Date Received:_____
Proposal Deadline:_____

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE
NEW PROPOSAL

ACADEMIC UNIT: All Units_____

DATE PREPARED: 1/18/17_____

PRIMARY AUTHOR(S): APC_____

_____

1. **DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE:**

To provide a streamlined university attendance policy that offers basic guidelines but also allows instructors room to implement specific requirements as they see fit.

2. **STARTING WITH: (Excluding exceptional circumstances proposals will take effect Fall of the following year).**

_X_ Fall, ____ Spring, ____ Summer, _2017____ Year

3. **CURRENT POLICY: (Please See Current Catalogue, Faculty Handbook…)**

In the 2016-2017 University Catalogue, the attendance policy begins on page 459:

XIX. Class Attendance – Class attendance is mandatory for all enrolled students. Class attendance is linked to a variety of daily classroom assignments, and these assignments require students' preparation and participation in order for students to be successful. A record of the students' attendance is required by all instructors beginning on the first day the class meets. Faculty are required to take attendance until the final examination date. Students absent from class due to official university business, or other reasons considered excusable, are responsible for making up and submitting work to their instructors within seven (7) business days of the absence.

Excused absences, university-sponsored and personal, include the following: documented required military service; documented university service on campus or off-campus representation of the University; documented research, presentation, or field trip; documented interview for professional/ academic advancement, and documented jury duty.

Personal excused absences include the following: documented illness from a doctor or practicing medical professional in the area of the student's illness, who attended to the student; documented serious illness or death of an immediate family member (mother, father, spouse, child, sibling, grandparent, or (former) legal guardian, and documented court appearance.

Absence(s) planned from class(es) because of **university-sponsored activities** must be reported to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs two (2) weeks prior to the date of the absence. The Vice President for Student Affairs will inform faculty members BEFORE the student's absence from class(es) in

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these cases. Service-related absences do not reduce the number for Non-Service related excused absences allowed to a student.

All other documented absences must be submitted to and bear the signature of the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs within seven (7) business days of the absence(s).

A student who stops attending a class for any reason must contact the instructor and the Office of the Registrar to withdraw officially from the course. This action must be done on or before the published withdrawal date on the official Academic Calendar for that semester. If a student fails to withdraw from a class, the lack of action will result in a failing grade for the course.

Late registration beyond the University's add/drop date must be approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the University Registrar, and the class instructor. Under these circumstances, no excused or unexcused absences will be accrued until the date of the students first official course enrollment. All make-up assignments must be completed within a time period determined by the instructor.

In addition to regular attendance, timely attendance is required for each student enrolled in Kentucky State University in order for students to take full advantage of class participation. A student is tardy when he/she:

(a) Reports to class after the published start time of a class.
(b) Exits the class prior to the end of the class without the instructor's approval.

Three violations of the tardiness will constitute an unexcused absence.

All faculty, staff, and students are required to follow the policies outlined in this Catalogue.

A student who has not attended a face-to-face class by the end of the first two weeks of the course will be dropped from the class administratively for financial aid purposes. The same holds true for an online student who has not signed and returned the course agreement attached to the syllabus within the first two weeks of class.

A student enrolled in a face-to-face course or hybrid course who accrues a number of unexcused absences which exceeds the number of class meetings in one week shall be reported to the Center for Academic Persistence (CAPS). The CAPS staff will confirm the student's attendance record in the class with the instructor before withdrawing the student from the course. This action excludes official excuses as verified by the Office of Student Affairs.

A student enrolled in a 100% online or hybrid course is required to complete the online course assessment successfully and engage in the process as described in the course syllabus.

An instructor whose student does not meet the conditions stipulated in this policy must report the absent student to the Center for Academic Persistence Services (CAPS) to be withdrawn from the class.

The CAPS staff will be responsible for providing student intervention and support, and is available as a resource to student to encourage class preparation and participation. CAPS will deliver a Persistence Assessment report to instructors within 24 hours of notice for each student reported to CAPS office for attendance problems.

All faculty must include an attendance policy in the syllabus of the course they teach and provide such syllabus to the student on the first day of class. Faculty should encourage students to prepare and participate in class activities and students should make sure they understand how attendance and absenteeism affect the level of their preparation and participation, and ultimately their performance in the course.

4. **PROPOSED CHANGES:**

XIX. Class Attendance – All enrolled students should attend class regularly. Students need to be present and prepared to work in order to be successful. Instructors must record attendance as mandated by federal financial aid guidelines. Students absent from class are responsible for making up and submitting work to their instructors.

University-sponsored excused absences include the following: documented university service on campus; off-campus representation of the University; documented research, presentation, or field trip; and documented interview for professional/ academic advancement.

Absence(s) planned from class(es) because of **university-sponsored activities** must be reported to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs two (2) weeks prior to the date of the absence. The Vice President for Student Affairs will inform faculty members BEFORE the student's absence from class(es) in these cases.

Personal excused absences include the following: documented required military service; documented illness with a note from a doctor or practicing medical professional in the area of the student's illness who attended to the student; documented serious illness or death of an immediate family member (mother, father, spouse, child, sibling, grandparent, or (former) legal guardian; and documented court appearance or jury duty.

Excessive **unexcused absences** can result in course failure. Typically, this means missing a week of class meetings in a semester. For example, a student accrues more than three unexcused absences in a Monday / Wednesday / Friday course or two unexcused absences in a Tuesday / Thursday class. Faculty should include on all course syllabi how absences and / or tardiness will impact the final grade.

For each unexcused absence over the maximum number allowed, the instructor may lower the course grade one full grade level. If an individual instructor or academic unit adopts more stringent attendance policies, those policies must appear in a conspicuous location in the course syllabus and must be announced to the class on the first day it meets.

