

# Template of University Senate Committee Annual Report

**Due Date:** Submit in MSWord format to [senate@gcsu.edu](mailto:senate@gcsu.edu) **no later than 11:59pm on Fri 1 May 2020**

*Note: This report should represent consensus of the entire committee and serve as a historical record of committee deliberations over the academic year.*

**Committee Name:** Academic Policy Committee (APC)  
**Academic Year:** 2019 - 2020

## Committee Charge:

**V.Section2.C.1.a. Membership.** The Academic Policy Committee shall have no fewer than thirteen (13) and no more than fifteen (15) members distributed as follows: no fewer than eleven (11) and no more than thirteen (13) members selected from the Corps of Instruction faculty, at least seven (7) of whom are elected faculty senators, one (1) member who is the Chief Academic Officer or an individual appointed by the Chief Academic Officer to serve as a designee in compliance with V.Section2.C, and one (1) member appointed by the University President in compliance with II.Section1.A.5.

**V.Section2.C.1.b. Scope.** The Academic Policy Committee shall review and recommend for or against policy relating to undergraduate and graduate education matters that have broad impact or implication to the university as a whole, which includes, but is not limited to, policies relating to grading, scholastic probation and honors, academic appeals, academic standing, standards for admission, general university degree requirements, educational processes, academic calendar, academic assessment, and academic ceremonies. This committee also provides advice, as appropriate, on academic procedural matters at the institution which includes, but is not limited to, academic assessment and those matters relating to the educational process.

## Committee Calendar:

*Listing of dates on which the committee met.*

Date	Location
April 19, 2019	Did not meet
August 13, 2019	At University Senate Retreat
September 6, 2019	Health Sciences 211
October 4, 2019	Health Sciences 211
November 1, 2019	Health Sciences 211
January 10, 2020	Health Sciences 211
February 14, 2020	Health Sciences 211
March 6, 2020	Health Sciences 211
April 10, 2020	Via WebEx

## Executive Summary:

APC spent time discussing the following:

1. Plagiarism Reporting System
2. Student Behavior, Grievances, and Electronic Submission
3. HR's Prohibition and Penalties Guide
4. Academic Calendar
5. Fair Use of Online Content

APC spent considerable time deliberating and hearing from guest speakers regarding the last item, Fair Use of Online Content. This is the only item that led to APC sending three Copyright Policy motions to the senate floor during the 2019-2020 academic year. Two of the motions (D2L Splash Page and Annual Compliance Training) were voted on and approved by the senate. The third (Syllabus Statement) was withdrawn from the senate meeting agenda, by the APC Chair, prior to the senate meeting due to the questions and comments raised.

## Committee Membership and Record of Attendance:

AGGREGATE MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR:

“P” denotes Present, “A” denotes Absent, “R” denotes Regrets.

Meeting Dates	Sept. 6	Oct. 4	Nov. 1	Jan. 10	Feb. 14	Mar. 6	Apr. 10
Nicole De Clouette (Chair)	R	R	P	P	P	P	P
Carolyn Denard	R	A	P	R	P	R	P
Melanie DeVore	P	P	P	P	P	R	P
Sarah Handwerker	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Min Kim	R	R	R	P	P	P	P
Julian Knox	P	P	P	R	P	P	P
Alesa Liles	P	P	P	P	R	R	R
Catrena Lisse	R	P	P	P	P	P	P
Bryan Marshall	P	R	P	P	R	R	P
Wathsala Medawala	P	P	P	R	P	R	P
Christine Mutiti	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Sam Mutiti	P	P	P	R	P	P	P
Gennady Rudkevich	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
Christina Smith (Vice-Chair)	P	P	P	P	P	R	P
Jessica Wallace (Secretary)	P	P	P	P	R	R	P

