

## Committee on Academic Policy

### Meeting Minutes

Monday, 02-01-2021, 1:00 – 1:50 pm

#### Meeting #10

Meeting held over Zoom due COVID 19 restrictions.

In Attendance: J. Duddle (Chair), A. Heinricher (Provost's office), A. Hall-Phillips, J. Rulfs, S. Zhou, J. deWinter (Secretary), S. Miles (Registrar), Ryan Candy MA '21, Sam Levitan '24

- Welcomed new representatives: Susan Zhou as a faculty representative and Sam Levitan as student representative
- Announcements
  - Canvas Site: Canvas site for CAP now populated with historical documents dating back to 1976
  - Overload Policy Motion: There were no regularly scheduled meetings prior to the start of C term in late January. Therefore, a motion from the registrar's office regarding the overload policy for C and D terms was discussed by email and approved by email vote on 01-08-2021. The motion is as follows:

CAP recommends that students be allowed to overload in C or D term by 1/3 (that is, register for more than three undergraduate classes) without receiving prior advisor approval. The registrar will email all faculty advisors the list of their students who have chosen to overload. The only students that would require advisor approval would be:

- First-year students
- Students enrolled in a full-term project work (either IQP or MQP)
- Students enrolled in ID 2050
- Students overloading by more than 1/3 in the Spring semester (C and D terms inclusive), which would be a financial overload in addition to academic.
- Approved Minutes for meeting #9
- CERT has asked for feedback on draft (v.12) 2021-22 calendar. CERT and Dean Heinricher noted the following pros and cons of the draft calendar:
  - Pros
    - Includes Labor Day holiday
    - 6-day break between A & B
    - B term ends early for Registrar processing in Workday
    - C & D terms as originally scheduled
    - Two weeks after Thanksgiving if we need to go remote
  - Cons
    - 1 flip day in A term (1st day)
    - Starts a day earlier than usual for move in and orientation
    - NSO may have to be cut short (not just start early)
    - 6-day break between A&B... grades due on Monday and classes start on Wednesday
    - No no-class day near the end of the term for "mental health break"
    - No time set aside in B term for advising and spring registration

Labor Day: CERT wanted to reinsert the Labor Day holiday, which is different than the calendar for 2020-2021. CAP noted that the Labor Day holiday is important for mental health; and also represents a common travel time for family/friends/holiday.

New Student Orientation: There are only two weekdays for NSO in the proposed calendar, which may be troublesome. The staggered move in also made scheduling of NSO challenging.

A/B Break: The proposed calendar is a compromise to incentivize less travel. However, CAP noted that 6 days seems to be more than enough time to get on planes and go places. There doesn't seem to be data to show that there is a difference between 6 days for travel and 10 days for travel in terms of what percentage of students, faculty, and/or staff will travel.

Project Centers: The A/B term break is a fast turnaround for project centers, but the project centers have flexibility to start earlier or end later. Even so, faculty being able to finish A term classes/grades and get set up at a project center may be a challenge. Student consensus on project centers is that personal travel is better when it can occur before the start of the project rather than traveling after projects. This would be difficult for B term project centers (if they are operating).

Overall Recommendation: Faculty recommend to return to the **regular calendar** with an eye to the current trajectory of the pandemic becoming under control, the pedagogical effect it will have on faculty, and the mental health of all. CAP recognizes that CERT proposed this calendar because a shorter break is even more untenable, and we appreciate this effort. However, without sufficient data, we do not support this proposed (v.12) calendar over the regular calendar for the year 2021-2022.

- Dean's List – Discussion
  - Dean Heinricher presented CAP with the following data. In the distant past, CAP and the faculty raised the bar for inclusion on the Dean's List (by requiring that the student complete 2 full units in the semester) because we saw about 30% of undergraduates being named to the list. There was a short dip in the number and percentage on the list but we seem to be back where we started with a large number and percentage on the list (see table below).

				<i>Dean's List: Fall Terms</i>			
<i>Class Year</i>	<i>AB14</i>	<i>AB15</i>	<i>AB16</i>	<i>AB17</i>	<i>AB18</i>	<i>AB19</i>	<i>AB20</i>
<i>Senior</i>	221	188	301	309	299	303	<b>387</b>
<i>Junior</i>	296	410	401	474	507	460	<b>630</b>
<i>Sophomore</i>	326	341	385	450	375	473	<b>556</b>
<i>Freshman</i>	231	299	336	376	420	432	<b>483</b>

<b><i>Dean's List Total</i></b>	1074	1238	1423	1609	1601	1668	<b><i>2056</i></b>
<b><i>Enrollment Total</i></b>	4031	4085	4214	4244	4466	4642	<b><i>4661</i></b>
<b><i>% on Dean's List</i></b>	26.60%	30.30%	33.80%	37.90%	35.85%	35.93%	<b><i>44.11%</i></b>

CAP discussed the trend in data. There may be Covid generosity in grading in AB20, or we may need to go back to reconsider the Dean's List. Why do we have a Dean's List in a university with no failing grades? About 40% of fall grades were As. This introduces a broader discussion about project grading—too many students who get As, and there is an expectant correlation that hard work equals A. Floated: projects shouldn't get grades but rather receive pass/fails like comprehensive exams. Grade inflation is tracking nationwide. The question was raised about faculty workloads affecting grade inflation—as faculty workloads increase, is this making faculty more lenient. Increased workloads is also a national trend. This topic will be carried over to the following meeting.

- Meeting adjourned at 1:52pm.

Submitted by J. deWinter, Secretary (C Term)