

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Annual Report of the Educational Policy Committee to Faculty Council
March 28, 2003

Membership: Lucia Binotti (2005; on leave Spring 2003), Melissa M. Bullard (2003), Robert Daniels (alternate for Kramer), Peter C. Gordon (2005; on leave Fall 2002), John Halton (alternate for Gordon, Fall 2002, Binotti Spring 2003), George Harper (Graduate Student Representative), George W. Houston (2003; Chair), Lloyd S. Kramer (2004; on leave 2002-2003), Bobbi Owen (2003), Susan F. Pierce (2004), Kimberly Sexton (Undergraduate Student Representative), Joseph Templeton (2004), Barbara Wildemuth (2005), David Lanier (ex officio).

Meetings. In 2002-2003, the Educational Policy Committee met in alternate weeks during September and early October, weekly from late October through mid-December and in January, and in alternate weeks in February and March. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, April 9.

Annual Report prepared by George W. Houston (Chair), with review of committee.

Committee charge: "The committee is concerned with those matters of educational policy and its implementation which have significant impact upon graduate and undergraduate instruction within the Division of Academic Affairs, and as to which the Faculty Council possesses legislative powers by delegation from the General Faculty under Article II of the Faculty Code. The committee's function is advisory to the Faculty Council in respect of such matters."

Activities, AY 2002-2003 (through March 26, 2003).

Proposed Change of Grades in Graduate Courses from HPLF to ABCDF.

In April of 2002, Linda Dykstra, Dean of the Graduate School, wrote the Educational Policy Committee (henceforth EPC) asking for its reaction to a proposal to change grades in graduate courses from HPLF to ABCDF, with S retained for thesis/dissertation credit. She asked that we also consider the addition of plusses and minuses to graduate transcripts. The principal reason for proposing the change to an ABCDF scale is to allow the easy computation of grade point averages, so that graduate students may compete effectively for awards that are based in part upon GPA. A subcommittee consisting of John Halton (Chair), George Harper, and Barbara Wildemuth considered the matter. When polled by the Graduate and Professional Students' Federation, 83% of students (1,188 of 1,375, with another 63 undecided) were opposed to a change in the grading system. Faculty polled by the Graduate School would favor a change, 35 to 14. The EPC was not able to attain a clear majority in favor of or opposed to either proposal, and in our reply to the Graduate School we stated that there seemed to us to be no compelling reason to convert from HPLF to ABCF. (We did not seriously consider ABCDF. The problem is that students now are not eligible to continue if they receive three "L's." If one used ABCDF, which grade would determine eligibility, C or D?) The Business School had previously contacted the University Registrar about establishing their own grading scale. The EPC felt that this was not desirable, and we conveyed to the Graduate School our hope that there be a single grading system for all Master's and PhD programs, including both the Graduate School and the Business School.

Proposed XF grade and associated changes in the Student Judicial System.

When the Chancellor's Task Force to Review the Student Judicial System made its report in May of 2002, the Committee on Student Conduct (COSC) was asked to review that report in general and to make recommendations concerning revisions to the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. One of the Task Force's recommendations was to establish a grade of XF to be assigned to students convicted of Honor Code violations; associated with that there was to be a required course in honor and integrity, and a wider range of options available as sanctions in cases of academic dishonesty. The EPC was asked to consider that part of the Task Force's recommendations. A Subcommittee consisting of Melissa Bullard (Chair), Lucia Binotti, Robert Daniels, and Kimberly Sexton met, considered the matter, and reported to the whole EPC. Following our discussion of the Subcommittee report, in which both divided opinions and serious reservations concerning the proposed XF grade emerged, the Subcommittee (through its Chair, Melissa Bullard) contacted the Chair of the COSC, Judith Wegner, and reported our concerns and misgivings. Those were taken into account by COSC as it continued work on the subject, and there were several exchanges of information and views from EPC to COSC and back. Ultimately, the COSC report and recommendations did not include the proposed XF grade but did allow for an increased range of sanctions, which the EPC too had thought was desirable.

Curriculum Review.