## Motions brought to the Senate floor:

<b>Motion Number:</b> 1920.APC.001.P	<b>Title of Motion:</b> Proposed Revision to add Copyright Policy to <b>D2L Splash Page</b>
<b>Motion Type:</b> Policy Recommendation	<b>Motion Text:</b> To add a link to the University System of Georgia’s Copyright Policy (including the Fair Use Checklist) to the Georgia View splash page (D2L/Brightspace Learning Management).
<b>Purpose:</b> The USG (and therefore GC) already has a Copyright Policy. The impetus for this motion is that faculty are not aware of the Copyright Policy and the Fair Use Checklist. APC met with Susan Kerr (Chief Informational Officer), Jim Berger (Director of Center for Teaching and Learning), and Barbara Szyjko (Instructional Technology Staff Specialist) on November 1, 2019 to discuss adding a link to the D2L (Georgia View) splash page: gcsu.view.usg.edu	
<b>Outcome:</b> This motion was approved by APC on March 6 <sup>th</sup> and brought to ECUS on the same day. The motion was presented to the University Senate electronically on April 24 <sup>th</sup> . The Senate approved the motion via electronic vote 30-0.	

<b>Motion Number:</b> 1920.APC.002.P	<b>Title of Motion:</b> Proposed Revision to add Copyright Policy to <b>Annual Compliance Training</b>
<b>Motion Type:</b> Policy Recommendation	<b>Motion Text:</b> To add a link to the USG’s Copyright Policy (including the Fair Use Checklist) to Georgia College’s Annual Employee Compliance Training.
<b>Purpose:</b> The USG (and therefore GC) already has a Copyright Policy. The impetus for this motion is that faculty and staff are not aware of the Copyright Policy and the Fair Use Checklist. Adding a statement (and a link to the copyright policy) to the Annual Employee Compliance Training will ensure that faculty and staff are trained on this policy each year.	

**Outcome:** This motion was approved by APC on March 6<sup>th</sup> and brought to ECUS on the same day. The motion was presented to the University Senate electronically on April 24<sup>th</sup>. The Senate approved the motion via electronic vote 29-2.

The motion below was sent for review to University Senate members. Due to questions and comments brought forth (see below under Committee Recommendations), the APC Chair withdrew the motion from the April 24<sup>th</sup> University Senate meeting.

<b>Motion Number:</b> 1920.APC.003.P	<b>Title of Motion:</b> Proposed Revision to add Copyright Policy to <b>Required Syllabus Statements</b>
<b>Motion Type:</b> Policy Recommendation	<b>Motion Text:</b> To add a link to the USG’s Copyright Policy (including the Fair Use Checklist) and the following text to Georgia College’s Required Syllabus Statements:  <b>Student Use of Copyrighted Materials</b> As a student, your ability to post or link to copyrighted material is governed by United States copyright law. The law allows for students to post or link to copyrighted materials within the course environment when the materials are pertinent to course work. In addition, GC Policy expressly forbids the sharing or posting of copyrighted material without the proper consent of the author. The absence of a copyright notice or symbol on a work does not denote a lack of copyright. Students should assume that all materials provided are copyright protected. Failure to comply with this policy may result in restriction or loss of university network access and/or disciplinary action through the Office of Student Affairs. For questions involving copyright issues, please consult the GC Office of Legal Affairs. Refer to the USG Policy on the Use of Copyrighted Works at <a href="https://www.usg.edu/copyright">https://www.usg.edu/copyright</a> .
<b>Purpose:</b> The USG (and therefore GC) already has a Copyright Policy. The impetus for this motion is that faculty and students are not aware of the Copyright Policy and the Fair Use Checklist. Adding a statement (and a link to the copyright policy) to the Required Syllabus Statements will ensure that faculty and students are educated on this policy each semester.	
<b>Outcome:</b> This motion was approved by APC on April 10 <sup>th</sup> and brought to ECUS on the same day. The motion was presented to the University Senate electronically, and then withdrawn by the APC Chair.	

