

Duke University

Arts & Sciences Council Minutes

Meeting #3 (November 12, 2009)

Welcome

Council Chair Ruth Day called the meeting to order.

Minutes

- No additions or corrections to October minutes
- Minutes approved
- Thanks to David Malone, Acting Executive Secretary for the October minutes

Updates

ECASC Vote

Open position on the Executive Committee of the A&S Council (ECASC), for a faculty member from the Humanities. Candidates are:

- Sharon Holland (English/AAAS/Women's Studies)
- Beth Holmgren (Slavic & Eurasian Studies)

Owing to technical problems with electronic voting, the vote was taken by paper ballot during the meeting. Faculty representatives from all divisions voted.

IT Security/Privacy Policy

- Report at last meeting by IT officials
- Since then, the proposed policy has been reviewed by Council representatives & ECASC
- ECASC recommends approval
- No objections or concerns raised
- Therefore the new policy was approved

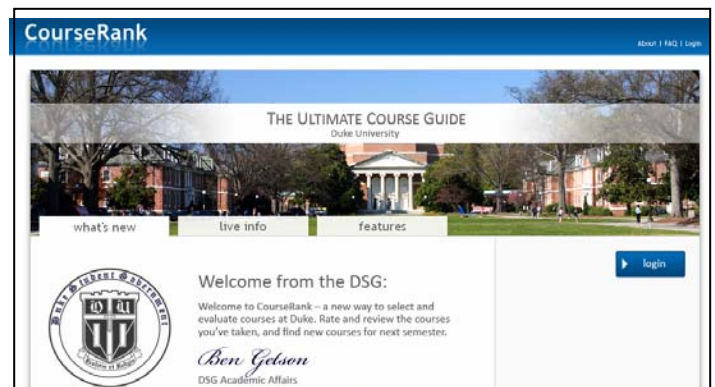
General Information

Methodist Church Site Visit

- Met with many Duke leaders
- Meeting with faculty (including 2 from ECASC)
 - 3 site visitors, all academics
- Main topics:
 - interdisciplinary focus
 - scarce economic resources
 - the Chapel as a campus symbol
- Their impressions: Duke is a leader in making interdisciplinary programs work; we are doing better than other institutions in coping with economic challenges
- Our impression: informative and collegial

Student Course Evaluation Website

- Major student concerns with the Trinity College official course evaluation process:
 - 1) Not all faculty "opt-in" to have their results posted online
 - 2) Only quantitative ratings are shown online, not comments that students write on the form
- Duke Student Government (DSG) recently launched a site called "CourseRank" (developed by Stanford students, now a commercial venture)
- It is very brief; the main section asks students to:
 - rate each course overall
 - provide overall comments (content unspecified)
- How to access it:
 - it requires Shibboleth authentication, so only people at Duke can access it at:
<https://duke.courserank.com/duke/home>
- What the homepage looks like:



- DSG informed Council Chair Day about the site
 - the meeting was very informative
 - it occurred the day before the site went live
 - therefore there was no time to inform the general faculty nor to provide comments
- The site will run on a trial basis for one year
- The Council welcomes timely information and the opportunity to comment in the future

Discussion

George McLendon (Dean of A&S): Asked about the gathering of the information on the student website, its statistical significance, and the fair collection and summary of student comments.

Cynthia Chen (DSG Academic VP): The site gives an average score. They had 44 percent of the student body responding in the last two weeks. They feel they are getting a full range of opinions.

Dean McLendon: But they must have a statistically meaningful set of responses for each course. How can they judge how well they are doing?

Cynthia Chen: This is a huge step above other systems that are available. Once you get responses numbering in the hundreds, you get a reasonable measure of a course. For example, in Econ 51, we have 150 ratings which makes this data more significant than other sources. Also this system has more features. For example, you can get grade distributions.

Peter Lange (Provost): There is the issue of faculty opt-in versus opt-out for such a survey. If the number of faculty that chooses to opt-in is modest, it is likely that such a site as we are considering will emerge. One of the arguments made for opt-out rather than opt-in was that the quality of the information available to the students would be better. This is because the course evaluations process would be pretty obligatory in terms of the number of students that entered data and the number of courses that are represented. There was not a willingness to go to opt-out and there are opportunities for students to put up their own sites. This is what has happened. The Arts and Sciences Council should return to the question of opt-in vs. opt-out.

