

Tuesday March 9, 2021

Educational Policy and Planning Committee Meeting

Present: Chair, Jarrod Hanson, SEHD; Secretary, Rachel Stott, Library; Dennis DeBay, SEHD; Inge Wefes, Graduate School; Matthew Shea, College of Architecture and Planning; Wendy Bolyard, School of Public Affairs; Bryan Wee, CLAS

Absent: Vice Chair, Jimmy Kim, Engineering; Tod Duncan, CLAS; Christopher Merkner, CLAS; Jing Zhang; Business; David Liban, College of Arts and Media.

1. Call to order
2. Approval of [minutes from February 2021](#)
 - a. Motion to Approve: Dennis DeBay motions to approve; Matt Shea seconds
 - b. Minutes Approved
3. Updates
 - a. Passed on comments and suggestions regarding Pass/Fail policy
 - b. Work will continue on Credit Hour Guidelines document in a working group.
Feedback can be passed on through Inge Wefes or Dennis DeBay.
 - i. Important to indicate if it's for all students or undergrad only, as graduate courses typically have no pass/fail options
4. Campus syllabus policy ([Policy 1031](#)) Begin discussion and divide work
 - a. Tasks for EPPC:
 - i. Determine various purposes the syllabus serves – informative, contractual, pedagogical, etc. Consider whether certain aspects should be separated out into different documents?
 1. What can be taken out? What can be linked to in a different spot (like campus-wide policy pages)
 2. Talk to others in your department/unit who work with syllabi often or examples of creative syllabi that might be “breaking the rules”
 - ii. Identify innovative campus syllabus policies (or creative folks rebelling against campus policies through their syllabi). What can we learn?
 - iii. Identify ways that technology can serve to streamline syllabi.
 - b. EPPC in-meeting discussion about syllabi:**
 - i. Some of the minimums for syllabi:
 1. Some syllabi are nothing more than course schedule/calendar -- important, but isn't the full picture
 2. Learning outcomes also important feature of syllabi
 3. LOs need to be in close alignment with the assessment
 4. Consistent grading scales

5. Info about chances for make-up work/extra credit
 6. Use syllabi to prevent potential unethical behaviors of students.
- ii. Challenges and other things to consider:
1. Syllabi are a collection of other policies – linking out to existing policies could maybe mitigate this – but some challenges come when faculty interpret these campus-wide policies for their own purposes
 - a. Example: observance of religious holidays
 2. Syllabi review for larger schools/colleges are more difficult to complete.
 3. Gradient of boiler plate material that needs to be included—some policies are non-negotiable and that content could be jettisoned. The policies that are more up for interpretation could be emphasized in the syllabus with guidance for students.
 4. How has the pandemic helped us rethink the contractual obligations that the syllabus represents? Expectations for students, but also for instructors.
 5. The syllabus can help provide context for why students are doing what they're doing in the course (tell the story of the course). If students don't feel connected to why they're in this course, they may not care as much.
 6. The policy includes submitting paper copies ahead of course—can this be adapted to include Canvas as well?
 - a. Creating a syllabus template for Canvas to help make it easier to include.
 - b. CETL could be a partner here – they have helped create info that was important to include in Canvas landing pages; could be translated to syllabi template.
 - c. How we deliver it matters.
 7. Is the syllabus one way that students determine whether or not they take a course? Maybe they enroll and then once they see the syllabus, they make a decision. What if students got a page that tells the story of the course up front, before they had access to the full syllabus?
 - a. This would go beyond the course descriptions in the catalog.
 - b. Could include the major learning outcomes.
 - c. Opportunity for course instructors to be creative with their language and humanize their course and why they're passionate about teaching it.
 - d. Creating short videos (“commercials”) for your course could be an option—they could be linked to the student shopping carts when they are looking at course catalog.

8. Tying syllabi to strategic plan around student success.
 9. What infrastructure is in place to help course instructors make these changes to their syllabi?
 - a. Templates and student workers could help with this?
 10. Concerns around over-standardization.
 11. Is there a way to get student feedback on the syllabus? Things they might appreciate/like/dislike that we aren't thinking about?
 - a. Lead some student focus groups to get feedback on general thoughts on syllabus; do students use them? What info has been especially useful, etc?
 - b. Involve student body president/student government.
 - c. Adding standardized questions to FCQs.
 12. Creative ways to engage students with a course syllabus.
 - a. Annotation exercises (Hyphes.is, for example)
 - b. Discussion/reflection questions that help identify pain points/things that are unclear or stressful for students early on in the course.
 13. Syllabi review process—course instructor responsibility? Individual schools/colleges/departments with their own review process? Should there be a formalized standard process. Is it a minimum expectation that a course faculty should be reviewing the syllabi for any courses they are teaching every year?
 14. Lecturers and adjuncts teaching a high number of courses that are just given a syllabus—those folks are probably not in a position to do a full-on syllabus review. Those responsibilities should fall to a course lead(s).
 - c. Other ideas moving forward?
 - i. Create a skeleton of a basic syllabus with all the required elements, plus guidance on how to accommodate exceptions/add additional context or information to syllabi as necessary
 - ii. Jarrod will put a folder in Teams to collect syllabi examples.
5. Adjournment

EPPC information including agendas and minutes is available on the UCD website at http://www.ucdenver.edu/faculty_staff/faculty/assembly/downtown/committees/Pages/Educational-planning-and-policy.aspx