

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL
REQUEST FOR INPUT

PRESENTED BY: Len Proctor, Chair, Academic Programs Committee

DATE OF MEETING: Sept. 16, 2010

SUBJECT: **Draft of the Academic Courses Policy on Course Delivery, Examinations, and Assessment of Student Learning**

COUNCIL ACTION: For discussion only

The Academic Courses Policy on Course Delivery, Examinations, and Assessment of Student Learning assembles in one document all of the policies, rules and procedures at the University of Saskatchewan which relate to course delivery, examinations and student assessment.

The policy draft was assembled over a two year period by a Subcommittee of the Academic Programs Committee with representation from the Teaching & Learning Committee, and it was circulated broadly last spring for review and comment.

Background

For the most part, the expectations, rules and procedures relating to course delivery, examinations, and assessment of learning as described in this draft policy and its related procedures have already been approved by University Council over the last several years, and are already being followed. Students may have had difficulty finding them, however, and some instructors or staff also may not have been familiar with the previous documents

When the Examination Regulations were revised and approved by University Council two years ago, several discussions at University Council indicated there was a need for a policy document which would pull together the university's existing procedures on course delivery, examinations, and student assessment and would place them within a broader policy context of teaching and learning. The draft also intends to encourage discussion of academic and administrative issues affecting course delivery.

The draft was developed by the Academic Courses Subcommittee, which consisted of the former chair of the Academic Programs Committee Gordon Hill, APC members Mik Bickis, Russ Isinger, and Daniel McCullough, and TLCC member Marcel D'Eon. It was distributed widely in the spring of 2010 for discussion, and comments were received from the University Learning Centre, the Centre for Continuing & Distance Education, the program committees in the colleges of Arts & Science and Kinesiology, analysts at Institutional Planning & Assessment, Curriculum Studies faculty, the Assistant Dean of the Edwards School of Business, and the Bylaws Committee of Council. Suggested changes have been incorporated into the draft document.

Issues for discussion

In forwarding this draft to Council as a Request for Input, the Academic Programs Committee particularly would like to hear discussion on two aspects of the draft:

1. Restrictions to the addition of new assignments, quizzes or examinations - “No Surprises” Rule:

After the distribution of the course syllabus, no major assignment, quiz or examination is to be newly assigned in a course unless no student objects. (Page 6)

Because students plan their academic deadlines around the course assignments listed in the Course Syllabus, the Subcommittee agreed that instructors should try not to add requirements to courses after the syllabus is circulated. The Subcommittee and the Academic Programs Committee have had considerable discussion about whether this rule should require consent from all students or whether implied consent would be sufficient.

2. Continuing to restrict permission to attend lectures:

No person may gain the benefit of instruction in a course without first being registered in the course either as a credit or audit student. Individuals who are not registered in a course, either as a credit or audit student, cannot attend the course for any significant period of time. Instructors are responsible for ensuring that participants in their course are officially registered and their names are on the class list. (Page 7)

At the present time, university policy prohibits unregistered individuals from attending lectures, based on the principle of fairness to the students who have registered and paid tuition, and also the liability risk for unregistered students. The draft policy modifies this restriction somewhat, so that instructors are authorized to permit guest lecturers and graduate student assistants to attend some of their lectures. The Subcommittee and the Academic Programs Committee have had considerable discussion about whether the policy should be broadened further, based on whether allowing open participation in lectures might be beneficial to students and to the image of our university.

ATTACHMENTS:

[Draft Academic Courses Policy on Course Delivery, Examinations, and Assessment of Student Learning \(June 2010\)](#)