

Committee on Academic Policy

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 10th, 2021, 2:00 pm

Meeting #8 AY2021-2022

Meeting held at Fuller Labs Becket Conference Room (FL246)

Attendees: O. Pavlov (Chair; SSPS), B. Calli (Secretary; Robotics), J. deWinter (Humanities), A. C. Heinricher (Provost's Office) B. Servatius (Math), S. Zhou (Chemical Engineering), S. Levitan '24 (Student Representative), R. Gyurcsan '24 (Student Representative), S. Miles (Registrar)

1. Meeting started at 02:00 pm.
2. Meeting minutes for Meeting #7 AY2021-2022 were reviewed and approved with minor revisions.
3. CAP received two recommendations from the Mental Health and Well-being Task Force.
  - a. Recommendation 1: Implementing a "Pass"/"NR" policy, similar to the policy put in place during D-term and E-term 2020, to help students manage their stress levels.
  - b. Recommendation 2: Suspending downgrading students' academic standing at the end of the fall semester.
4. CAP Discussed Recommendation 1:
  - a. In the past week, the student representatives of CAP asked the WPI student their opinions on a new "Pass"/"NR" policy. The responses they got were as follows:
    - i. The majority of the students think that such a policy would be great to have, but in moderation. For example, the number of "Pass" grades should be limited.
    - ii. The majority of the students support a permanent "Pass"/"NR" policy.
    - iii. Some students worry that an aggressive "Pass"/"NR" policy might degrade the value of their degree.
    - iv. Some students think that the challenges are an essential and necessary part of pursuing a degree at WPI. They acknowledge that getting their degrees is difficult and they want to take it on.
  - b. CAP recognizes that a new "Pass"/"NR" policy can indeed be instrumental to help students manage their stress levels.
  - c. CAP recognizes that other universities and institutions have similar "Pass"/"NR" policies, but the implementation varies.
    - i. Some institutions allow the students see their grade before converting it to "Pass"/"NR". Some institutions only allow a "Pass"/"NR" decision during the add/drop period.

- ii. Almost all institutions have a limit on the number of “Pass”/”NR” the students can use.
- d. CAP discussed a possible policy that
  - i. the students should be able to see their grades before deciding on a “Pass” or an “NR”. Otherwise, the policy might even cause more stress.
  - ii. should allow a limited number of “Pass”/”NR” the students should use. There can be a limit per semester or per academic year.
  - iii. can be implemented for a limited time period, and needs to be re-visited at the end of the academic year.
- 5. CAP discussed the motion draft of the posthumous degree policy.
- 6. CAP received an invitation to join the upcoming CITP meeting. CAP Chair O. Pavlov will join to the meeting.
- 7. Meeting adjourned at 2:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Berk Calli

B-term Secretary