

Motion to amend the T&R Faculty Handbook with a statement about midterm grade reports

Referred by the Faculty Issues Committee

Motion:

The Faculty Senate approves the addition of the following language (red type) to the second paragraph of section 2.8 of the T & R Faculty Handbook:

Faculty members will inform students, orally and in writing, of their course requirements, attendance, and grading policies during the first week of the semester. Faculty members are responsible for providing some form of feedback regarding grades and/or academic performance prior to each semester's withdrawal date. Such feedback might take the form of a midterm grade, a written or oral progress report, or whatever means the faculty member deems most appropriate. Students must be provided the opportunity to examine and discuss with their professor written examinations and other materials used in the grading process.

Rationale:

Late in the spring semester of 2014, the Student Government Association drafted a motion they called "The Midterm Grades Act of 2014." Their motion stated that students who are not considered to be at risk did not uniformly receive midterm feedback that would make them aware of the need to improve their performance. The SGA motion recognized that in some cases, this information might not take the form of grades if not enough graded activities had been given. In those cases, they requested a written progress report.

From the perspective of faculty, mandating such a report or midterm grade can be an onerous demand and implies that faculty are not already doing this. Student feedback does suggest that not all students do receive this information although there may be situations where the information exists but the students have not used it. In an attempt to support the SGA request without dictating how faculty should provide this information, the Faculty Issues Committee has determined that an amendment to the Faculty Handbook might serve to remind faculty of their responsibility to students in this area.

Motion: We propose the addition of two sentences to the Faculty Handbook in the following section. Section 2 of the Handbook is dedicated to faculty responsibilities. The focus of this section appears to be on the teaching load of faculty, what to do in case of illness, and other administrative requirements. Although there is a statement to the effect that faculty must inform students of course requirements and grading policies, there is no statement regarding the manner or time period in which grades are

shared with students. Thus, our proposed addition would appear to fit in subsection 2.8 on Class Administration, coming in the second paragraph which currently reads as follows:

“Faculty members will inform students, orally and in writing, of their course requirements, attendance, and grading policies during the first week of the semester. Students must be provided the opportunity to examine and discuss with their professor written examinations and other materials used in the grading process.” (p. 56)

New version:

Faculty members will inform students, orally and in writing, of their course requirements, attendance, and grading policies during the first week of the semester. **Faculty members are responsible for providing some form of feedback regarding grades and/or academic performance prior to each semester’s withdrawal date. Such feedback might take the form of a midterm grade, a written or oral progress report, or whatever means the faculty member deems most appropriate.** Students must be provided the opportunity to examine and discuss with their professor written examinations and other materials used in the grading process.