Chair Ruth Day: This issue is already on the ECASC agenda. Can anyone at Duke access the system, even faculty??

Cynthia Chen: Faculty do have the opportunity to make entries into this system.

Awa Nur (DSG President): There should be a serious look at the opt-in, opt-out issue. The students have a need for a better course evaluation system.

Dean McLendon: About 3/4 of the faculty have voluntarily opted-in.

[Study Abroad → Global Education](#)

Study Abroad Office Changes



Margaret Riley
Director, Global Education Office
for Undergraduates

Why has the name of the Study Abroad Office been changed to the Global Education Office for Undergraduates? The answer is that the office was asked to undertake the oversight of several domestic programs. Three of these were the Duke in New York Arts and the Media, Duke in New York Financial Markets and Institutions, and Duke in Los Angeles. In addition the Quality Enhancement Plan has the global study semester abroad which needs oversight. Since the Duke strategic plan has "global" as a focus, all of these programs are important. The word "global" is to be interpreted as meaning local, regional, national, and international.

Study Abroad Committee Request



Tom Robisheaux
Chair, Study Abroad Committee

The Study Abroad Committee is the faculty oversight committee associated with the Study Abroad Office. Since the Study Abroad Office has changed its name and duties, the Committee requests a change its name and charge as well. The new name would be the Committee for Global Education for Undergraduates and its charge would be to review programs periodically that are listed under the Global Education Office for Undergraduates. It is to consider petitions from students and approve changes in their programs. The proposed changes are shown in blue:

[Study Abroad Committee](#)

[Committee on Global Education for Undergraduates](#)

Charge: The Committee on [Study Abroad-Global Education](#) shall recommend to the Dean of Trinity College and to the Council appropriate regulations for study abroad, and foreign academic exchange programs, and domestic programs overseen by the Office on [Global Education for Undergraduates](#). The Committee shall recommend guidelines for determining transfer credit to Duke for academic work done abroad. It shall approve academic changes (deletions, revisions, and additions) in study abroad programs that have been previously endorsed by Duke. It shall recommend new Duke-sponsored study abroad programs to the Dean of the College following a careful review of detailed proposals. It shall review periodically all Duke-sponsored and approved programs overseen by Global Education Office for study abroad in terms of changing educational and academic needs at Duke.

Dean Lee Baker (Trinity): The two Duke in New York programs have faculty steering committees. So it should be noted that they do have faculty oversight.

The Council approved the requested changes in name (Global Education Committee) and charge (to include the additional programs covered by the GEO).

A&S Council Priorities Poll: Preliminary Results



Ruth Day
Chair, A&S Council

Purpose of Poll:

- determine faculty views about A&S priorities
- help set the Council agenda

Methods

- Who:** --faculty representatives to the A&S Council
 --31 faculty, representing 600+ faculty
 --responses anonymous (no names collected)

How:

- consult with colleagues in Department or Program
- enter collective views via electronic link to poll
 (one vote per Dept/Prog)

- When:** --poll open 10/1/09 – 10/30/09

Content:

- topics in the Council charge, from the bylaws
- 3 categories:
 - A&S Issues
 - Trinity College Issues
 - Legislation & Approval
- plus specific topics within each category (see below)

Procedure:

- 1) rate priorities for each topic along a 5-pt. scale:
5 = highest priority / 1 = low priority
- 2) write comments for each topic and overall (optional)

General Results

Response Rate:

- 94% (29 of 31 representatives)

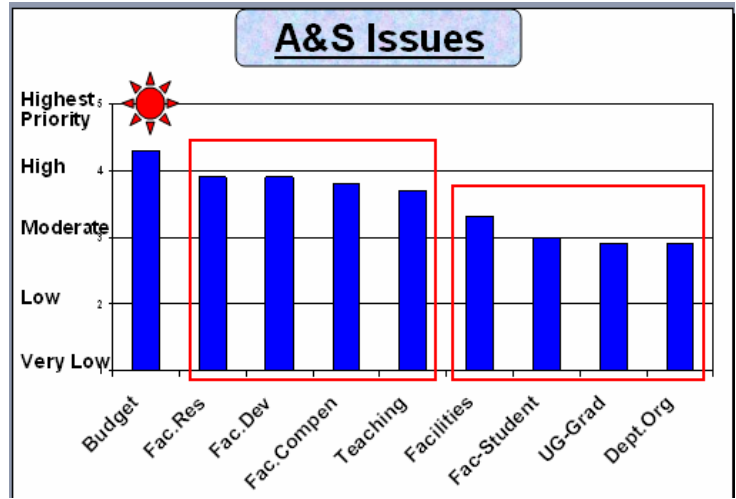
Experience:

- average 2 years on Council
- average 10 years at Duke

A&S Issues

Specific Topics (from bylaws):

- General A&S budget
- Faculty research support
- Faculty development
- Faculty compensation
- Teaching
- Facilities
- Organization of departments
- Undergrad-grad interaction
- Faculty-student interaction



Results

- Averaged over all who responded
- Highest priority in entire poll = A&S budget
- High priority = faculty issues (research, development, compensation) and teaching
- Moderate priority = facilities, faculty-student interaction, graduate-undergraduate interaction (e.g., TAs), and organization of Departments and Programs

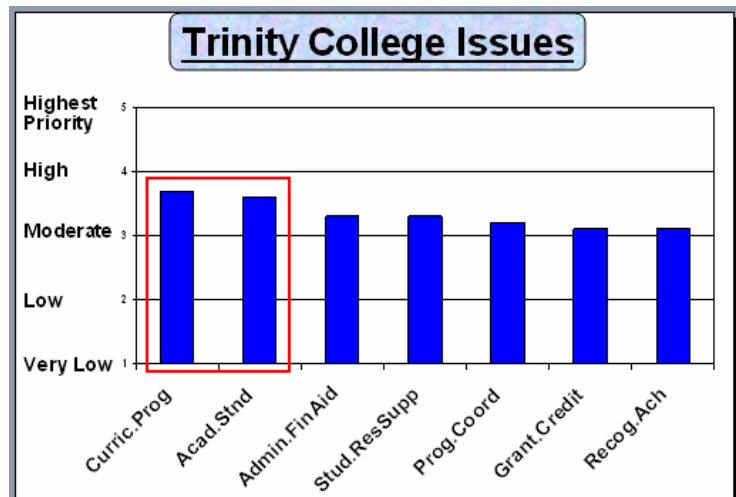
Comments

- Written comments were given within the Poll for:
- most of the specific topics
 - additional topics (e.g., Professors of the Practice)
 - general A&S concerns
- Sample comments were given at the Council meeting.

Trinity College Issues

Specific Topics (from bylaws):

- Academic standards
- Curricular programs
- Granting credit
- Coordination (academic programs, residential life, general learning environments)
- Admissions & financial aid
- Student research support
- Recognition of superior achievement



Results

- High priority = curricular programs, academic standards
- Moderate priority = all others

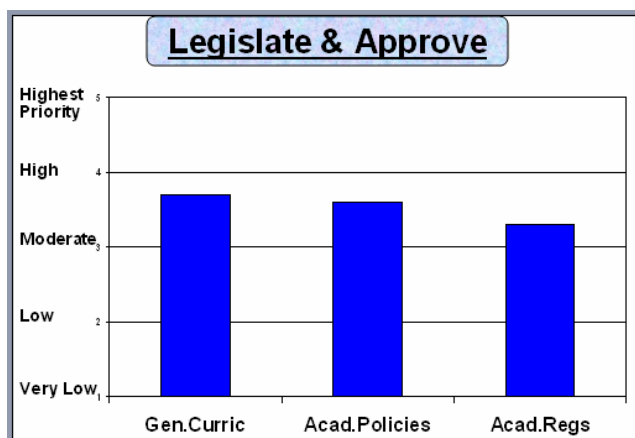
Comments

- Many interesting comments, to be reported later

Legislate & Approve

Specific Topics (from bylaws):

- The general curriculum
- Academic regulations
- Academic policies



Results

- High priority = general curriculum, academic policies
- Moderate priority = academic regulations

Comments

- Many interesting comments, to be reported later

Anything Else?

A box at the end of the Poll asked for comments about "anything else." These comments were especially interesting. A few examples were given at the Council meeting, the rest will be provided later.

