

ACADEMIC POLICIES COMMITTEE

Monday, September 13, 2021
2:30p.m. | Campus Commons 2300

MINUTES

Present: Benedict, Brewer, Couch (Heiny), Franklin, Kraver, Pullen, Schaberl (Lightfoot), Vaughan, Wieben, Wood

Absent: Benavidez, Matchett

Guest: Levin

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:31pm.

Approval of the Agenda

Approved without objection.

Approval of the August 30, 2021 meeting minutes

Approved without objection.

Announcements

Chair's report (Vaughan) – No Report.

Reports from Councils:

Graduate Council (Brewer) – No Report.

Liberal Arts Council (Wood) – At our meeting we discussed the work of Council and plans for the coming year. We reviewed LAC appeals, and we also sent our bylaws to Codification for review.

Professional Education Council (Kraver) - PEC meets next week.

Undergraduate Council (Franklin) - UGC meets tomorrow.

Student Senate (Benavidez) – No Report.

Unfinished Business

- **Permanent S/U Grading Policy**
 - No new updates.

New Business

- **Language Use in Academic Contexts**
 - Kraver brought to the committee an issue that arose in the context of teaching a 19th century literature course.
 - Some readings for the course contain racial slurs. When students are quoting from the text, they may choose to read the language as presented, use another term, or omit problematic words, whichever is their preference.
 - One of the students in the class asked that a particular word not be used at all.
 - The student's concern was addressed through the appropriate channels (Department Chair, College Dean, Title IX and Dean of Students Office).
 - No wrongdoing was found. The language use in the context of the classroom is considered protected speech and is a matter of academic freedom. It is not considered hate speech.
 - Discussion:

- Related issues in other fields of study: examples from History, Music, and more
 - Many faculty members include a warning about topics that may make students uncomfortable
 - Importance of academic discourse and providing a safe space for difficult issues to be discussed critically
 - Review of articles relating to the subject:
 - <https://www.chronicle.com/article/is-it-ever-ok-to-enunciate-a-slur-in-the-classroom>
 - <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/07/24/colleges-should-develop-guidelines-using-n-word-classes-opinion>
 - <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/opinion/dispatches-academic-freedom/academic-freedom-and-the-n-word/>
 - <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/should-schools-have-an-n-word-policy-uproar-over-guards-firing-forces-hard-questions/2019/10>
 - Additional resources on the Colorado State University website:
 - MOU on Academic Freedom - <https://president.colostate.edu/mou-on-academic-freedom/>
 - Student's Guide to Academic Freedom in the Classroom - <https://www.libarts.colostate.edu/classroom-climate/academic-freedom-in-the-classroom-students/>
- Since the issue has already been addressed within current guidelines, no additional policy needs to be created concerning language use in academic contexts.

Comments to the Good of the Order

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:07pm.

Angela Vaughan
Chair

Betsy Kienitz
Recording Secretary