Laurie McNeil, Chair of the Curriculum Review Steering Committee, presented the recommendations of the Steering Committee in a Faculty Forum on October 7, 2002. This was the last in a series of such fora, and following it the proposal was revised (becoming Version 1.3) and submitted to the EPC and to the Administrative Boards of the General College and the College of Arts and Sciences for their review and recommendations. The EPC met on a weekly basis in November and December to consider the proposal. We began by working through the proposal section by section, from goals to Foundations, then Approaches, Connections, and Supplemental General Education. At our meeting on December 11, we considered the proposal as a whole. Following that meeting, we prepared a memo, outlining the concerns we had about the proposed curriculum, and sent the memo to Professor McNeil and to Tom Tweed, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Curricula. In January, we met twice with Professor McNeil and Tweed to discuss their proposals, and then twice more to discuss the curriculum revision. At that point, we sent a revised memo in which we attempted to specify our concerns about the proposal. Meanwhile, the Administrative Boards had begun to consider Version 1.3, and on February 12 George Houston, Chair of the EPC, met briefly with the Administrative Boards, at the invitation of Tom Tweed, to outline the thoughts of the EPC. As of this writing (March 10), the Administrative Boards have made their recommendations, and the EPC awaits a revision of the Proposed Curriculum.

Since the process is ongoing, this is not the place for a detailed account of our concerns, but a few summary remarks may be helpful. The Committee is appreciative of the work done on the Curriculum Revision by Laurie McNeil, Tom Tweed, the members of the Steering Committee, and many other members of the student body and the faculty. We are especially grateful to Professors McNeil and Tweed for their willingness to meet with us, and for their attempt to respond to our concerns and those of the Administrative Boards. The EPC is particularly concerned with the complexity of the proposed new curriculum, with the number of requirements

it involves, with multiple counting as a way of dealing with the requirements, and with some of the definitions and names of requirements. We think it likely that it will be difficult for students to understand the curriculum as an intellectual and educational process, and that there will be problems in implementation and administration. Despite this, we note that the proposed curriculum has many good points, and it is our hope and expectation that further revision (leading to Version 1.4) will resolve some or all of these concerns.

Grade Compression and Inflation.

Faculty Council has requested that the EPC annually review grade point averages as a result of the concerns outlined in the EPC report on grading standards of Spring 2000. In response to Faculty Council Resolution 2001-5, all units reviewed their grading practices in the course of the year 2002 and reported on their reviews to the Provost's office. Those reports were forwarded from the Provost's office to the EPC and reviewed by Joseph Templeton and George Houston of the EPC. They vary from very brief to very detailed, but collectively they indicate that the various educational units in the University are aware of the need for attention to grading practices and in particular to the need for consistency. The Registrar's office now makes available a report on GPA's by subject, semester by semester (with a six-month lag to allow time for the resolution of IN and AB grades). It is available at <http://regweb.unc.edu/official/stats/datamart>. Since the Faculty Council action on this matter took place only three semesters ago, it is still too early to tell if there are any long-term trends in grade point averages, although we note that, if one compares the Fall of 1999 to the Fall of 2001, about as many units had lower GPA's as had higher. The EPC will continue to monitor these reports and bring them to the attention of the Faculty Council.

Remarks on Student Transcripts.

Sue Estroff, Chair of the Faculty, acting on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Council (ECFC), asked the Educational Policy Committee to gather information concerning remarks that are added to the transcripts of undergraduate students at the request of individual units within the University, and then to design a procedure for the approval of any such remarks proposed in future. At present, there are close to three hundred such remarks, most of them awards ("Carmichael Cobb Award," for example). In response, the EPC proposes a procedure that will require initiating units to submit a short form that will be routed through the Provost's office (as representative of the Administration), then to the EPC (representing the Faculty), and thence to the Registrar's office. Most such proposals are likely to be straightforward, so this should not be a burdensome task for either the Provost's office or the EPC. The proposed policy, procedure, and form is attached (Attachment A).

Professional School Certificates for Undergraduate and Non-Degree Students.

In response to a request from Sue Estroff on behalf of the ECFC, the EPC considered a draft proposal, prepared by the Provost's office, of a policy regarding the establishment of new certificate programs for undergraduate students in professional programs. A subcommittee consisting of David Lanier (Chair), Kimberly Sexton, and Barbara Wildemuth, reviewed the draft that we were sent and proposed changes, which we have forwarded to Sue Estroff. Our proposed revised version is attached as Attachment B.

