

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
Senate Educational Policies Committee  
November 8, 2010  
Meeting Minutes

**Present:** Amy Aggelou, John Close, Sam Conte (guest), Judy Erlen (Co-chair), Bonnie Falcione, Kathleen Kelly (Co-chair), Juan Manfredi, Debbie Miller, Alberta Sbragia, Jess Yokley

**Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm in Room 826 Cathedral of Learning

**Approval of minutes:** Minutes from the October 2010 meeting were approved

**New Business:**

1. **Introduction of Vice Provost Dr. Alberta Sbragia-** Dr. Sbragia was introduced in her new role as Vice-Provost for Graduate Studies.
2. **ADD/DROP deadline** - The SEPC was asked to explore the issues related to the length of time that students have for Adding (or Dropping) a course. Specifically 2 questions were raised at the October meeting:
  - a. Can Instructor Permission be added as a requirement for adding a course?
  - b. Is it feasible to change the time frame to ADD a course?

Dr. Sam Conte, University Registrar, attended the meeting today and provided the committee with insights into the rationale for the ADD/DROP time frames. He noted that these dates have both Academic Policy and Calendar implications. As this issue has been raised several times over the years, Dr. Conte reiterated that the final decisions have always favored the students over the Faculty. Specifically, the 10 days allowed gave students adequate time to try out a class as well as give them enough time to find new courses that will meet the requirements for their program. The issue of making up any missed work was discussed and the committee strongly suggested that faculty make clear to the student that it is their responsibility to get caught up with the material and/or any assignments.

Dr. Conte also stated that the ADD/DROP dates can be unlinked, but the implementation would have to be for all campuses.

After deliberating about the pros and cons of any changes, the committee made the decision NOT to recommend any changes to the Academic Calendar with respect to the ADD/DROP time frame.

3. **Vice-Provost Updates-** Dr. Manfredi gave an overview of the Middle States Accreditation preparation that is currently underway. The University is in the process of conducting the Self-Study and has chosen to use the Selected Topics model on the topic of "Using a University Wide Culture of Assessment for Continuous Improvement". Three working groups have been formed to address the 14 Middle States standards: Working Group 1) Using Assessment to Improve the Student Experience; Working Group 2) Using Assessment to Improve Institutional Effectiveness; and Working Group 3) Demonstrating Compliance through Document Review. The culture of assessment is being explored as it is used to evaluate and improve programs, services and

learning outcomes across the University. The University's Self-Study Steering Committee is being Co-Chaired by Dr. Patty Beeson and Dr. Sam Conte.

Dr. Manfredi reported on the recent PACUP meeting in which recommendations were made for approval of 3 proposals:

- Minor in Historic Preservation
- Certificate in Arabic Linguistic Studies
- B.S. in Engineering Science with a Concentration in Physics & Nanotechnology; this will replace the B.S. in Engineering Physics which was terminated

Implementation of the recommendations will require approval from the Provost.

- 4. Faculty Involvement in Student Retention-** the SEPC was asked to collaborate with the Senate Committees on Student Affairs & Admissions and Student Aid to address a broad range of issues related to student retention. The SEPC Co-Chairs will meet the aforementioned committee chairs and will add this topic to the December meeting.

Next meeting will be held **Friday, December 10 at noon in Room 826.**

***Adjournment:*** The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm.

Submitted by,

Kathleen Kelly & Judy Erlen