

**Educational Policy Committee  
Eric Edlund, EPC Chair  
Faculty Senate Annual Report  
2023-2024 Academic Year  
Report date: May 22, 2024**

EPC Membership for the 2023-2024 academic year

**Faculty members:** Karen Dafoe, Ryan Davis, Eric Edlund, Margaret Gichuru, Christina Knopf\*, Jason Parks, Abby Thomas, Jeff Walkuski, Chris Widdall

**Ex-officio members:** Carol Van Der Karr, Jennifer Martin-Tse

**Student members:** Maryrose Carnazza\*\*

**Permanent guests:** Nancy Diller

\* was not able to attend meetings during the spring semester due to a conflict with teaching duties

\*\* for the fall semester only

## **I. Executive Summary**

At the start of the Fall 2023 term, the EPC picked up a project that it had begun about the same time the year before – revision of the course withdrawal policy during an AGT process. At the EPC’s final planning meeting of the 2022-2023 academic year, this item was identified as a high-priority item to resume. Work on this project was interwoven with the development of the proposal allowing for combined UG/G programs. The latter project became the focus of the EPC’s work in the fall semester, and this proposal was submitted to and approved by Faculty Senate at the last meeting of the calendar year. The spring semester saw quite a lot of activity by the EPC, including the ROG work and submissions of three proposals to Faculty Senate.

Seven meetings were held in the fall semester and six meetings in the spring semester (7 were scheduled, but the final one on May 3 was cancelled due to lack of projects), The dates of these meetings are listed below.

Fall 2023

September 8 and 22

October 6 and 20

November 3 and 17

December 1

Spring 2024

February 2 and 16

March 1 and 22

April 5 and 19

May 5

Continuing the pattern of prior years, the EPC held its meetings at 10 AM on alternate Fridays. Pam Schroeder continues to be our administrative support for vetting processes, booking our meeting room, etc.

## II. Major Activities/Accomplishments/Significant Changes

### Organizational changes

- Outside of the usual coming and going of EPC members, there were no notable organizational changes.

### Accomplishments

- **Combined UG/G programs:** The EPC continued its work on this new policy, which was begun in Spring 2024. This proposal allows some amount of courses to double-count toward both UG and G in specially designed programs. This proposal was approved by Faculty Senate in December, 2023.
- **Credit limit increase for non-degree learners:** Darci Contri, representing the Extended Learning Office, submitted a proposal to the EPC that increases the credit hour caps for non-degree learners (aka, visiting students). This proposal was approved by Faculty Senate in February, 2024.
- **Course withdrawal during/following an AGT process:** This proposal took an interesting turn and ended at a place that was rather opposite to the thoughts of the faculty members who first raised concerns about this. The initial complaint was that administrator's should not interfere with the course withdrawal process and ultimate authority to deny withdrawal should be left to the instructors. After many long discussions of this topic, the EPC concluded that the ability to withdraw from a course should be left solely to the student to decide, regardless of any other circumstances relating to AGT processes. It was also deemed important that faculty members could and should continue with AGT processes following withdrawal of a student from a class so that offenses are included in the student's record. A proposal was introduced to Faculty Senate and later withdrawn and reintroduced following some concerns about the specific language in the proposal. It was ultimately approved by Faculty Senate in April, 2024.
- **Review of governance:** The EPC conducted its own internal audit of policies relating the EPC and proposed two changes. The first is that the official name of the committee should be changed from "Educational Policy Committee" to "Education Policy Committee". The second were more extensive changes to the process for distributing and soliciting feedback on policy proposals, contained under Section 415 of the Handbook. The latter was introduced as a separate proposal and was approved at the final meeting of the year.
- **Faculty survey:** A survey concerning policies around emergency closures of the college, attendance policies, and usage of final exam week was sent to all faculty in the Spring 2024 semester.

### Plan for the 2024-2025 academic year

The EPC largely cleared its backlog of projects and there are not urgent matters that need attention, as far as we are aware. The following is a list of projects that have been considered at various points and could be topics of discussion in the coming year.

- **Guide to the academic misconduct and grievance processes:** A draft of this document was created by Eric Edlund, Eunice Miller, and Tim Delaune in the summer of 2022. It was shared with Kevin Dames, current chair of the AGT, in Spring 2024. It is thought that this should be handed off to the AGT to pick up and introduce in the coming year.
- **Revisit prior changes to the definition of a concentration:** Policy changes to the concentration requirements that were made in the 2021/2022 year may have deleted important conditions on a concentration that are now missing from the handbook/catalog.
- **The process for administering Incompletes:** This has been a topic of on-going discussion for a few years and should be revisited. There was a question of whether changes implemented by Thom Hanford before his departure would largely address the issues of communication around this topic.
- **Generative AI:** Additions/changes to the academic misconduct statements to account for the rise in the use of generative AI technologies was discussed at Faculty Senate. The EPC may want to contribute to these discussions.
- **The process for administering course withdrawals:** During the EPC's discussions of the policies regarding course withdrawals during/following an AGT process, it was realized that the current forms and process for administering course withdrawals need to be revised. This is work that is largely outside the realm of the EPC, likely originating from the Registrar's Office, though the EPC may want to be included in discussions on these changes.
- **Emergency closures, attendance policies, and final exam week:** The EPC sent a survey to all faculty during the spring semester where it solicited feedback on these three areas of campus policy. While some inconsistencies in college policy were identified (attendance policies in particular), there was not a clear message from faculty to make changes to these policies. However, work should continue to sort through the data gathered and to examine policies at other institutions.

**III. Areas of Difficulty/Resistance**

We continue to have difficulty in recruiting student members to the EPC.

**IV. Membership**

All members of the committee were actively involved in the committee process. There were no real absentee problems that were beyond normal life situations and one member who could not attend during the spring semester due to a conflict with class assignments. Members would communicate their need to be absent in advance, would fill in as needed for Faculty Senate duties, and share in note-taking at meetings.

**V. Issues/Concerns for The Next Academic Year**

No chair has been elected for the 2024-2025 academic year.

**Submitted by:** Eric Edlund, EPC Chair 2023-2024