

To: Faculty Senate

From: Educational Policy Committee

Date: November 20, 2020

Subject: EPC Quarterly Report

Per the Constitution of the Portland State University Faculty, the charge of the Educational Policy Committee is as follows:

The Committee shall:

- 1) Serve as the faculty advisory body to the President and to the Faculty Senate on matters of educational policy and planning for the University.
- 2) Take notice of developments leading to such changes on its own initiative, with appropriate consultation with other interested faculty committees, and with timely report or recommendation to the Faculty Senate.
- 3) Make recommendations to the Senate concerning the approval of proposals from appropriate administrative officers or faculty committees for the establishment, abolition, or major alteration of the structure or educational function of departments, distinct programs, interdisciplinary programs, divisions, schools, colleges, centers, institutes, or other significant academic entities. All proposals must use the Process for Creation, Elimination and Alteration of Academic Units.
- 4) In consultation with the appropriate Faculty committees, recommend long-range plans and priorities for the achievement of the mission of the University.
- 5) Undertake matters falling within its competence on either its own initiative or by referral from the President, faculty committees, or the Faculty Senate.
- 6) Form subcommittees as needed to carry out its work.
- 7) Report to the Faculty Senate at least once each term.

The EPC is a university-wide committee appointed, as follows, by the Committee on Committees:

Co-chairs: Alex Sager (Phil) & Arthur Hendricks (Lib)

AO: Cynthia Baccar, REG (2016-)

COTA: Jennifer Ruth (2019-)

CLAS-AL: Alex Sager (2017-)

CLAS-AL: Tucker Childs (2019-)

CLAS-Sci: Linda George (2019-)

CLAS-Sci:

CLAS-SS:

CLAS-SS: Friedrich Schuler (2019-)

CUPA, Leopoldo Rodriguez (2017-)

COE: Deborah Peterson (2019-)

MCECS: Tim Anderson (2019-)

LIB: Arthur Hendricks (2013-)

OI:

SBA:

SPH: Lynne Messer (2018-)

SSW: Mollie Janssen (2018-)

Ex officio: Stephen Boyce (Math), Budget Committee, and two (2) students who have not yet been appointed by ASPSU.

Consultants:

Susan Jeffords, Provost

Andreen Morris, OAA

Kathi Ketcheson, Director, OIRP

Kevin Reynolds, Vice Pres. for Finance & Administration

Report:

During the Winter term, the EPC continued unfinished work carried over from Spring term, namely the Online Education Policy.

Subcommittees completed all but one of the reports generated by the EPC in 2016 regarding the state of online education at PSU. Two years ago the EPC carried out surveys, focus groups, and interviews of students, faculty, and administrators, as well as investigated questions around the cost of online education. An executive summary was drafted to summarize the findings from the subcommittee reports; however, the report on the cost of online education at PSU is still in progress.

With the advent of remote learning due to the pandemic, the EPC has needed to take a step back and consider how the shift to almost all faculty teaching remotely affects our research. At the very least, this requires us to revisit and rethink our original report. The original PI David Raffo, who initiated this report when he co-chaired the EPC, has applied to host a second survey on student attitudes toward online learning. We anticipate releasing a report in Winter term.

A subcommittee was formed to address the codes used for the Schedule of Classes. Currently there are 5 Instructional Method codes used in the Schedule of Classes to signal to students the two most critical things they need to know when planning class schedules: where do I need to be?, and when do I need to be there? These codes were set up quickly in response to the COVID-Remote learning situation. When we transition out of Covid, we will need to assess the utility of these codes. This committee hopes to address two issues: a narrow task of what course labels we should use to communicate with students about where and when they need to be; a broader set of questions about course modality at PSU, which includes questions such as the added fee for online class, questions about standardization in online education, and questions about how PSU will represent its online efforts to the larger community. For these broader questions, the goal is to begin to articulate them so we can determine whether they

should be addressed in the EPC or if they may be proper to other Faculty Senate committees or PSU bodies.

Another, related task, was to discuss fees for online courses in concert with the Budget Committee. Some students are confused by why some classes have a \$35 per credit fee while others don't. Steve Boyce reported he has been in discussions with others regarding costs, fees, and the funding model for remote, online, hybrid courses. A subcommittee was formed and work is on-going.

The EPC also formed a subcommittee to address the issue of the definition of terms in PSU policy documents, namely Departments versus Programs. The impetus for this was when the Indigenous Nations proposal to become a department was approved in 1919-20 by EPC. This caused us to realize that there is quite a variety of terms and many documents refer to "programs" that act like departments, and others use "department." What is the distinction? Academic units are also used. Some programs have degrees with BA and MA programs. Is "program" a synonym for "academic unit?" University studies is an example, with 25 NTTF faculty; who decides their curriculum? In a department, the faculty department proposes and makes changes to syllabi. Shared line faculty adds complexity to the discussion.

This goal of this subcommittee was to identify all the units, programs, and departments and develop a plan. After forming the subcommittee, we learned from Faculty Senate Steering that it was creating an Ad-Hoc Committee to Consider Definitions of Faculty, Program, and Department in the Faculty Constitution. While this subcommittee's charge differs in significant ways from the EPC subcommittee, we agree that it would be best to participate in Steering's Ad-Hoc Committee. Tim Anderson will be the EPC representative.

The EPC selected a representative for the Academic Freedom Task Force, and it is Jennifer Ruth. We want the EPC representative to represent academic freedom from a faculty perspective and AAUP from a bargaining perspective.

Lastly, The EPC reviewed a request from International and Global Studies seeking moratoria. International and Global Studies was a program and became a department. External review indicated the department should be thematic. The department has seven regional focuses and now in social sciences global issues are becoming more common, but the department doesn't have the authority to require other departments to offer courses on particular content areas. This department has only a 1.0 full-time tenure line.