



FACULTY SENATE

Student Affairs Committee

Minutes

December 5, 2019

8:30-10:00

Waterman 427a

- Present** Kenneth Allen (CNHS), Nick Bouffard (SGA), Sin Yee Chan (CAS), Thomas Chittenden (Faculty Senate President), Terry Delaney (CALs), Jonathan Flyer (LCoM), Steve Gove (GSB), William Louisos (CEMS), Jennifer Prue (CESS), Nancy Welch (CAS)
- Absent** Mia Hockett (LCoM), Patricia Mardeusz (LIB), Trish O’Kane (RSENR), Sam Pasualoni (SGA)
- Guests** Annie Stevens, Jamie Benson, Aidan Dougherty, J. Dickinson

Co-Chair Kenneth Allen called the meeting to order at 8:33 am Waterman 427a.

1. **Minutes.** The minutes of November 6, 2019 were approved with no changes.
2. **Attendance Policy Revision.**

Revised Attendance Policy

Approved 12/5/2019 except for the highlighted section

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all regularly scheduled classes. With the exceptions outlined below, the instructor has the final authority to excuse absences. It is the responsibility of the instructor to inform students of their policy for handling absences and tardiness and the consequences that may be imposed. Notification should be done both verbally and in writing at the beginning of each semester.

Nick motioned to approve this section of the policy; Berke seconded the motion.

Approve: 10

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

When scheduling for-credit or extra-credit activities (e.g., field trip, campus lecture, out-of-class exam) outside of the scheduled course time that are not part of the course’s catalog description and/or highlighted in the Extended Course Description, it is the responsibility of the instructor to

1. provide notification both verbally and in writing about these activities, including any financial cost, no later than the end of the first week of class
2. provide and clearly communicate both verbally and in writing alternatives for students who cannot attend an out-of-class activity due to course, work, or other conflict
3. adhere with ADA and UVM policies to ensure that activities, including transportation, are accessible and impose no risk burden on students.

Ken motioned to table this section of the policy; Jennifer seconded the motion.

Approve: 10

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor regarding the reason for absence or tardiness from class, and to discuss this with the instructor in advance whenever possible. The instructor has the right to require documentation in support of the student's request for an absence from class and to determine the appropriate response (e.g., excused absence, deadline extension, substituted work). If an out-of-class exam is scheduled which conflicts with a regularly scheduled class, the regularly scheduled class has priority.

When a student is unable to attend classes for reasons of health, bereavement, or required legal appearances (e.g., jury duty, citizenship hearing), the student should contact their academic dean's office regarding support. An instructor may request through the appropriate dean's office documentation to support a student's request for an excused absence.

Jennifer motioned to approve this part of the policy; Nancy seconded the motion.

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

Intercollegiate Competitions: Students who represent the University of Vermont in official intercollegiate varsity athletic or academic program-sponsored competitions should plan their schedules with special care, recognizing the primary importance of their academic responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the student to avoid signing up for a course or section whose scheduled meetings consistently conflict with the intercollegiate competition and travel schedule. If travel for such intercollegiate competition requires absences from a class, it is also the student's responsibility to provide the instructor with documentation of anticipated absences and to meet with the instructor regarding the missed course work and instruction. Provided a student has submitted documentation for absences due to participation in official intercollegiate competitions, an instructor must excuse the absences and should provide reasonable assistance to the student concerning missed instruction, assignments, and exams. Any conflicts between student and instructor may be presented for resolution to the course department chair or College dean's office.

Jennifer motioned to approve this part of the policy; Nancy seconded the motion.

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

Religious Observance: Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. Each semester students should submit in writing to their instructors by the end of the second full week of classes their documented religious observance schedule for the semester. Faculty will treat these absences as excused and will provide reasonable assistance to the student concerning missed instruction, assignments, and exams. Any conflicts between student and instructor may be presented for resolution to the course department chair or College dean's office.

Steve motioned to approve this part of the policy; Jennifer seconded the motion.

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

Disenrollment Policy: The instructor has the right to disenroll any student from a course if that student

1. does not meet the prerequisites of the course, or
2. fails to attend a scheduled course by the third instructional day of a semester or the second scheduled class session of a course, whichever comes later, unless the student has notified the instructor and has been excused.

To disenroll a student, the instructor must notify the registrar by the add/drop deadline. Upon such notification, the registrar shall remove the student's name from the class list and the course from the student's schedule. The student is

responsible for determining whether they are enrolled in a class. Any conflicts between student and instructor may be presented for resolution to the course department chair or College dean's office.

Jennifer motioned to approve this part of the policy; Ken seconded the motion.

Approve: 11

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 0

- 3. Revised policy Recommendation GOPA Calculations for Repeated Courses.** The language will be updated and the committee will work on an electronic vote.

- 4. Revised Resolution on Faculty Language around Alcohol and Drug Use.** The goal of Student Action & Wellbeing Committee is to get this to faculty every year. The SAC agrees this should be passed by the SGA and CFAS then brought back to the SAC to be voted on for endorsement. The SAC has some concern over the statistics presented in the statement. Annie Stevens will provide suggested edits directly with the Student Action and Wellbeing Committee. There is a copy of the resolution attached.

- 5. New Business.** The GPA Policy needs to be added to the Graduate College Catalog.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02 am.

This short reminder comes from the Student Government Association on behalf of the student body and is intended for all academic faculty.

To UVM faculty,

Here at UVM, substance use and, more problematically, misuse have become normalized and part of our culture. While use itself is the crux of the epidemic, how we discuss it plays another important role: normalization. This normalization did not happen overnight nor by one actor; this is the result of years of community, state, and national influences over decades. There is no benefit to pointing fingers or assigning blame, but there is a benefit to coming together as a community to change our culture on campus in a comprehensive manner. There are dozens of practices our community can do differently, including how our faculty talk to their students.

While it is unhealthy to ignore the issue of substance misuse, it is also unhealthy to normalize it. One example of normalization in our community is surrounding cannabis. Cracking a joke about your students skipping class because of smoking on 4/20 may seem harmless but it normalizes this culture. Here on campus, only 45%¹ of students use cannabis or use cannabis regularly but our culture acts like the school is all stoners. Other examples come out of comments about being hungover after high-risk weekends and using drugs and alcohol as a way to relate or connect to students. This normalization, and the normalization of other behaviors, provides a hazard for all students.. A heavy drinking and drug culture is detrimental to an academic community² and it is one of the responsibilities of our faculty to be cautious of how they talk about substance, especially in the classroom.

This issue impacts all students, but comes down hardest on students who struggle with substance misuse. Staying healthy is a constant tightrope for students who struggle with substance use and small triggers can push them into feeling unsafe in an environment where the primary concern ought to be their schoolwork. While the larger community benefits from more cautious language, it is these students who it would be most appreciated.

We hope this message reminds our faculty of the role they play on campus as mentors and educators and to be more thoughtful in how they discuss substance use.

For more questions or to learn more, please reach out to the Catamount Recovery Team at recoverycommunity@uvm.edu.

Best,

Student Action & Wellbeing Committee

Student Governm

¹ Data shared from the Catamount Recovery Program and Joy Solomon

² White, H., & Rabiner, David L. (2012). *College drinking and drug use / edited by Helene Raskin White, David L. Rabiner.* (Duke series in child development and public policy). New York: Guilford Press.