Regulations on class tardiness are determined by the instructor of the class.

For **virtual or hybrid courses**, faculty should indicate on the course syllabus what constitutes acceptable regular attendance.

A student who stops attending a class for any reason must contact the Office of the Registrar to withdraw officially from the course. This action must be done on or before the published withdrawal date on the official Academic Calendar for that semester. If a student fails to withdraw from a class, the lack of action will result in a failing grade for the course.

Late registration beyond the University's add/drop date must be approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the University Registrar, and the class instructor. Under these circumstances, no excused or unexcused absences will be accrued until the date of the students first official course enrollment. All make-up assignments must be completed within a time period determined by the instructor.

5. **EXPLANATION AND JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUESTED CHANGE:**

The existing attendance policy is cumbersome and covers a number of issues that should be their own policies, such as how to refer students to student support. CAPS no longer exists, and the procedure detailed in the existing policy for its intervention with students has not been followed.

Aside from recording attendance during the first few weeks of each semester in order to comply with federal financial aid guidelines, faculty should have the academic freedom to devise standards for attendance as they see fit based on context, including course type and student enrollment. Similarly, faculty should be able to decide how they want to handle tardiness. As the university works to improve its retention and graduation rates, faculty members need to have the autonomy to make professional decisions that will foster student success.

Academic Policies Committee Meeting (December 5, 2016)

Members Present: Ashok Kumar (Vice-Chair), Ibukun Amusan (Secretary), Maheteme Gebremedhin, Nkechi Amadife, Caroline Gibson

Guests: Kim Sipes (Faculty Senate President), James Obielodan, Hettie Oldham

Dr. Kumar called the meeting to order at 3:14 pm in Hathaway 314. Dr. Moffett was away for a conference.

The agenda was approved. The minutes of the November 21, 2016, meeting was also approved with adjournment time changed to 4:45 pm.

Some changes to the graduate policies were discussed. Dr. Obielodan, Director of Graduate Studies, presented the new graduate catalogue. He said the current catalogue section about graduate studies is outdated and Dr. Jackson (VPAA) asked for it to be reviewed, streamlined and updated. The graduate council has reviewed the document and it has been revised. Ms. Hettie Oldam, Assistant Coordinator of Graduate Studies also assisted with the revision. There are new graduate programs since 2013 that are not well represented by the current catalogue. Comparing with others universities in Kentucky, it appears that KSU's standards are higher. A number of schools in Kentucky, including some that have more resources, students and accreditations, require 2.5 GPA and have some flexibility with graduate admission tests. Considering what is obtained in other schools, the catalogue was revised to reflect some reasonable expectations for graduate studies at KSU.

The current 2.7 GPA requirement for graduate admission was revised to 2.5, the 2.4 - 2.69 GPA for probationary admission was changed to 2.3 - 2.49. The conditions a student must satisfy to transfer from probationary status to regular status can be found under the Probationary Admission subsection of the revised catalogue on pages 16-17. International students cannot be on probationary admission, though they can come provisionally to first take English as a second language.

Another major change is the application fee, which is currently $30 for domestic students and $100 for international students. Comparing with other schools in Kentucky, KSU's fee is too high for international students and it may be the most expensive. In the revised catalogue, the application fee was changed to $30 for all graduate applicants, domestic and international. Payment methods include checks, money orders and credit cards. International students can also pay with credit card but through someone in the USA.

It was asked whether administration has seen or approved the revised document and the graduate director said Dr. Jackson was kept informed all through the revision process.

It was said that some graduate students have complained about the quality of other students in their classes and it was asked whether accepting students with 2.3 GPA will affect the quality of students that come to KSU. It was stated that some students are non-traditional and they may not do as well as other students initially. However, it is up to the professors to find some balance for instructing all students in their classes. Some students not meeting the admission requirements have snuck through and entered graduate classes without the knowledge of the graduate director.

The admission requirements in the catalogue are the minimum requirements for admission to graduate studies at KSU. Individual graduate programs may have their own requirements but they cannot be lower than the university's minimum requirements for graduate studies.

In order to maintain standards or accreditation requirements, programs may decide to change their requirements for admission.

It was also noted that GPA cannot be rounded up. A GPA of 2.49 is not equivalent to 2.5.

After acceptance to KSU, international students are required to pay a deposit of $3500, which will be kept in their student account. At most 65% of the deposit can be used for tuition and the rest is kept until graduation. The deposit shows some evidence that the student can meet his/her financial responsibilities. Also, if a student is required to leave the US, the deposit can be used toward travel costs.

The graduate catalogue will usually be valid for one year, just like the undergraduate catalogue is for an academic year. APC should check that policies are revised in both the undergraduate and graduate catalogues. An addendum can be put on the website to indicate any changes.

The composition of the graduate council was discussed after it was brought up that there are differences between the composition in the new committee book and the graduate catalogue. It was mentioned that the new committee book has other issues and some things put in it were without faculty input.

It was mentioned that there has been some instances of issues with hierarchy, things not passing through the office of the director of graduate studies in the proper manner, and students getting admission letter directly from some graduate programs without going through the office of graduate studies. However, it was also stated that the new campus solutions system may help fix some of these problems.

Changes recommended by APC include updating the composition of the graduate council, including page numbers as well as completing the APC proposal tracking form.

A motion to approve the graduate catalogue with the suggested changes was moved and seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The attendance policy was discussed again by APC. The question still remained whether most of this should be left to the discretion of instructors. An older catalogue (2011-2012) has details that APC agree with and these will be merged with the previous proposal returned from faculty senate. Some of the details include a limit on the number of absences after which there are consequences. A statement that instructors must take attendance at every class meeting will also be included.

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 pm.