

August 28, 2002

To: Sandra K. Goertzen, Corresponding
Secretary, Academic Governance

From: Ted Day, Chairman
Committee on Educational Policy

Subject: 2001-2002 Annual Report

The principal accomplishment of the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) during the 2001-2002 Academic year was the review and approval of revisions and changes to catalogue material for the 2002-2004 Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogues. The Committee met in September to divide itself into two subcommittees. These subcommittees were respectively assigned to review proposed changes and revisions to the Graduate and Undergraduate catalogues and to make recommendations to the full committee. The work of each subcommittee was then debated before the full committee and formally approved. These Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogue subcommittees were chaired respectively by Pam Rollins and Ted Day. The 2002-2004 catalogue cycle is the first for which CEP has divided itself into subcommittees. The division of CEP into subcommittees, which was recommended to CEP by the Senate, seemed to work fairly well. This committee structure was advantageous in that it permitted the Committee to complete its work on the catalogue more rapidly while at the same time economizing on the time commitment required of the committee members. The principal disadvantage of the subcommittee structure is that the inability of subcommittee members to attend a given meeting can potentially have a greater impact on the ability of a subcommittee to complete its work than would be the case if the entire committee fully reviewed changes for both catalogues. In addition to the Committee's work on the catalogue, CEP also debated a number of other items, many of which will need to be addressed again by CEP during the upcoming academic year. The most significant of these items, along with a summary of CEP's deliberations on these issues are included in the report which follows.

During the Fall semester, CEP considered a proposal by the Computer Science Department to reduce the number of hours required for their PhD degree from 90 to 66 hours. Although the courses required under this proposal are identical to those currently required by PhD students in Computer Science, members of the Computer Science faculty suggested that the proposed changes would be helpful in marketing their program to prospective PhD students. The Committee engaged in a spirited discussion of a variety of issues related to this proposal. The Committee agreed to refer this proposal to the Academic Council, conditional on the following changes agreed on by members of the Computer Science Faculty in attendance at the meeting: (1) increase the minimum hours requirement to 72 from 66, (2) require transfer students to take a minimum of three organized three-hour classes at UTD, (3) include a residency-requirement of six full semesters at UTD (including possibly two long summer semesters), and (4) to prominently advertise the minimum time in residence at UTD in both the catalogue and other promotional materials as six full terms. The Academic Council referred this proposal back to CEP, requesting that (1) the CS faculty provide a well-reasoned explanation and justification for this proposal and that (2) CEP provide further analysis of their decision to refer the proposal to

the Academic Council. Although members of the Academic Council seemed to have a variety of other objections to this proposal, one of the principal objections to this proposal is that a 72-hour minimum would not be consistent with the 90-hour minimum requirement for other PhD programs offered within the School of Engineering and Computer Sciences. This proposal has been tabled by CEP until the CS faculty revise their proposal to call for completion of their PhD to be based on competency rather than a minimum number of hours. The CEP supports the replacement of a 90-hour requirement with a proficiency requirement.

CEP also engaged in an extensive debate on the problems associated with scheduling final examinations for courses meeting on either Tuesday/Thursday or Monday/Wednesday from 5:30 pm to 6:45 pm. Over the objection of the Committee Chairman, the Committee voted to refer to the Academic Council a proposal that final exams for twice per week 5:30 pm classes run from 5 pm to 7:30 pm and that final exams for once per week 7 pm classes run from 7:30 pm to 10 pm. The Chairman strenuously objected to this proposal, arguing that (1) students need at least 3 hours to complete a rigorous final exam, (2) the current 7 pm start time for final exams is already too late in the evening, and (3) the proposal fails to allow time for students beginning exams at 5 pm to vacate the room so that preparations can be made for final exams scheduled to begin at 7:30 pm. The Committee also recommended that the Undergraduate Catalogue be brought into conformity with the Graduate Catalogue by changing the section in the catalogue on Incomplete Grades by requiring that all course work must be completed within eight weeks from the deadline for the submission of final grades.

The Academic Calendar will need to be reconsidered by CEP during the upcoming year. During our discussion of the calendar last year, it was noted that there are many Monday holidays in 2003, which tend to cause a number of scheduling problems, particularly for Monday labs. One possibility to ease such scheduling problems considered by CEP was a reduction of the summer registration period to one day, with classes starting on May 19, moving everything back 2 days. A similar solution was proposed for Summer 2004. An alternate proposal called for graduation for graduate students be held a week before undergraduate ceremonies. Jean Stuart volunteered to give this proposal further study. Another proposal considered by the Committee was to reduce to length of the Summer semester by cutting the long session to 10 weeks and to reduce the current 6-week sessions to 5 weeks. Although a motion was made to recommend both Summer session proposals to the Academic Council, some members of the Committee expressed great concern that 5-week terms would not permit courses to be taught effectively. This discussion was tabled in order to permit Committee members to discuss proposals for the 5-week summer session with their faculty colleagues.

Finally, CEP entertained a proposal from Ralph McInerney to protect the academic status of students participating in university sanctioned experiential education programs by developing and publishing an official university statement which defines students participating in experiential education programs as having "full time" student status. This proposal was incomplete in that it failed to deal with the fact that the details of such programs are left to the individual schools and/or departments, with no well defined upper limit on the number of hours that can be completed in such programs. Although companies participating in such programs often provide UTD with a job description for approval, students may also ask to have a job approved whenever a company is willing to participate and follow program guidelines. Given the concerns of the Committee regarding the possibility that students could enroll in unlimited

numbers of hours under such programs, the Committee requested that a limit be set on the number of semesters during which a student may participate in such programs. This proposal was ultimately tabled for further discussion.

Goertzen, Sandra K

From: Ted Day [tday@utdallas.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, August 28, 2002 2:54 PM
To: Goertzen, Sandra K
Subject: Annual Committee Report for CEP



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Attached is a Microsoft Word 5.1b file (for MacIntosh) that contains the Chairman's Annual Report for the Committee on Educational Policy. If you want a file in some other format please let me know. Thanks very much, Ted Day