Noise, the Educational Process, and Related Issues.

Peter Gordon brought up the matter of noise, and in particular construction noise, on campus, and its effect on the educational process. He wondered also about the process of classroom renovation, in particular the criteria used in establishing which classrooms will be renovated first, or in what order. Members of the EPC agreed that these are matters that affect our ability to teach, especially in light of the proposed construction to take place over the next several years. At our meeting on March 3 we began considering both specific problems and possible resolutions of them. We plan to meet with members of the Administration, especially Facilities Planning, to find out what plans for noise abatement are already in place, then consider what might be an appropriate course of action.

Educational Policy Committee. **Attachment A.** DRAFT of Policy statement regarding remarks to be added to transcripts and DRAFT of a form to be used when proposing a new Remark on Student's Transcript.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Office of the Registrar
Remarks on Transcripts

1. Policy. The transcripts of students who attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill provide space for remarks that recognize special achievement in academic and University-related activities. Individual units may propose new transcript remarks subject to the following conditions:

- The remark must recognize academic achievement or achievement in activities directly related to the University. Negative remarks are not permitted.
- The remark may not exceed 54 characters in length.
- The word "distinction" may be used only to recognize academic achievement. For other activities, words such as "recognition" or "excellence in ..." should be used.

Some examples of acceptable remarks: "Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award," "Pfeiffer Scholar," "Year-at-Lyon," "Certificate in Women's Studies." All remarks in use by February 2003 are hereby approved. A master list of all approved remarks is maintained by the University Registrar.

2. Proposal for a New Transcript Remark. Instructions. For approval of a new remark, please complete this form, then send a copy to the Provost's office for approval. The Provost's office will forward it to the Educational Policy Committee for their approval. Upon final approval, the EPC will forward the form to the University Registrar, who will confirm the effective date and inform all parties listed below when the remark is available.

Initiating Unit (Department, Curriculum, etc.):

Proposed Remark (54 characters maximum):

Justification. Please be brief. If more documentation is needed, it can be attached.

Proposed Effective Date:

Contact information and signature of Unit Head; date.

Approval by Provost; date.

Approval by Educational Policy Committee; date.

Received by the University Registrar; confirmed effective date:

Educational Policy Committee. *Attachment B*. DRAFT of policy statement regarding certificate programs in professional schools.

Professional School Certificate for Undergraduates and Non-Degree Students

A Professional School Certificate enables a student to explore a specific area of professional study at the undergraduate level. The Certificate is offered under the direction of a professional school and is designed for undergraduates and for non-degree students. A non-degree student must have a minimum of an associate-level degree. The admission to on-campus certificate programs will be performed through the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. The admission to off-campus certificate programs will be performed according to distance education admission policy. A Professional School Certificate must be comprised of a minimum of nine credit hours. To establish a Professional School Certificate, the originating department head, program director and dean should submit the following information to the Office of the Provost:

- Statement of rationale and any existing established need for the program. If the program is offered by a community college, explain why there is also a need to offer this certificate at UNC-Chapel Hill.
- Describe the demographics of the target student population for this program (degree-seeking UNC Chapel Hill students, non-degree students, college-age, adult).
- Detailed description of the proposed program including its impact on campus resources such as classrooms and instructional personnel.
- If directed toward UNC Chapel Hill degree students, specify if courses can be double-counted toward the student's major as well as the certificate, and describe why certificate is necessary beyond offering major options, concentrations, or minors.
- Admissions criteria.
- Three-year semester-by-semester projection of enrollments, course offerings, financial plan, and evaluation plan. Course and program evaluation should be a standard component of all certificate programs. Certificate programs should be reviewed at least every five years by the administrative board of the school.
- Identification of proposed Certificate Program Director, teaching faculty and membership of Advisory Board.
- Text for the undergraduate bulletin.

Students enrolled in the program must earn at least a "C" grade in each course to be awarded the certificate. Students who earn a "C-" or lower grade in any certificate course will not be awarded the certificate. Students may not transfer courses into the certificate program.

Programs must be approved at least six months prior to enrolling students. Once the Office of the Provost approves the certificate, it will advise the Office of the University Registrar. Recipients of a Professional School Certificate may have this award noted on their Carolina transcript.