculum development, equipment purchase, and outcome assessment, and

WHEREAS Dr. Jan M. Shepherd served unselfishly as chair of the departmental evaluation committee for more than a decade, as departmental library liaison for almost two decades, and as departmental representative to Faculty Senate for nearly a decade, and

WHEREAS Dr. Jan M. Shepherd has, efficiently and with no thought for recognition, maintained numerous instruments needed by students and faculty for investigations of organic reactions and compounds, most notably the nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer, and

WHEREAS Dr. Jan M. Shepherd distinguished himself as a scholar through several publications, continuous revision of laboratory experiments in his courses, and recent exhaustive review of the organic chemistry curriculum at Millersville,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Dr. Jan M. Shepherd be granted the honorary title of Associate Professor of Chemistry Emeritus.

Attachment #5

MUOnline Instructor Preparation List

Recommendations for Faculty Preparation

It is highly recommended that you avail yourself of several of the following professional development opportunities:

- Blackboard training – either one-on-one with Instructional Designer or a group training
- Pedagogy training – either from MU sessions or by attending a related conference
- Videoconference training – either one-on-one with IT or a group training
- Distance learning conferences
- Distance learning webinars or web conferences

Ensure that you have the following technical competencies:

- be proficient using the basic elements of online courses: email, threaded discussions, chats
- be able to describe the characteristics of successful distance learners
- be able to describe techniques for effective online teaching;
- be able to evaluate the quality of online learning programs;
- be able to explain the accessibility issues associated with online education; and
- be able to describe strategies for integrating online and classroom instruction
(excepted from: Kearsley, G. and Blomeyer, R. (2004). Preparing K-12 teachers to teach online, *Educational Technology*, 49-52)

Have a high comfort level with the various tools/systems used to teach via distance learning.

Experience distance learning as a student – if you can gain first-hand experience as a distance learner, it will provide you with an entirely different perspective when teaching.

Check out the variety of faculty resources on these MU websites:

- http://muweb.millersville.edu/~muonline/faculty_menu.php,
- <http://muweb.millersville.edu/~excellen/index.html>.

Procedural Steps to Preparing Distance Learning Courses

Determine which distance learning format is appropriate for your course. Then determine which format of distance learning – blended, online, or videoconferencing – is most appropriate for the course.

Contact the MUOnline office and the Instructional Design office to discuss your interest in distance learning, to set up a consultation meeting, and establish relationship with a faculty mentor.

Be sure that your course has gone through or is in the process of going through the course approval process. To convert an existing course to the distance learning format, you need approval from your department, the appropriate university curriculum committee (either UCPRC, GCPRC, or TEC), and the Associate Provost. This expedited process takes 30 days.

Ensure that you are considering the timelines for converting a course; it is recommended to begin working with the Instructional Design office at least one semester before you plan to offer the course.

Contact the Office of Learning Services to ensure that course meets universal design standards, such as ensuring the course can be accessed by visual- and auditory-impaired students.

Recommended Guidelines for Reviewing Distance Learning Courses

Adapted by the MUOnline Advisory Group – September 2006

Approved by Deans' Council – November 2006

Definition of Distance Learning at Millersville University: Distance learning takes place when students and faculty members are separated from each other by location or time. This can include courses offered in online, blended, or video conference formats.

*Items noted with a * are emphasized and should be recognized as being of unique importance for online courses.*

COURSE DESIGN

Course design addresses elements of instructional design in a distance learning course. The course provides for review of effective course procedures, instructional delivery and student learning outcomes. In a well designed course...

- ...objectives are clearly described to students
- ...content is made available to students in manageable segments
- ...content is organized and arranged to make all areas easily accessible
- ...*visual and/or auditory prompts are used to motivate students
- ...appropriate ancillary resources are available as part of course content
- ...students are provided an opportunity to evaluate the course
- ...*instructor has worked with Office of Learning Services and IT staff to ensure that accessibility issues are addressed

Comments:

COMMUNICATION and COLLABORATION

Interaction and collaboration can take many forms. The criteria places emphasis on the type and amount of interaction and collaboration within a distance learning environment. In an exemplary course, learner-to-learner, learner-to-content, and learner-to-instructor interaction and collaboration are exemplified through...

- ...clearly stated expectations defining minimal levels of student participation
- ...*the use of real-time features such as chat rooms & whiteboards
- ...*the use of asynchronous tools such as discussion & email
- ...*clearly stated expectations of instructor's active role in moderating discussions, providing feedback, etc.
- ...*a deliberate attempt to create a community of learners using strategies such as group projects, assignments, and activities
- ...*clearly stated guidelines for contacting instructor, including office "hours"

The communication and interaction methods used in this course include:

discussion board whiteboard student presentations chat rooms email other

Comments:

TECHNOLOGY

The use of technology within a distance learning course should focus on enhancing and enabling student learning. Used appropriately, technology enhances learning when...

