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Academic Affairs Committee Minutes

Faculty Senate

10-20-2022

October 2022 Academic Affairs Minutes

University of Nebraska at Kearney Academic Affairs Committee

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**Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee
Minutes from Meeting
Thursday, October 20, 2022
Meeting held via Zoom**

Present: Debbie Bridges (CBT), Steve Hall (CBT), Ralph Hanson (CAS), Bailey Koch (COE), Rachel Hammer (LIB), Chance Bell (FS), Joel Cardenas (AA), Lisa Neal (REG), Mark Ellis (AA), Olivia Koenig (Student Senate); Zoie Jacobsen (Student Senate)

Absent: Julie Shaffer (CAS), Kate Heelan (COE)

Guests: Derek Boeckner (Faculty Senate)

Bridges called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

Bridges welcomed Committee members and introduced Boeckner (FS).

Derek Boeckner, FS President and Member, Faculty Senate Executive Committee, presented the charge to the FSAA committee and oversaw election of Chair and Secretary. Hanson (Koch) nominated Bridges as Chair. Motion carried. Bridges (Koch) nominated Hanson as Secretary. Motion carried. Boeckner thanked the Committee and turned the meeting over to Bridges.

Bridges requested a motion to approve the agenda. Hanson (Bell) moved to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Discussion moved to agenda items #104 - #109. Bridges noted that the subcommittee met last week and did not see red flags. Hanson (Koch) moved to approve agenda items ##104 - #109. Motion carried.

Discussion turned to the revised Finals Week Policy proposal from the September meeting. Bridges reminded the Committee that the proposal was submitted by Faculty Senate with the request to send it through the Committee's formal approval process. Bridges informed the Committee that the proposal was sent out to campus and the College Ed Policy / Academic Affairs Committees for review and input. Resulting feedback / input received was provided to the Committee. Bridges noted that there were four basic themes to the faculty feedback:

- 1) *Putting date / location / time of final exam in each syllabus was unnecessary.* Statement that final exam will be administered according to Final Exam Schedule (with link to schedule) is sufficient, especially given that the final exam schedule is set by University policy and are published on UNK's website.
- 2) *Accommodation for students taking three or more finals in one day was seen as appropriate but wording needs clarified.* Faculty want the option to negotiate a time with students for the makeup exam rather than having it be automatically scheduled for late Thursday afternoon during finals week. Faculty also noted a process for verifying a student's eligibility for accommodation should be included in the policy; timing of student's request to the faculty member for accommodation should also be addressed.
- 3) *Appeals process needs clarified;* process should not start with dean but rather begin with instructor then department chair then dean.
- 4) *Faculty felt that there was not a clear explanation for moving notification of any major assignments from eighth week to the fifth week of the semester.*

Based on the feedback received from campus, Bridges noted there seemed to be a lack of support to approve the policy as submitted and asked the Committee for next steps. Committee agreed that revision

of the wording should be the next step. Hanson (Koch) moved to revise the language for the proposed finals week policy according to feedback from the faculty, have it approved by the Committee, and then send proposal out to campus for review. Motion carried.

Bridges, with the assistance of Neal and Hanson, will draft the revised language and send out to the Committee. The goal is to have Committee approved language to present at November meeting and then out to campus for review.

Bridges reminded the Committee that quick turnaround on approving the minutes is needed to meet Faculty Senate's submission deadline for the November packet – so please watch email and act on the minutes as soon as possible. Hanson (Koch) moved to adjourn. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph Hanson, Secretary

Approved via email, October 24, 2022

2022-2023 ACADEMIC AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Academic Affairs Subcommittee 10/12/2022

Academic Affairs Full Committee 10/20/2022

NUMBER, REQUEST, LEVEL, SPECIFIC REQUEST, DEGREE/COURSE, PROGRAM/COURSE, TITLE, DEPT, COL, REASON

#104, Change to Bachelor of Arts Foreign Languages International Students English Literature Requirement (2C); Current Language: International students, whose native language is not English, may complete six credit hours of English Literature coursework in lieu of the Foreign Languages requirement. Proposed Language: International **and Refugee** students, whose native language is not English, may complete six credit hours of English Literature coursework in lieu of the Foreign Languages requirement.

