University Senate Committee Annual Report

Due Date: Submit in MSWord format to <u>senate@gcsu.edu</u> no later than 11:59 pm on 5/1/2022

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: **2021 - 2022**

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
August 8, 2021	Zoom (University Senate Retreat)
September 3, 2021	Zoom
October 1, 2021	Zoom
November 5, 2021	Zoom
January 7, 2022	Zoom
February 11, 2022	Zoom
March 4, 2022	Zoom
April 8, 2022	Zoom

Executive Summary:
APC spent time discussing the following:
1. COVID considerations affecting students
2. Self-plagiarism by students
3. Student Ratings of Instruction
4. Time Zone issues in D2L
5. Academic Freedom
6. Faculty qualifications
7. Student success as per the new USG tenure guidelines
8. The student bill of rights and responsibilities

APC was busy throughout the year. We took on several issues that were ultimately handed off to other committees but nevertheless believe we helped lay groundwork to make those workloads more manageable for them given they could see our work on it before they took it up. The closing months were spent on reviewing the student bill of rights and

responsibilities as it is 14 years old. Despite its age, after a careful review we determined it was not in need of any updating.

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. 3	Oct. 1	Nov. 5	Jan. 7	Feb. 11	Mar. 4	Apr. 8
Nicholas Creel (Chair)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Benjamin Clark (Vice Chair)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Dana Gorzelany-Mostak (Secretary)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Steve Elliott-Gower	P	P	P	P	R	P	P
Robert Sumowski	P	P	P	R	P	P	P
Alesa Liles	P	R	P	R	P	P	P
Eryn Viscarra	P	R	P	P	R	P	P
Youngmi Kim	P	P	P	R	P	P	P
Mariana Stoyanova	P	P	P	P	P	P	R
Laura Childs	P	P	P	R	P	P	R
Melanie DeVore	P	R	P	P	P	P	R
Catrina Lisse	P	P	P	P	P	P	R
James Schiffman	P	P	P				
Jamie Downing				P	P	P	P

Motions brought to the Senate floor:

None. The committee did not at any point see the need to deliver a motion to the full Senate. Most of what we discussed was ultimately sent to other committees, most often the faculty affairs committee, and so we were ultimately not the ideal venue for these matters to be made into motions.

Reference Material/Existing Policies and Handbooks:
University System of Georgia's Copyright Policy:
https://www.usg.edu/copyright/copyright_generally

University System of Georgia's 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.

1. COVID considerations affecting students
    a. We considered whether any official policy was needed to help students get back to "normal" as COVID remained an issues, particularly in early parts of the Fall and spring.

2. Self-plagiarism by students
    a. We reviewed the student code of conduct at the request of the provost to make sure self-plagiarism was overtly prohibited. In so doing, we found it was an no further action was necessary.

3. Student Ratings of Instruction
   a. We spent a lot of time discussing SRIs, particularly ways to inform students of their purpose and value. We were of the mind that a recommendation be made to overtly tell students how these reviews are used and what sorts of comments were appropriate to make on them to lessen the bias the instrument tends to have.

4. Time Zone issues in D2L
   a. We were assured that time zone issues could be handled by the instructor in D2L.

5. Academic Freedom
   a. We reviewed academic freedom policies but noticed the issue was batter handled by another committee. We made recommendations and referred the matter to the Faculty Affairs Committee.

6. Faculty qualifications
   a. We were asked to review the faculty qualifications policy allowing hires to me bade from faculty with terminal degrees form non-accredited universities. Again, we saw this as better handled by the faculty affairs committee and sent it to them.

7. Student success as per the new USG tenure guidelines
   a. We discussed what student success meant in light of the USG imposed post-tenure review changes. Overall, we were of the mind that at Georgia College student success was already taken into account in reviewing the teaching, research, and service obligations of faculty and so no real action was required on this front.

8. The student bill of rights and responsibilities
   a. We sought to review the student bill of rights and responsibilities, having noticed it was last updated 14 years ago. After a review we found it sufficient and not in need of change.

Committee Reflections:

What worked well, what did not work so well. Given your charge, how did you spend your time?
WebEx was not just viewed as an acceptable way to meet but the ideal manner to do so this year, even with COVID protocols largely being pulled back entirely. It would not be unreasonable to keep the option on the table going forward for non-pandemic related reasons, particularly if it allows members to meet who might find themselves off campus on Fridays either on a periodic or regular basis.

Student government representatives were rather unprofessional in terms of never meeting with the committee despite well over a dozen instances of outreach on our part. Specifically, we wanted to get their perspective on the student bill of rights but they never showed any interest in engaging with us on the issue. It may be a good idea to designate a student government representative on the committee given its subject matter jurisdiction.

Feedback on Committee Meetings:
- The times and "locations" worked well. WebEx meetings allowed for good and consistent turnout from members.
- Meetings were run efficiently.

Feedback for the Executive Committee of the University Senate (ECUS):
Ensure issues referred to the APC are subject matter appropriate. We spent a good deal of time reflecting on several issues that ultimately were the purview of other committees and so we ultimately were less focused on issues that were in our jurisdiction.

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 committee Chair should review every issue sent to them to ensure the committee is the appropriate venue for the issue at hand.

Seek student input on the code of conduct. No student government official responded to our requests to do so, despite over a dozen attempts to get them on board.

Recommend items for consideration at the governance retreat:

None

Appendix: Academic Policy Committee Operating Procedures 2021-22

Adopted by APC at the 8 Aug 2021 Governance Retreat

The committee elected to retain the operating procedures from the previous year:
"In terms of SOP, the committee agreed to keep meetings rather informal, except for votes on policies. APC is composed of 13 members, so there will need to be 7 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 US operating procedures permit for electronic discussion of items if achieving and maintaining a quorum becomes difficult. During the 2021-2022-year, APC will continue to conduct virtual meetings as needed due to COVID 19.