Kentucky State University
Faculty Senate Academic Policies Committee Minutes
January 23, 2017
314 Hathaway

Members in Attendance: Joe Moffett (Chair), Caroline Gibson, Ashok Kumar, Ibukun Amusan, Nkechi Amadife, Nancy Capriles, and Maheteme Gebremedhin (Secretary)

- Meeting was called to order by Dr. Moffett (Chair) at 3:15 pm
- Approval of meeting agenda for 1/23/2017- seconded by a member and passed
- The December 5, 2016 Minutes was approved after a member requested corrections be made on the members Attendance list and typo.

The Chair opened the first APC meeting of the Spring 2017 semester by thanking the outgoing APC's secretary (Dr. Ibukun Amusan) for the outstanding service he has rendered over the year. Appreciation and applaud was echoed by members as well. Gebremedhin is the succeeding secretary.

I. **Revised Attendance Policy:**

This action item has been a lingering issue over the last few years. In fall 2016 it went through several iterations and multiple back and forth between APC and the Faculty Senate, in part because the existing 'policy' is outdated, unclear, and often containing misleading and duplicative languages that diminishes its effectiveness. Chair Moffett recounted some of the previous work undertaken by APC involving the task of updating and revising the document to have a centralized absence policy. He reiterated that APC will continue to update/revise and provide inputs for the proposed structure of the policy. He then discussed an amendment added under the subsection XIX.

Discussion later ensued about effective ways of notifying Excused Absence to faculty and timelines (i.e., when an instructor should know about excused students, say for example 24 or 72 hrs earlier). The current practice is that the Office of Student Affairs sends out a series of bulk emails (sometimes several times a day) with a long list of absentees without categorizing them by their respective department. Members acknowledged that this adds another layer of confusion requiring faculty to go through a long list of names to find out whether a student is absent from his/her class. While a large list or catalog of excused absentee is useful for other administrative offices, such a list is of little value to the individual faculty. Questions were asked if the office could explore alternative and better ways of communicating excused absence to faculty.

II. Administrative Withdrawal Policy (AW)

Chair Moffett circulated a draft document entitled "KSU Administrative Withdrawal Policy". This document still is in the works and members were reminded that APC

aims to solicit ideas and gather pertinent information to make it strong and robust. Members expressed their appreciation for the effort made by the Chair in compiling and putting together such a document with the necessary background information, objectives, and intended goals.
Some of the relevant information include in the draft document are:

- Current KSU 'AW' Policy
- Office of Educational Support Intervention
- Instructor initiated Administrative Withdrawal
- AW Policies and Procedures
- Student Appeals of AW

A suggestion was made that more information was needed and continuous improvement of the document is possible by seeking inputs and suggestions from faculty. A member posits whether students know about the existence of such option. The Chair shared his ideas and thoughts on AW relevance to academic achievements in student performance and spoke in detail about the several benefits of AW. He stated there may be situations where students could be better off if they opt for AW early on the semester, when deemed necessary, than getting failing grades such as D or F. A member explained that some students may need to opt for AW and would be better served by understanding it fully before initiating the process. It was clear that the committee had difficulty finding existing written policy/document in this regard. Noting the lack of such policy, Chair Moffett identifies several questions that need to be asked: "What are the benefits AW? What do we know about the likely effects of proposed AW rules on improving student grades? How can we make the AW process logical to students and make its implementation simpler? Much of the discussion was around the negative impact of excessive student absence on final grades.

Lastly, few questions were raised:

- Who should initiate the 'AW',
- When or at what stage during the semester the instructors discuses 'AW' with students
- Are we not taking away students' right from obtaining 'D' or 'F' by constituting 'AW'?

III. Course Cancellation Policy

A request was made by Dr. Deneia Thomas to APC to start working on compiling and putting together information to a standard course cancellation policy. The Chair began by expressing his frustration that he couldn't find such a written policy document here in campus or elsewhere. Consultations with faculty at other sister universities seems to point that there is no rigid policy to follow for cancellation. He went on to explain the current practices of cancelling a course, which are handled very differently among departments. A member shared his past knowledge that

everybody operates under the 'unwritten rule'. For a course to be offered there needs to be a minimum number of students--the numbers being 10 and 5 for undergraduate and graduate course, respectively. If a course does not have sufficient registrants, each department, at the discretion of the chair, makes the determination (and reserve the right) to cancel the course.

IV. Meeting was adjourned at 4:30

Submitted by Maheteme Gebremedhin (APC Secretary)