**Reference Material/Existing Policies and Handbooks:**

University System of Georgia’s Copyright Policy:  
[https://www.usg.edu/copyright/copyright\\_generally](https://www.usg.edu/copyright/copyright_generally)

**University System of Georgia’s Fair Use Checklist:**

[https://www.usg.edu/copyright/fair\\_use\\_checklist](https://www.usg.edu/copyright/fair_use_checklist)

**Other Significant Deliberation (Non-Motions):**

*Short summary of each issue that consumed a significant amount of committee time.*

**Plagiarism**

During the governance retreat, committee members raised the issue of **plagiarism prevention**, which was a carryover item from the previous academic year. In 2018-19, the senate approved an APC motion to recommend that plagiarism detection be attached to all GC courses by default. The plagiarism prevention attribute was to be attached to each course in Banner (PAWS). Following the governance retreat, the APC chair reached out to the Registrar, Kay Anderson, who confirmed that the plagiarism detection system had been applied to each course in Banner.

A question was also raised at the governance retreat regarding **faculty knowledge of the plagiarism reporting system**. Dr. Shawn Brooks, Vice President for Student Affairs, attended the October 4<sup>th</sup> APC meeting. He explained a bifurcated system whereby plagiarism charges that are handled within Academic Affairs are only sent to Student Affairs when it is time to

suspend or dismiss a student. Otherwise, Student Life is not aware of the process in Academic Affairs or how cases end up in Student Life.

Questions that were raised:

- 1) **How can a faculty member know if a student, who has cheated or plagiarized, has committed multiple acts of academic dishonesty in other courses?** APC is interested in exploring a systematized reporting of academic dishonesty to help identify serial offenders. Committee members were to start conversations within their departments to discuss how academic dishonesty issues are handled.
- 2) **Is it okay for faculty members to communicate academic dishonesty problems with certain students to other faculty members in the department?** Faculty should consult with Legal Affairs.
- 3) **Why do faculty never hear about the outcome after reporting?** The answer is unknown but likely is related to FERPA.

Conclusion: Students need better education regarding academic dishonesty.

### **Student Behavior, Grievances, and Electronic Submission**

This item is another carryover from the 2018-19 senate session. Specifically, the issues raised were: 1) there is a mismatch between policies governing academic grievances in the University Catalog (2018-2019) and in the Student Handbook; 2) the policy does not allow for interaction between a student and faculty member before escalating the situation to administrators, Legal Affairs, Title IX, etc.; and 3) having academic and non-academic grievances and Title IX complaints listed on the same page may be confusing for students.

Dr. Shawn Brooks also addressed this issue at the October 4<sup>th</sup> APC meeting. Earlier that week, Student Life made changes to the way they address student behavior complaints. Complaints go to one staff member who then assesses the complaint and sends it to the appropriate office. This should help distinguish between freedom of expression issues and issues that are actionable complaints. Student complaints on faculty issues will go first to faculty, then to department chair, and up the established chain (via Academic Affairs). Faculty complaints about student conduct will go to Student Life.

### **Discussion of Prohibitions and Penalties Guide**

This item was raised by a committee member at the October 4<sup>th</sup> APC meeting. The Penalties and Prohibitions Guide includes a rubric for disciplinary action. GC's Chief Human Resources Officer, Carol Ward, attended the November 1<sup>st</sup> APC meeting. She explained that the guide was created by Human Resources and Legal Affairs in 2012 and applies to faculty and staff. Committee members raised that concern that most faculty are not aware of this guide. Ms. Ward explained that new employees are given training on this during orientation and that all employees acknowledge that they are aware of the guide in the annual compliance training (though there was no link to the guide in the annual training).

Ms. Ward explained that the document is intended to be educational and as a path forward for improvement. It offers clear guidelines for addressing problems as they arise. If staff or faculty fail to follow the policies, the guide communicates to supervisors and department chairs on the appropriate steps to be taken. The document was created to improve consistency across units but the problem is that supervisors and chairs apply the document differently.