#105, Alter, Course, Prerequisites, CDIS 420, Research in Communication Disorders, CDIS, COE, Removing the senior-level status from the prerequisites. Students are now taking this course closer to the statistics course in their junior year; Change prerequisites, Old Value: Senior level standing, New Value: Junior standing.

#106, Create, Course, MKT 366, Event Operation Fundamentals, MASCM, CBT, There is demand for a course in Event Operation Fundamentals, primarily among marketing students. Once approved, our intent is to add this course as an elective to the Marketing Emphasis and to the Marketing/Management Minor.

#107, Discontinue, Course, PE 350L, Modalities in Athletic Training Laboratory, PEREC, COE, PE 350 was discontinued with the AT program moving to master's level, so the lab must be discontinued as well.

#108, Discontinue, Program, Psychology 7-12 Teaching Subject Endorsement, B.A.Ed., PSY, CASC, Rationale for Inactivation: Low enrollment.

#109, Alter, Course, Corequisites, TE 319, Management and Assessment in K-12/Secondary Classrooms, TE, COE, Updating corequisites. CDIS 312 is no longer being offered and therefore shouldn't be coupled; Change corequisites, Old Value: TE 320 or ART 371 or CDIS 312 or MUS 356 or MUS 467 or PE 471, New Value: TE 320 or ART 371 or MUS 356 or MUS 467 or PE 471

Transcript of Faculty Comments on Finals Week Policy proposal:

CAS Comments:

The Music Program has engaged in a lively discussion on how our unique activities interact with this policy. We would like to request a revision to point 3 to include "performances"

"3. Projects, papers, **performances**, and speeches scheduled for completion during the last week of classes must have been assigned in writing by the end of the eighth fifth week of the semester. This refers to the project and its scope, not the topic." [potential additional language is in **bold**]

This revision reflects some unavoidable needs to schedule KSO concerts and occasional additional concerts during Dead Week. The department has striven for several years to keep concerts off this week, but we have found an occasional exception unavoidable. I'm happy to answer any questions about our request. (I apologize that this email is coming to you from my phone while I'm mentoring students at auditions.) Thanks for your work on this committee and for considering this revision request.

In the notes section (bottom)

https://www.unk.edu/offices/registrar/academic_policies_handbook/Final_Exam_Schedules.php

there are a few items that aren't listed in the proposed FWP. In particular "*Four or five-hour courses will meet twice during the last week, according to the above schedule*" isn't in the proposed FWP, but it's not mentioned as a change.

What's the story? Why were these changes not listed as changes?

I'm not entirely comfortable with a distinction between a "project" and a good-old-fashioned homework. But I avoid that issue by not having HW due during dead week.

There is a small error on #2. It should probably read:

"The week prior to Finals Week," instead of what is indicated on the pdf.

This policy looks good to me, but I want to add that I don't generally give final exams in my courses. Students usually have to write final papers or complete final projects.

Under #5, this is sometimes brought up by my lab students. We typically have a final exam during dead week, but some labs do not have any exams, and all labs I have taught do not meet finals week.

Can we add something to the syllabus statement that the student request will be submitted to the department chair for approval, because I do not have access to student schedules to verify that they do have three exams in one day.

Also, I would change the syllabus wording of "the only examinations allowed during the last week of classes" to "the only exams allowed during the week prior to finals week" as the previous is confusing for students.

Does the student choose which exam they want moved? I've seen policies where it is the first exam alphabetically (and then numerically) fall term and first exam reverse alphabetically (and then numerically) spring term. That removes debate from which exam is the one moved.

The placement of the clarification on how to handle three finals on one day should be placed at the end of point 1 not at the end of point 2 (copied below). Either that or that additional sentence should be a point of its own directly following point 1 and should very clearly state that the make-up time is Thursday of Finals week at 3:30 pm.

