



MINUTES OF MEETING #3 (2007-08)

SENATE TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2007, 11:00 AM

BOARD ROOM, 13TH FLOOR, SCHMON TOWER

PRESENT: Professor John Sivell (Chair), Ms. Karen Bordonaro, Professor Maureen Connolly, Dean John Corlett, Professor Patricia Debly, Dr. Greg Finn, Professor Julian Kitchen, Professor Tom O'Neill, Dean Marilyn Rose,

Mr. Patrick Beard, Ms. Barb Davis, Dean Joffre Mercier, Margaret Thompson (Secretary)

REGRETS: Professor Mohamed Ayadi, Ms. Margaret Grove, Professor Anna Lathrop, Ms. Iva Mathews, Professor Paul Zelisko

Professor Sivell welcomed members and guests and called the meeting to order.

1. Approval of Minutes

[The minutes of the Meeting #2 held on November 28, 2007 had been electronically distributed with the meeting materials.]

MOVED (O'Neill/Bordonaro)

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Teaching and Learning Policy Committee held on November 28, 2007 be approved.

CARRIED

2. Start Day of Fall Term

Professor Sivell noted that Dean Mercier and Barb Davis were in attendance for the discussion. Dean Mercier apprised the Committee of the scheduling challenges faced by those departments that offer courses with lab-based components when fall term commences late in the week, such as a Thursday, during the 12-week fall term. Dean Mercier noted that he had consulted and discussed several potential solutions with Department Chairs, senior lab demonstrators and faculty members. The majority had agreed that the most favourable preference for the upcoming year would be to add two extra days at the end of the fall term for those faculties with lab-based components in their courses. Dean Mercier added that the proposal would not impact pedagogy and would alleviate a further reduction in labs.

A comprehensive discussion ensued during which Dean Mercier and Ms. Davis responded to questions and received further suggestions and comments from members. It was recognized that the proposal to add two extra days at the end of the 2008-09 fall term (a Friday and a Monday) would be for a one-year trial period and that further proposals, including the initiation of a formal orientation week for students, would continue to be examined.

MOVED (Connolly/O'Neill)

THAT the Teaching and Learning Policy Committee recommend to Senate that for the 2008-09 academic year, two extra days be added at the end of the fall term for those faculties with lab-based components.

CARRIED

Dean Mercier retired from the meeting.

3. FHB III: 6.1 - English Proficiency - Report from Subgroup

[A Report from the subgroup, together with a copy of the current section of FHB III 6.1 - *English Proficiency*, had been electronically distributed with the meeting materials.]

Professor Sivell referred members to the Report of the subgroup. During the previous Committee meeting, amendments had been proposed to FHB III: 6.1 and a subgroup had been struck to examine further potential amendments to recognize that literacy/numeracy skills are closely related to academic success.

MOVED (Connolly/Finn)

THAT the Teaching and Learning Policy Committee recommend that Senate approve the following amendments to FHB III: 6.1 - English Proficiency:

6.1 English Proficiency Literacy and Numeracy

~~A. The Sub-Committee on Literacy in Reading and Writing will develop and administer policies and procedures for the assessment and improvement of Brock University students' skills in reading and writing.~~

~~1. Each September, in-coming students who are attending university for the first time (those with ID numbers beginning with 91 or above, excluding transfer students), will be required to take a test intended to assess literacy skills in the specific areas of reading and writing. Full-time students who do not write the test at that time will not be permitted to re-register the following September until they have taken the literacy test. The Sub-Committee will have on-going responsibility for determining the format, content and goals of this test.~~

~~2. The Sub-Committee will be responsible for establishing the procedures by which the testing is to be conducted and, in cooperation with the Office of the Registrar, for the actual on-site administration of the testing sessions~~

~~3. The Sub-Committee will further bear responsibility for the marking of the tests and for the generation and distribution of interpretative data which will aid the students in comprehending their individual test results.~~

- ~~4. The testing will be supervised and the scripts will be marked by the Department of Applied Language Studies, with the participation of members of the Counselling Centre.~~
- ~~5. Students will receive feedback concerning individual performance within one month of writing the test. These results may contain a recommendation to seek remediation; however, no student will be compelled to do so as a consequence of the testing conducted.~~
- ~~6. Testing will occur twice yearly; during the registration period in September and on the first Saturday after the beginning of classes in January. Full-time students will be scheduled to write at the first testing session scheduled subsequent to their entry into University. In most instances, this will mean the September in which they commence their studies~~
- ~~7. Part-time students may defer the test, if they so choose, until such time as they have completed two credits. Normally, part-time students will be expected to sit the test before they begin their third credit and must do so by the September subsequent to the completion of their third credit or they will not be permitted to register for additional credits until they have taken the test.~~

A. The University recognizes that literacy and numeracy are strongly related to academic success.

B. Departments, Centres and Programs retain the right may choose to administer their own tests and requirements with regard to English proficiency literacy and numeracy assessments and requirements.

Departments, Centres and Programs should also consult FHB III 5.3 regarding provisions for students with disabilities.

~~C. Students whose level(s) of listening comprehension or reading comprehension or verbal fluency (oral or written) are judged to be such as to constitute an actual or potential barrier to normal academic progress may be required to undertake remedial instruction in English. These courses are intended to ensure breadth in a student's overall program and to acquaint the student with the critical interests, concerns and approaches of the three major disciplines.~~

C. Students may be required by the University to take credit courses in English as a Subsequent Language as a condition of registration.

~~D. Students required to take English as a Second Language must attain a satisfactory level of proficiency or complete additional studies in English as a Second Language until an acceptable fluency in English is attained. The Undergraduate Student Affairs Committee may require a reduced credit load until such proficiency is demonstrated.~~

CARRIED

4. Weight of Exams

[A former section of FHB 6.1.1 *Weight Given to Final Examinations* had been distributed with the meeting materials.]

Professor Connolly noted that during a meeting of the Retention Committee, the issue of weight of exams on student retention had been discussed. Currently there was not a policy in the Faculty Handbook outlining maximum weight of exams. Professor Connolly referred members to the specifications that had been in place until they were removed from the FHB at Senate 413 on May 24, 1995.

A comprehensive discussion ensued during which members provided comments to Professor Connolly regarding best practices for assessment with respect to student retention. Professor Connolly thanked members for the feedback which she would relate to the Retention Committee.

5. Towards a Rational Academic Year - Discussion Paper

[A document titled *Towards a Rational Academic Year* had been electronically distributed with the meeting materials.]

During a brief discussion, members concurred that the document be removed from the agenda. Professor Connolly would request that the Information Technology and Infrastructure Committee review the implications of the discussion paper relevant to its Committee's mandate.

6. Other Business - None

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.