

Academic Affairs Committee Meeting

3:30 PM, 501 Main Library

3.6.01

Discussion ensued about academic regulations we are looking at, and, in particular, the pros and cons of the proposed 10 week deadline for dropping classes without penalty. In this instance the onus is on the instructor to grade examination papers, and save a seating position in the course, only to have someone drop out well after the midpoint of the semester.

The committee feels fairly unanimous in the desire to see the number of weeks a student can drop fall in the range of 7 - 8, absolute maximum. And students should have to speak to their advisor before dropping any course. This is the message the Committee will take back to Dr. Lazer.

Areas of Academic Affairs that should be brought forward to the next iteration of the Committee are:

- How the graduate school deals with new students. There seems to be a fair amount of confusion among newly accepted and newly arriving graduate students about preregistration, and the registration process. There are instances of students not being sent registration materials, with the expectation that students, after being accepted into the University, need to call and request registration material. This seems confusing and questionable.
- The Student Government Association is interested in making public instructor evaluations. It is felt by the current AA Committee that this is a clear violation of the privacy that exists between employer (UA) and employee (faculty member).*
- The Academic Regulations package considerations need to be pursued by next year's Academic Affairs Committee, and re-presented to the faculty senate in the fall of 2001 for a vote.

Committee note: the most effective advisors are faculty members interested in undergraduate education who are given time to advise and rewarded for such.

* = Don DeSmet and Steve Miller met with SGA representatives John Macklen (VP Student Affairs), and Brad McGiverny (VP Academic Affairs) on 3.8.01, at the request of SGA to discuss posting faculty teaching evaluations to the web for student access. We discussed how teaching evaluations are often a hot point for faculty members, who have been known to question the usefulness, objectivity, and validity of such tools. The evaluation instruments are various across campus. They are frequently used by administrators as a tool to determine progress toward tenure and retention, as well as pay raises. For the faculty these are matters of strict privacy between the faculty member and their supervisor and need to remain so.