2. During the week prior to Final Week, the only examinations that may be given are: laboratory practical examinations, make-up or repeat examinations, and self paced examinations. **In the event that a student is scheduled to take three or more final exams in one day during the final exam week, the student may: take all final exams as scheduled; take the exam during the allotted day and time that is open for make-up examination or resolution of conflict, which is Thursday at 3:30pm**

By placing that sentence at the end of point two, it gives the impression that students with three exams on one day during finals week can take the exam on Thursday of the week before finals – as that point is describing what can happen during the week prior to finals. This will lead to confusion and argument.

The sentence construction is a bit odd as well. It appears that there should be a third point as the first two are separated by a semicolon (which perhaps should be a simple OR instead) and there is no period at the end.

I think it's unnecessary and unfounded in any reasoning. We just revised this policy a couple of years ago and I don't understand what it accomplishes to move the project/major assignment "deadline" for faculty up to Week 5. I emailed Julie and Ted asking if they were given a reason as to why students need to be notified of a project due at the end of the term so early, when there is NO CHANCE they are going to start working on until *maybe* the week before it's due. Ted told me they were not provided with a justification of why this change from Week 8 to Week 5 was being suggested/made.

I'm not sure it really affects any of us because our end of term projects/papers tend to be assigned early or in pieces (e.g., Intro, Method, Results, Discussion, then final draft). But in principle, I don't see how it helps students to cater to them in this way. I am annoyed that they expect faculty to do things like this when generally speaking, the majority of students seem to be putting in less and less effort.

Overall, I have no issues with the policy with one exception (my exception will be stated in my word changes). I also found some parts where the wording could be improved.

Old:

2. During the week prior to Final Week, the only examinations that may be given are: laboratory practical examinations, make-up or repeat examinations, and self paced examinations. In the event that a student is scheduled to take three or more final exams in one day during the final exam week, the student may: take all final exams as scheduled; take the exam during the allotted day and time that is open for make-up examination or resolution of conflict, which is Thursday at 3:30pm

New (changes in purple):

2. During the week prior to **Finals Week**, the only examinations that may be given are: laboratory practical examinations, make-up or repeat examinations, and self-paced examinations. In the event that a student is scheduled to take three or more final exams in one day during the final exam week, the student may: take all final exams as scheduled; take the exam during the allotted day and time that is open for make-up examination or resolution of conflict, which is Thursday at 3:30pm; **or take the exam during Finals Week at an agreed upon time worked out between the student and the instructor.**

If we are going to be flexible and provide a make-up time, why can't the instructor and the student come up with an alternative plan – or at least have the option. I could think about situations where either the instructor or student want to take the exam and get it completed as soon as possible to finish the class or commence grading and waiting until Thursday afternoon might not be the best option.

In point 4, I would change the wording to: Complaints about failure to follow the above outlined procedures should be made immediately to the appropriate department Chair **and if necessary, the Dean.**

CBT Comments:

Comment #1:

I believe there should be wording that a student must contact their instructor the week prior to finals week if they intend to exercise the right to use the make up exam period on Thursday due to the overwhelming number of exams on a single day. Otherwise, I can envision some students may skip an exam without notification and then try to leverage a reschedule on Thursday.

Comment #2:

I think the new point two is annoyingly bad. There are two loosely related statements joined together. Those should be separate points.

Why shorten from 8 weeks to 5? (Corollary, why don't faculty list it in their syllabus at the start of the semester?) I have had classes once or twice in 18 years where the students really got into a project so I let them do that instead of a test. But hey, let's take away everyone's chance to have some flexibility.

And the last addition is just stupid in my opinion. We already have problems with faculty getting the syllabus statements wrong. So let's change from the incredibly clear ~"final exams will be given at the time listed on the final exam schedule webpage" to "Put the final exam time in the syllabus so you introduce another point of failure."

And, why is it that if a student believes an instructor is violating the policy they just go straight to the chair or dean and not the instructor? Ask the instructor first. Why allow complaints straight to the dean? If it gets to the dean and is legit it is time to bring the hammer down. But that should not be step one.

