

EPAG Minutes February 6, 2014
3:00-4:30 Campus Center 214

June Ban, Terry Boychuk, Kendrick Brown, Ernesto Capello, Merita Bushi, Susan Fox, Geoff Gorham, Ann Minnick, Jayne Niemi, Jaine Strauss, Joelle Vitiello (Chair), Harry Waters, Jr.

1. Approval of minutes: The minutes from January 30, 2014 were approved.
2. Joelle informed us that all new documents about credits/calendar are on the Moodle site.
3. Kendrick explained the Higher Learning Commission's new rules, required forms, calendar of accreditation visits and reviews. Compliance questions that will come up for all schools: Do you have a statement of what a credit is? Do you follow your own stated policy? Those schools within the HLC region that are similar to Mac seem to be 4 credits = approx. 42 hours.

Kendrick has previously provided a comparison of the 1992 statement on variable credit and compared it to the approved 14-15 calendar. It seemed that in some years adding one or two days to the academic calendar could resolve the discrepancies between the two, rather than starting over on a new credit hour policy. The Provost has stated that she is officially agnostic on the right way to approach this question, but has a personal preference to change the calendar. Most of all she is concerned about the student experience.

We discussed our option. Do we say what we are doing now in 2014, or do we try to make the college minimum 42 that was stated in 1992? What about 60 minute hour versus the 50 minute hour that is allowed in the HLC definition? One committee member calculated that the 10 minutes would result in 6 hours more. Another cited his experience at places where courses are three credits and the teaching period is 50 minutes.

We discussed trying to add a Wednesday to spring semesters, ending on Monday in fall semesters, and other tweaks to the semester calendar that might help. There was much discussion around the idea of 40-42 hours and making everything hit a minimum of 40 hours. Another suggestion is to re-write portions of the 1992 policy to fold in what we really do and justify how the other things we do qualify toward meeting that policy.

Could the so-called "Awkward Monday" ending of classes/finals be avoided with creative thinking about maybe an extra hour for those Monday night classes? Some creativity was evident, but many options seemed impractical or caused other issues. Should we add an hour, add a day? What's the fallout from these possible solutions?

Jayne agreed to find and provide copies of the 1992 faculty meeting minutes from April through November, since there seemed to be some decisions about the calendar that nearly instantly violated the credit hour policy as it was described in April. NB: Research reveals that evening classes have been held on both Monday and Wednesday evening since at least 1979.

It was also noted that we seem content with the status quo on minimum and that one option would

be to cite the various ways we are in compliance with the current version of the 1992, (the faculty voted on a motion in 1992 that set the minimum of contact hours at 40 hours for MWF and 39 hours for TR) despite the contact hour variations. Joelle will draft a document to that effect.

Kathy and Kendrick have an HLC visit scheduled in April, so we should plan with that date in mind.

4. Joelle departed the room so that faculty who met with the French & Francophone Studies department reviewers could report on their meetings.

5. The meeting was adjourned at 4:27.

Jayne Niemi, Registrar