- ...it promotes critical reflection and analysis of content
- ...*assignments/activities clearly explain the objectives of the technology
- ...*internal communication tools are used by students and instructor to elaborate on course content
- ...it goes beyond the use of technology for technology's sake
- ...*student connectivity issues are considered in course design

*A variety of technology tools (use of one or more of the technologies listed as options is not required) are used in this course include:

discussion board whiteboard student presentations chat rooms email
video audio quiz/survey tools self-test animation graphics/images glossary
CD-ROM tool other _____

Comments:

ASSESSMENT

Assessment focuses on the evaluation of student work. The project criteria speak to the quality and type of student assessments within the course, placing particular emphasis on...

- ...assignments that encourage students to use critical thinking skills
- ...the alignment of assignments and stated objectives
- ...assignments which provide students with ample opportunities to practice and apply concepts/skills in realistic and relevant ways
- ...assignments/projects that require students to make appropriate and effective use of external resources (print, library, web, electronic)
- ...clearly communicated assignments and explicit expectations
- ...*clearly stating how the Internet may be used in completing work
- ...*utilizing built-in quiz features where appropriate

Comments:

STUDENT SUPPORT

Student support is concerned with the resources made available to students as part of a distance learning course. Such resources may be accessible as a part of the course or the MUOnline infrastructure. Specifically, student support provides that the course provides information about or links to the various student services, including, but not limited to...

- ... *tutorials covering such topics as: using email, browser settings, required applications, etc.
- ... *information on accessing Millersville University Help Desk
- ... *information on accessing Blackboard Help Desk
- ... *access to online library resources
- ... *tools required for viewing course content (RealPlayer, Acrobat Reader, and other plug-ins) including instructions for use
- ... *information for accessing tools on MUOnline website
- ... *appropriate instructor contact information

Comments:

VISUAL EVIDENCE

**Optional for faculty to provide visual examples such as screen shots, URLs, or a presentation of a few interactive modules from the course.*

Attachment #6

**To: Dr Ana Börger-Greco, Chair, Faculty Senate
Faculty Senators**

From: Dr Scott Schaffer, Senator, Sociology/Anthropology Department

Date: February 20/2007

Re: Proposal to change the deadline for final grade submissions

Just before the end of Fall 2006, the Registrar's Office announced that the deadline to submit final grades was to be one day earlier than the usual Wednesday after final exams are completed. In discussions with the Registrar, the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Provost afterwards, I discovered that the primary reason for this shortened deadline had to do with the need to inform students on academic probation of their dismissal in a timely enough manner to allow them to appeal that decision. To wit, the Governance Manual states:

A student who is given a warning, placed on probation, or dismissed, and who believes that there were specific circumstances which adversely affected his/her academic performance, may request a review by writing a letter of appeal to the Academic Standards Committee and may request a personal interview before the committee.

In order to be acted on for the next semester, letters of appeal must be received by the committee within eight (8) working days from the date that appears on the notice of warning, probation or dismissal. (Section 3: Undergraduate Academic Policies, Academic Standards, Probation, Dismissal, Subsection 4)

In essence, there is a fundamental conflict at work in this policy and in the time frame allowed for the evaluation of final coursework – namely, the tension between *the faculty's desire to make the evaluation of a final examination or paper a pedagogically beneficial exercise* and *the need to allow those students failing out of the university to appeal that decision*. Put another way, the needs of the few – 200 or so students every semester – to appeal the consequences of their failure to meet the standards of the university is outweighing the needs of the many, both faculty and students, to receive the greatest educational benefit out of their final coursework.

Note that in all of this, there is no requirement that final grades be submitted prior to the University commencement exercises for students ostensibly graduating; hence, those who are allowed to walk through commencement ceremonies could potentially not be graduating at all.

I have a solution to this problem that I propose that the Academic Policies Committee (APC) consider; namely:

- That APC recommend to the Provost that there be a two-stage process for final grade submission, wherein *grades for students already on Academic Probation and those who have applied for graduation be due prior to that semester's commencement exercises*, and *grades for all other students be due two weeks after the end of the semester* in order to allow faculty members to provide useful feedback and evaluations of student work;
- That the Registrar's Office be required to provide faculty members with a list of students who are currently on Academic Probation or subject to Academic Dismissal proceedings, as well as those who have applied for graduation in that term, so that they know whose grades need to be completed first;
- That a policy be instituted whereby students who are neither graduating nor on Academic Probation may request of their professors that their work be "triaged" so that they may receive their grades early;
- That the Registrar's Office work with the tenders of Banner and/or SAP to allow grades to be immediately posted to students' transcripts and grade reports, rather than waiting for them to be rolled 30 hours after the submission deadline, *or* to allow students to access their DARS during the evaluation period;
- That a full and complete explanation of the rationale for the "delay" in the grade submission deadline be made to the University community.

In a time where paper grade reports are neither "posted" on campus nor mailed to students, and where students are required to use electronic systems to access their grades, there is no practical need for either such an early deadline nor the 36 hour delay in posting grades. Likewise, there is a greater pedagogical benefit in allowing faculty members to take more time to evaluate student work *if they see fit*, while at the same time ensuring that the needs of graduating seniors and students subject to Academic Dismissal are met.

I thereby request that Faculty Senate decide to recommend the development of this policy to the Academic Policies Committee, and request that APC develop such a policy for approval with all due haste.