

October 25, 2010

Request to Docket: Reply from the Educational Policy Commission Regarding Changes to the University Policy on Attendance and Make-Up Work.

Dear Faculty Chair Wurtz:

Last April the Faculty Senate considered the Educational Policy Commission's (EPC) recommendations regarding the University Policy on Class Attendance and Make-Up Work. According to the Senate minutes from April 12, 2010, a motion was made "...to approve the EPC's Policy on Class Attendance and Make-Up Work with option 2, with the addition that each of the primaries are given the right to have a second, a support person, with them as they go through the process." However, the minutes do not reflect any discussion of the merits of this addition to the policy.

The EPC questions the wisdom of specifying that each party is allowed to bring someone with them to the grievance meeting. First is the issue of privacy rights (FERPA). If this language is added, then someone needs to be responsible for making sure the student has agreed to waive her/his FERPA rights. Neither the student's support person nor the faculty member's support person has a legal right to the information that will be openly shared as a part of the grievance process. Additionally, we believe the policy, as approved by the senate, provides the student with an advocate throughout the grievance process in the form of an NISG Executive Officer. Lastly, the faculty member similarly has a built in support person in the form of his/her department head.

If the Faculty Senate feels strongly about this addition to the policy, we request that the Senate specify who should be responsible for making sure that the student's right to privacy is not violated.

Additionally, the EPC requests that the Faculty Senate specify who is in charge of creating the grievance committee as specified in the policy. Specifically, there needs to be a person who makes the call for faculty willing to serve in a pool from which two members can be drawn in the event of a grievance. The EPC does not have the authority to dictate who the responsible individual should be, but feels that this issue must be followed up on by the Senate.

Lastly, the EPC requests that the Faculty Senate makes sure that policies passed in the Senate are made available on the UNI Website, in appropriate UNI documents, and that an announcement is made in UNI Online and MyUNIverse notifying faculty and students about changes to UNI policies that directly impact them. Although the Attendance and Make-Up Work policy was passed in April 2010, we cannot find it on the UNI website or in the UNI Course Catalog. Additionally, several years ago the Senate passed an EPC recommendation on technology use in the classroom. We also cannot find this policy on the UNI website.

Respectfully,

Gayle Rhineberger-Dunn, Chair, Educational Policy Commission
J. Ben Schafer (CNS) Kashonna Drain (student)
Maria Basom (HFA) Polina Bogomolova (student)
Susan Moore (L) Rhonda Greenway (student)
Lyn Countryman (at large, ED) Philip Patton (ex officio, registrar)
David Surdam (BA) Michael Licari (ex officio, Associate Provost)
Francesca Soans (HFA)

cc: James Jurgenson, Chair of the Faculty
Jesse Swan, Senate Parliamentarian