Comment #3:

Just curious but what was the reasoning behind wanting to switch from announcing semester projects in week 8 to week 5? In the real world, you rarely get any notice when doing projects...maybe a couple of weeks. I'm fine with making sure semester projects are discussed by week 5. But, we're really wanting to prepare students for life after school, I'm not quite sure we really need a policy that ensures all work is talked about in writing by week 5 of the semester. And maybe I'm interpreting it wrong. And no need to make changes based on this observation....just wanted to throw out the thought and maybe get more clarification on the motivation behind the change. And maybe you don't know since it appears as if the suggested changes came from student government and faculty senate and that's OK too if you aren't sure of the motivation behind the change.

Comment(s) #4:

Notes on final week policy

I believe there should be wording that a student must contact their instructor the week prior to finals week if they intend to exercise the right to use the make up exam period on Thursday due to the overwhelming number of exams on a single day. Otherwise, I can envision some students may skip an exam without notification and then try to leverage a reschedule on Thursday.

Adding "In the event that a student is scheduled to take three or more final exams in one day during the final exam week, the student may: take all final exams as scheduled; take the exam during the allotted day and time that is open for make-up examination or resolution of conflict, which is Thursday at 3:30pm" to the second point seems odd since the two are separate topics. I agree with the intent of the statement but it should be a separate point.

For example:

1. During the week prior to Finals Week, the only examinations that may be given are: laboratory practical examinations, makeup or repeat examinations, and self-paced examinations.
2. In the event that a student is scheduled to take three or more final exams in one day during the final exam week, the student may: take all final exams as scheduled; take the exam during the allotted day and time that is open for make-up examination or resolution of conflict, which is Thursday at 3:30pm

Point 3 is not dependent on point 2 and should be its own independent statement.

I actually thought the three or more exams rule was in place already. The common make up time is already in place as note d but adding it to the main body is fine. If it is added to the main body though it should be removed as a note to reduce redundancy.

I would prefer that an option be included for a commonly agreed upon makeup time. I.e: *In the event that a student is scheduled to take three or more final exams in one day during the final exam week, the student may: take all final exams as scheduled; take the exam at a mutually agreed upon time, or take the exam Thursday at 3:30pm, the allotted day and time that is open for make-up examination or resolution of conflict.*

It does not make sense to me that the instructor and student are not allowed to agree upon a more convenient time if they both wanted to do so. I am in favor of there being a set time for instances when an agreement can't be reached.

Why change the deadline for assignments of projects from the eighth week to the fifth week? I don't really object to moving it but it seems like it has the effect of giving faculty less flexibility to modify their course if they believe the addition of a project, paper, or speech would be beneficial. But really, it seems odd to me that anyone would not include a project, paper, or speech in their syllabus to start with.

Original point 4, shouldn't the faculty member have a chance to discuss any disagreement first? It seems odd that the current policy has the Dean as a legitimate first contact. If a faculty member is giving a makeup exam during the week prior to Final Week shouldn't the student take that concern to the faculty member first so they can discuss the policy? A faculty member should (almost) always have a chance to address any problems directly with a student directly before a chair or dean becomes involved.

Something more along the lines of:

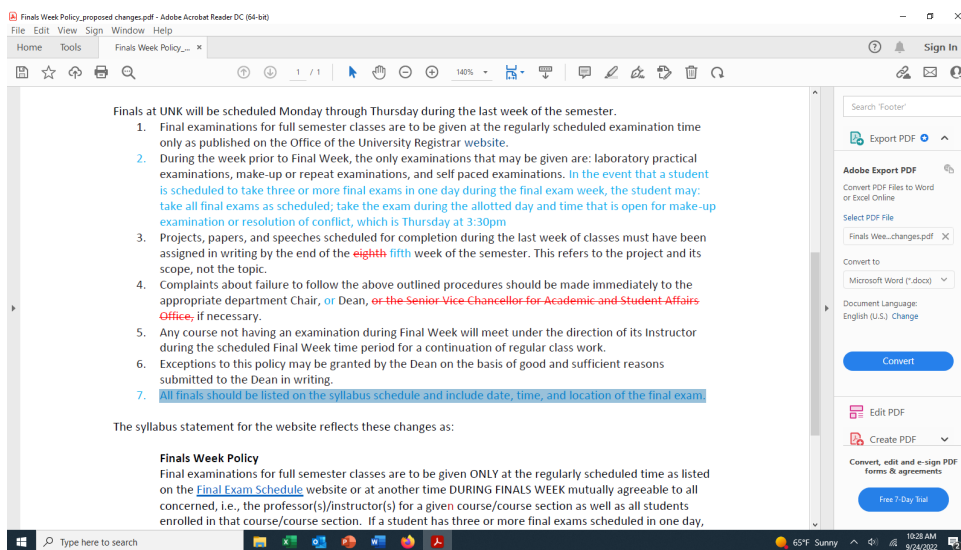
Complaints about failure to follow the above outlined procedures should be made immediately to the faculty member. If the faculty member is not responsive to the students' concerns the appropriate department Chair should be notified. If necessary, appeals can be filed with the Dean of the College offering the course.

Adding an additional bullet point requiring the finals be listed on the syllabus schedule and include date, time, and location of the final exam is a horrible idea. Point 1 already requires that the exam be offered at the regularly scheduled time. The final exam time is listed in the Final Exam Schedule. Consider the number of courses offered at UNK. If each course has a syllabus and the overall accuracy rate of listing the correct details for the final exam is 99% then you would have a lot of mistakes. I already see syllabus with the wrong syllabus statements in them where faculty update a syllabus from a previous semester. That will happen with the final exam schedules as well. Add in when a course has a room change after the syllabus has been made, faculty who use a common syllabus for multiple courses, and other just general imperfection and adding a requirement that information that is available online be reproduced on the syllabus is an invitation to conflict. What happens when there is discrepancy between the time that appears on the syllabus and the time the exam is supposed to be given?

COE Comments:

1. Need to clarify/ define what is meant by "self-paced" exam
2. One faculty feels that all projects/papers/speeches/performances need to be in the syllabus from the start.
3. One faculty and the COE APSC has concerns with #7 (7. All finals should be listed on the syllabus schedule and include date, time, and location of the final exam.)
 - a. Many faculty members have their course schedule as a separate document from the syllabus, so including the date, time, and location of the final exam on both documents is going to lead to mistakes. It's also redundant. I also think the location of the final exam is pretty well understood to be in the classroom where the class normally meets, and should only be required to be listed if the final exam will be somewhere else. My suggestion would be to alter statement 7 to read:

- i. All finals should be listed on the syllabus or course schedule and include date, and time of the final exam. If the final exam will be held somewhere other than the classroom where the class typically meets, this also needs to be included.
 - b. COE APSC : Our only concern is requiring the date/time to be listed on the syllabus due to the fact that the schedule is consistent and posted on the university website. On the other hand, class times may change which would effect the final exam day/time and if a faculty member forgets to update that detail on their syllabus, or if a new faculty member inherits a syllabus and doesn't realize it needs to be adjusted, we run the risk of having confusion. Instead, perhaps require a phrase such as
 - i. "The final exam will be scheduled in accordance with the university's posted final exam schedule" and then provide the link to the academic calendar/final exam schedule.
4. Also, it seems that the blue text for point 2 (see the screenshot, below) should actually be point 3, which will then renumber the other points so that point 7 will become point 8.



Other Comments (received via email to Chair, FSAA Committee):

Comment #1:

How is the faculty member supposed to verify the student has three or more finals in one day? What is to prevent academic dishonesty with a student discussing the final with other students who have already completed the exam during the allotted time should they decide to complete the exam during the "make-up" time?

I currently list the final exam times on the course calendar including the date and time. But occasionally I have to change the location....or the location is changed for me due to other facility factors....available computer labs, other finals needing alternative accommodations etc.