

University Senate, May 4, 2009

Report of the Academic Affairs Committee

Policy for the Use of Undergraduate Learning Assistants: This was approved by the Senate at the April meeting, subject to editorial revisions. We said we would bring back the final version for a vote at the May meeting. Refer to the separate attachment for the specifics.

Proposed Fredonia Academic Community Engagement (FACE) Center: Refer to the separate proposal for details.

Proposed Pilot Study of Online Evaluation of Courses: The committee proposes that we conduct a pilot study of an online course evaluation system during the 2009 – 2010 academic year. The purpose of the pilot would be for the campus to gain some concrete experience with such a system, so that we would be in a better position to judge its pros and cons.

Participation would be voluntary, although we would hope to have some participation from each department/school and to have the set of courses using the online system be a representative sample.

At this time, we are asking the Senate to approve the concept of doing the pilot study. If the Senate approves, then the Academic Affairs Committee will come back in September with a detailed proposal for implementation.

Proposed System for Transfer Credit Appeals: Refer to the separate attachment for details.

Discussion Item – S/U Grades: Currently, a grade of “S” (satisfactory) in a course does not impact a student’s GPA, but a grade of “U” (unsatisfactory) does. If a student receives a grade of U in a 12-credit internship, or in any of the 15-credit courses used for student teaching, then this can have a very detrimental effect on the student’s GPA.

Recently, the committee received a proposal to revise the interpretation of the U grade, so that it would not count in the GPA. This would make our use of S/U consistent with that at most other SUNY schools.

We’d like to have some discussion of this issue by the Senate, and then take a straw poll. The committee has identified three options for consideration:

1. Revise the effect of the U grade so that it would not impact the GPA.
2. Add a new grading option for courses, S/V – S would mean “satisfactory,” V would mean “unsatisfactory,” and neither grade would impact the GPA. (The current S/U option would remain, and if a department wanted to change the grading mode of a course from S/U to S/V, the department would need to make a course proposal to that effect.
3. Leave things the way they are.

Joseph Straight, Chair
Academic Affairs Committee