APC committee members were most concerned that the guide appears to be written for staff and then is applied to faculty (e.g., abiding by the dress code). It is not clear if any faculty were involved in the original drafting of the document. The APC chair took this item to ECUS on November 1<sup>st</sup> and the issue was steered to FAPC.

### **Ad hoc committees and other groups:**

*None*

### **Committee Reflections:**

*What worked well, what did not work so well. Given your charge, how did you spend your time?*

Feedback on Committee Meetings:

- The times and locations worked well.
- We had a good turnout for each meeting.
- Meetings were run efficiently.

Feedback for the Executive Committee of the University Senate (ECUS):  
Limit the guest speakers at senate meetings to policy-related matters.

### **Committee Recommendations:**

*Advice to the membership of the committee for the next academic year such as:*

*Are there any issues that should be considered by this committee the following year?*

*Are there any issues that this year's committee was unable to complete its work on?*

*Do any of this year's committee actions require follow-up? (i.e. a policy was drafted, but there was a recommendation for a review of the policy during the following year.)*

*Recommendations on calendar (meeting times, outline items that you expect would be considered annually)*

The 2020-2021 Academic Policy Committee may want to revisit the Copyright Policy motion to the Required Syllabus Statements. Below are the questions and comments that were brought forth after the motion was circulated to senate members:

1) Question: While one sentence says the *law allows* students to post, the next sentence says *GC policy forbids* students to post: "The law allows for students to post or link to copyrighted materials within the course environment when the materials are pertinent to course work. In addition, GC Policy expressly forbids the sharing or posting of copyrighted material without the proper consent of the author." Which should students follow: the law or GC policy?

2) Question: This part of the statement, "Failure to comply with this policy may result in restriction or loss of university network access and/or disciplinary action through the Office of Student Affairs" suggests that posting or sharing copyrighted material is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct issue:

<http://catalog.gcsu.edu/2019-2020/Undergraduate-Catalog/Academic-Policies/Student-Code-of-Conduct>.

If the rationale for the required statement is student awareness, why wasn't copyright infringement specifically added to the Student Code of Conduct? ***Could the copyright infringement statement be moved there instead of the syllabus, which should focus on academic and course policies?*** Relatedly, who is supposed to be policing student copyright infringement: Faculty, Student Life, the University Library?

3) Comment: The statement concludes, "For questions involving copyright issues, please consult the GC Office of Legal Affairs." Copyright policy is a legal issue for faculty to consider when putting together course materials but it's not a student academic issue like plagiarism, attendance, or disability accommodations, and ***therefore should not be put on syllabi***.

4) Comment: We should always ask ourselves when adding to the required syllabus statement, "When have we put too much there?" The more that is required, the less important each item will appear to be. Our syllabus statement has become so long, that we now just put a link to the statement, and not including its entirety in the syllabus. We may want to reconsider how we communicate these important items.

### **Recommend items for consideration at the governance retreat:**

Questions:

Copyright Policy to the Required Syllabus Statements. Does APC continue to pursue this?

What are some of the academic policy-related effects of COVID-19?

### **Appendix: Academic Policy Committee Operating Procedures 2019-20**

*At the 2019 Governance Retreat, APC elected to retain the operating procedures from the previous year. The APC chair found the 2017-2018 APC Operating Procedures on the senate website. She updated the procedures to reflect the current academic year, and sent them electronically to the committee on August 20<sup>th</sup>. The APC operating procedures were unanimously approved for the 2019-2020 academic year.*

In terms of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), the committee agreed to keep meetings rather informal, except for votes on policies. APC is composed of 15 members, so there will need to be 8 members present to establish a quorum to conduct committee business. Other SOP items of committee agreement were to bring up agenda items early; to be respectful of when meetings begin and end; to require approval of extended time at regularly scheduled end of an APC meeting; require consensus before new items for discussion are brought to the attention of ECUS; and when possible, to invite guests to clarify information related to committee discussions.

We also acknowledged that University Senate Operating Procedures permit for electronic discussion of items if achieving and maintaining a quorum becomes difficult.