Council Discussion

Dean Ingeborg Walther: When I was in the Academic Council they always had an opportunity for the Provost to respond to questions. I do not know if this Council has that but it would be nice to have a forum where some of the questions could be answered. Especially how Arts and Sciences relates to the Nicholas School and questions like that.

Ruth Day (Council Chair): Anyone is welcome to come and comment. ECASC is looking at various models for faculty governance and how various deans, the provost, and vice provosts will interact with us.

We will be bringing this issue back to you in the coming months.

Dean McLendon: Did representatives give just their own views or those of their colleagues?

Chair Ruth Day: The representatives were instructed to consult their colleagues and they had a full month to do so. How many of you [representatives] consulted with your faculty? [Virtually all said yes.] Some of the consultations were very thorough – for example, the one in Psychology & Neuroscience.

Makeba Willbourne (alternate, Psychology & Neuroscience): Our representative, Ahmad Hariri, sent a version of the Poll to everyone in the Department. We replied and he tallied the results, then sent them into the A&S Poll site.

Dean McLendon (Trinity): It is great that you have done this and I look forward to reading the details.

Chair Ruth Day (to the Council): Do you advise a written report or can we just finish up the slide set and make it available to everyone? [The Council requested the slides.]

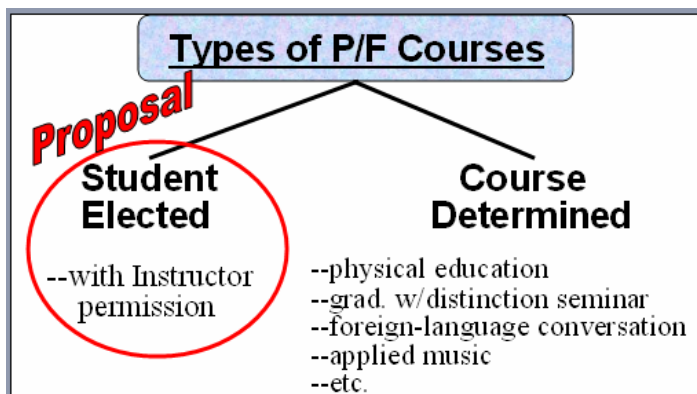
Additional discussion focused on other details in the Poll.

Pass/Fail Proposal

The Chair of the Academic Standards Committee (Peter Feaver) was not able to attend the meeting, so this presentation and discussion was led by Council Chair Ruth Day. She noted that several clarifications are needed in the proposed policy.

Clarifications

Types of P/F Courses



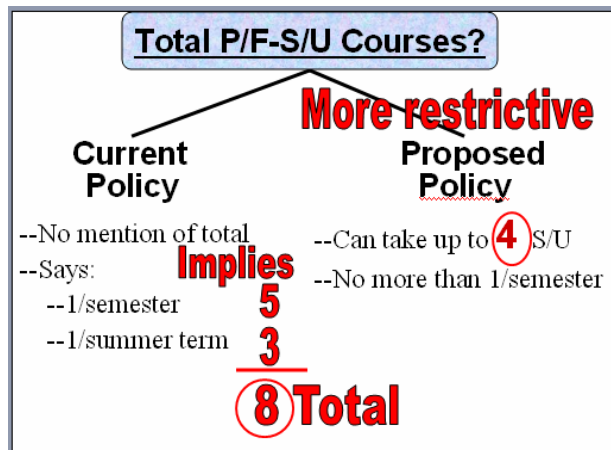
The proposed policy does not address the two types of P/F courses. Is the proposed change from P/F → S/U:

- Only for Student-Elected courses?
- If so, then students could get both P/F and S/U on their transcripts

Is the proposed change from P/F → S/U

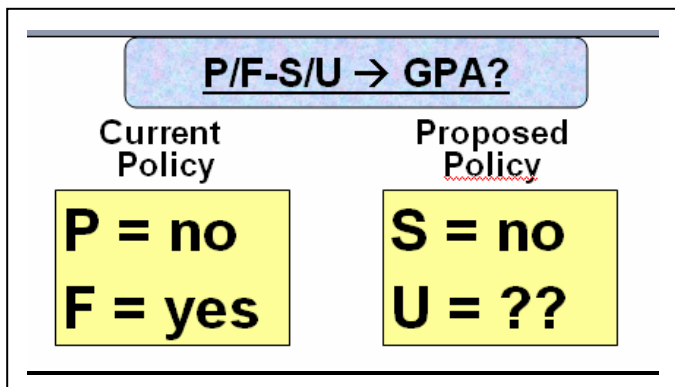
- Only for Student-Elected courses?
- If so, then students could get both P/F and S/U on their transcripts

Total Number of P/F or S/U Courses



Although the new policy was developed in part to liberalize the current policy, it in fact is more restrictive in terms of number of courses allowed. (Note: The current policy allows students to take P/F courses after they have declared a major; so the estimate of 5 semesters may vary across students.)

