

Committee on Academic Policy (CAP): Meeting Minutes

Monday, 23 October 2023, 9:00am

Meeting #7 AY2023-2024

Meeting held remotely

Attendees: B. Calli (RBE, CAP chair,), F. Levey (MME), B. Servatius (MA, CITP representative), S. Wodin-Schwartz (MME), A. Gericke (Dean of Undergraduate Studies, ad interim), D. Heilman (CBC, UOAC Representative), S. Levitan '24 (Student representative), J. Dudle (CEAE, EDC Representative), Connor Chartier '25 (Student representative), S. Miles (Registrar).

1. Meeting was called to order at 9:04am
2. Will meet remotely this term due to scheduling restrictions
3. Introduced Connor Chartier ('25) as second student representative to CAP
4. Review of items for discussion this term
 - Grade inflation
 - Requirements for Dean's list
 - Grade appeal policy
 - Bylaws for CAP
 - Faculty flexibility guidelines for students
 - ChatGPT
 - Disallowed double major combinations
5. Began with discussion of Dean's list. Dean Gericke shared data for students on Dean's list from AY 12/13 to 22/23. Goal was for ~25% of students to be on Dean's list, however over the years percentage has increased: Fall 2012, 43% and rose to 52% as of Fall 2023 (it was noted that the number of Charles O. Thompson Scholars has also risen). This is not necessarily reflective of better student performance and enhances placement of emphasis on grades. This draws into question the value and meaning of the Dean's list. Ideas were discussed for new policies with respect to the Dean's list including:
 - Slightly altering the grade criteria
 - Substantive alterations to the criteria (including other evaluative measures)
 - Broader institutional shifts to address grade inflation
 - Eliminating the Dean's list
 - Also discussed was to recommend that the faculty revisit the definitions of the letter grades (e.g. A: exceeds expectations, B: meets expectations), and generate a grading scheme following these definitions for their courses.
6. Discussion moved to grade inflation. Apparent culture shift among faculty of generally giving higher grades. Middle and high school experience has shifted as well in this regard. Amount of redo, retake, extra credit, has been increased, especially during and after pandemic. Dean Gericke will look into grading in more specific areas (MQP, IQP, HUA Seminar, major courses, course levels). There are faculty on campus working on "ungrading" and alternate methods of grading (e.g. competency based, P/F). CAP will invite faculty from this group as well as guests from the Center for Well-Being for further discussion toward making recommendations on these issues.
7. Meeting adjourned at 9:54