

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Annual Report of the Educational Policy Committee to Faculty Council
January 2023

Educational Policy Committee, 2022-2023

Members:

- Bardeen, Angela (University Libraries/Libraries), At-Large, term expires 2024
- Cramer, Lorraine (Microbiology & Immunology/Medicine), At-Large, term expires 2024-CHAIR
- Else-Quest, Nicole (Women and Gender Studies) At-Large, term expires 2025
- Fuller, Sarah (Public Policy/Arts & Sciences), At-Large, term expires 2023
- Gualtieri-Reed, Elizabeth (English and Comparative Literature) At-Large, term expires 2025
- Hsu, Carmen (Romance Studies/Arts & Sciences), At-Large, term expires 2023
- Sawyer, Keith (Education), At-Large, term expires 2024
- Weinberg-Wolf, Jennifer (Physics and Astronomy) At-Large, term expires 2025
- Zomorodi, Meg (Nursing), At-Large, term expires 2023
- Lloyd, Chad (Chemistry/Arts & Sciences), Graduate Student, term expires 2023
- Bryant, Victoria, Undergraduate Student, term expires 2023

Non-Voting Members (Consultants):

- DiGrazia, Lauren (Assistant Provost & University Registrar/Office of the University Registrar)
- Panter, Abigail (Senior Associate Dean/Arts & Sciences)
- Russell, Chloë (Associate Dean & Director/Academic Advising)
- Samford, Christy (Deputy Director/Office of the University Registrar)

Committee Charge: The committee is concerned with those matters of educational policy and its implementation as to which the Faculty Council possess legislative powers by delegation from the General Faculty under Article II of the Code. The committee's function is advisory to the Faculty Council and the University Registrar.

2022-2023 Meetings: September 2, September 30, November 4, December 6, January 11. Future meetings to be held on February 17, March 22, and April 28.

Summary of activities during the 2021-2022 academic year:

1. The EPC has continued in its efforts to improve communication and implementation of the current University Approved Absences (UAA) policy as well as address the new issues that have arisen as a result of the Covid epidemic. The current policy was approved in 2019 and information regarding the UAA policy was sent out via emails as well as in departmental meetings. However, issues arose with UAAs during the COVID pandemic regarding volume of requests, as well as non-compliance or misunderstanding of the policy by faculty members. A committee was created to help clarify the current UAA policies to the Senior Associate Deans (SADs) at their September, 2022 meeting, and to the Faculty Council at the Jan. 20, 2023 Faculty Council meeting. The committee consists of Desirée Rieckenberg (Dean of Students), Joy Renner (Associate Professor and Director, Health and Faculty Advisor, Academic Advising) and one of the main architects of the current UAA policy, as well as current members of the EPC committee.

In addition to education regarding the current UAA policy, the EPC has been working to help to resolve problems unforeseen in 2019. In 2020 and 2021, additional accommodations were made for absences, and faculty went above and beyond to meet the needs of the students. However, while many of these accommodations were meant to be temporary, students seem to continue to expect the same amount of flexibility as was allowed during the height of the pandemic. EPC has also discussed was the issue that there is just one person handling all of the UAA requests, Chris Skowronek (Coordinator, University Approved Absence Office), with as small number of UAAs coming to a subcommittee of EPC members for review.

- In 2020-2021, there were 1,079 UAA
- In 2021-2022, there were 5,063 UAA
- 2022-2023 is on track to the 2021-2022
- These numbers do not include Covid absences

Discussions continue regarding issues faculty are having with some aspects of the current policy. Michelle Sheran-Andrews (Economics) addressed the EPC regarding UAA overburden in large STEM classes. The committee is currently investigating how other institutions implement restrictions to UAAs in an effort to clarify the current UAA guidelines.

- Benchmarking other University absence policies.
- Working with Student Affairs for updating the website to clarify the process as to what meets the standard of a UAA at the UAAO hub.
- Working with Student Affairs for updating the website to increase communications with students and faculty as to the process for UAA request.
- Collaborating with EOC, ARS and the Provosts Office for students who need more than the traditional UAA.

2. EPC approved an update to the University Policy Memorandum 4 ([UPM 4](#)) Standard Course and Section Numbering Systems. This memorandum is intended to clarify the standard course numbering system and to point out some variations and limitations. Revisions were necessary because many of the old numbers were no longer being used or were for programs that no longer existed.
3. EPC approved an update on [UPM 31 Instructional Modes](#), which formally describes the five possible class instructional modes at UNC-CH. Todd Nicolet (Vice Provost for Digital and Lifelong Learning) and Jennifer Larson (Tar Heel Teaching and Learning Collaborative) introduced and answered questions regarding this update.
4. The EPC is continuing to discuss the Double-application process. This involves specifically the need for a separate application process that includes additional requirements (letter of recommendation, essays, etc). A subcommittee has collected data regarding application and admissions process from a questionnaire was sent to programs that require a secondary admissions process. The subcommittee is continuing to collect information for a more formal report to the EPC.
5. The EPC has on its agenda continuing discussions regarding policy changes to Course repeat and Grade forgiveness policies, as well as Pass/fail policies.

Report Respectfully Submitted by Lorraine Cramer, January 18, 2023