Effect of P/F vs. S/U on GPA



In the current policy, Pass grades do not count toward the grade-point average (GPA), but Fail grades do. In the proposed policy, Satisfactory grades do not count in the GPA, but no mention is made of Unsatisfactory grades.

Effect of Loose Ends on Voting

Since these clarifications revealed some troubling but not fatal problems, the Council decided to vote today, but that these votes are provisional. These problems will be resolved and the final vote will be held at the next meeting.

Pass/Fail Votes

There were three issues that the Academic Standards Committee did not resolve and sent them to ECASC for advice. ECASC examined and modified the possible options somewhat. A provisional vote was taken on each and the results are starred below. They passed unanimously or by a very large majority.

Freshman Option

Freshmen

First-Year Students

Should the new policy be made available to first-year students?

Option-A = NO

With the consent of the instructor, a student **who has reached the 3rd semester of enrollment** may register, following instructions included in registration information, for grading on a "satisfactory/unsatisfactory" basis

OR

Option B = YES

With the consent of the instructor, a student may register, following instructions included in registration information, for grading on a "satisfactory/unsatisfactory" basis

Discussion: Freshman Option

Ingeborg Walther (alternate, German): If option A were passed would a first year student have the option of taking a fifth course on a pass-fail basis?

Chair Ruth Day: What is the rule about the number of courses a first year student can take?

Dean Willard: It is 4.5. It could be five with special approval.

Majors Option

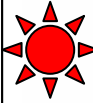
Majors

S/U & Major

Can courses taken on an S/U basis count toward major requirements?

Option-A = NO

Courses taken on an satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis do not count toward satisfying the requirements or prerequisites of a major, minor, or certificate program.



Option-B = MAYBE

Courses taken on an satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis **generally** do not count toward satisfying the requirements or prerequisites of a major, minor, or certificate program. **However, departments and programs may choose to allow courses taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis to count towards prerequisites and corequisites for a major. (require approval by DUS of student's major or student's dean)**

OR

Discussion: Major Option

Is there a rule about how many S/U can count on the major?

Ron Grunwald (Biology): The departments in principle can choose to make limitations.

Dean Mary Nijhout: Departments can make different rules in this regard even though the same courses might count in different majors. A student might bring to one DUS a petition to count a course that had previously been taken pass-fail because the student had intended to major in an area that would accept it as a pass-fail course. We have to be aware of this problem. Different departments do behave differently.

Dalene Stangl (Statistical Sciences): Between econ and math and stats, there are so many common courses, it is going to be a nightmare.

Leslie Digby (Evolutionary Anthropology): Having just voted in that freshmen can take S/U, it would be an advising issue if you voted that it could not count towards the major.

TimeTable Option

TimeTable

TimeTable for Declaring S/U

When should students declare they are taking the course on an S/U basis?

Option A = EARLIER

Students who wish to take a course satisfactory/unsatisfactory must obtain the instructor's permission and register to do so **by the end of the course correction period in any term.** Students who have elected to register for a course satisfactory/ unsatisfactory **may choose to register for a letter grade** by filing a request with the registrar **up to four weeks before the last day of classes** (see specific deadline date in the Academic Calendar).

OR

Option B = LATER

Students who wish to take a course satisfactory/unsatisfactory must obtain the instructor's permission and register to do so by filing a request with their academic dean **up to four weeks before the last day of classes** (see specific deadline date in the Academic Calendar).

Discussion: TimeTable

Question: The difference between drop-add and the correction period is how many days?

Ruth Day: One week.

Question: Does this correspond to the withdrawal deadline?

Ruth Day: Yes.

Close of Meeting

Chair Ruth Day thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan W. Biermann
Executive Secretary