



Senate Advisory Committee on Academic Policy

2014-2015 Activity Report

During the school year 2014-2015, the University of Utah's Senate Advisory Committee on Academic Policy (SACAP) consisted of nine faculty: Ed Barbanell (Humanities), Thad Hall (Social & Behavioral Science), Harriet Hopf (School of Medicine), Ken Monson (Engineering), Susan Naidu (Social & Behavioral Science), Julia Summerhays (Health), Margaret Toscano (Humanities), Erin Wimmer (Eccles Health Sciences Library), and Ilija Miskovic (Mines & Earth Sciences).

Over this period, the Committee proposed a change to the Policy [6-100], regarding excused absences from examinations and assignments. The part of the proposed policy passed in December 2014, but the Committee continued to work on researching related policies at other institutions – particularly other PAC12 institutions – and harmonizing the rest of the Policy.

The Committee met on January 29th, 2015, to discuss and finalize the changes to the Policy. The meeting resulted in the following conclusions:

- For many of the issues that arise regarding class attendance, including both *"Mental and Physical Illness"*, existing policies and procedures already exist, but both students and faculty are largely unaware of them and unfamiliar with how to access them, so the Committee should lay out what these are.
- For some things, including *"Family Crises"* or *"Caring for Sick Significant Others"*, the Committee will check if these issues are already within the purview of existing procedures.
- For some other things, especially *"Jury Duty"*, create a web page, et cetera so that students know where to go (Amy Wildermuth's office, in this case).



- When issues really seem to fall outside of existing processes, and the student and professor cannot reach an amicable solution, the Committee will check if existing policy (6-400, sec. 4), covering “*Academic Actions*”, can be mobilized. There might be a need to modify the definition of “*Academic Action*” here.
- For those classes that have elements, such as labs and field trips, where making them up is not feasible, and so missing them would mean that the only option a student would have would be a late withdrawal, the Committee would encourage faculty to list warnings on their syllabi.
- Some colleges, like Engineering, publish “red books” outlining college-wide policies about these issues, and so the Committee would encourage other colleges and departments to develop and promulgate similar documents.
- Concerning the “*Military Duty*”, which has already been added to the policy, the Committee will work with Veteran Support Services to add clarifying language to the Policy.

The final draft of the Policy will be presented to the Senate’s Executive Committee on April 20th, 2015, so it can be ready for a May 4 Senate meeting.

Prepared by:

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Chair, SACAP

April 13, 2015