

Portland State University Faculty Senate Motion
5 June 2023

Designate Educational Policy Committee to represent Faculty Senate on a summer workgroup to develop an attendance policy and implementation plan

Motion presented by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee

In order to develop an attendance policy and implementation plan which will bring PSU into compliance with Department of Education Financial Aid requirements and timelines, members of the Educational Policy Committee shall represent Faculty Senate on a summer workgroup.

Background, rationale, and preliminary discussions

The Department of Education regularly audits institutions to ensure compliance with policies relating to the administration of financial aid. PSU has participated in this year's audit by providing materials to DOE and through meetings and responses to DOE inquiries. The audit identified several areas for PSU improvement, among them several issues relating to how financial aid is awarded for study abroad programs. One of the most significant findings of the audit relates to the expectation from DOE that institutions be able to verify the attendance of students receiving financial aid, in other words, that students receiving federal financial aid are indeed attending classes. Because PSU does not have a consistent and uniform policy for verifying student attendance, we have been found to be **non-compliant** in this area. Failure to remain in compliance **risks PSU's authorization to administer financial aid**. With the significant numbers of PSU students who rely on financial aid to support their education, this is a serious matter that requiring urgent attention. To remain in compliance and therefore eligible to disburse financial aid to students, PSU is required to have both a policy and a mechanism in place by fall term, 2023 by which we can document that students have initiated attendance in each course for which they are registered and for which they receive financial aid. If a student does not initiate attendance in each class, PSU must recalculate the student's eligibility and, if necessary, return some or all of their financial aid.

The Director of Financial Aid, the Registrar, and others have begun meeting with a number of stakeholder partners, including the Education Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate, the AAUP, PSUFA, and GEU. A working group will be formed to work over the summer on the task of developing a plan for initiation of attendance and implementation of that plan. The Office of Academic Affairs will provide compensation for faculty who participate in the working group.

The policy and plan will be presented to Faculty Senate during fall term.