

DEANS COUNCIL
October 13, 2020
Minutes

The Deans Council met on Tuesday, October 13 from 8:30-10:00 a.m. via Zoom. Those present were Austin Agho (Chair), Tammi Dice, Gail Dodge, Stuart Frazer, Kate Hawkins, David Metzger, Brian Payne, Kent Sandstrom, Ben Stuart, Jeff Tanner, Bonnie Van Lunen, and Robert Wojtowicz. The following agenda items were discussed.

1. The September 15, 2020 minutes were approved.
2. Proposed Revisions to the Faculty Sanctions Policy

The proposed changes to the Faculty Sanctions Policy were made by Jay Wright. He was directed by the President and the Board of Visitors to revise the policy to include the definition of a severe sanction. In doing so, he changed “severe” sanction to a “major” sanction and defined it as a sanction that involves a property right as defined by the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. He also included a revision to make it clear that no attorneys could participate in the proceedings other than to advise their clients.

The Deans had several concerns, suggestions, and questions about the proposed revisions.

- Under the proposed definition of a major sanction, some actions that the Deans would consider a major sanction would become minor sanctions.
- Is the proposed definition of a major sanction comprehensive enough? Should actions be included in addition to those involving a property right?
- Should there be an intermediate step, such as minor sanction, major sanction, and severe sanction?
- Would prohibiting a faculty member from receiving a salary increase be considered a major sanction?
- If revisions are made, a more detailed review of the policy is needed to see if additional changes are needed. The policy has not been changed since 1982.
- References to a severe sanction appear in other policies, such as the Faculty Grievance Policy. These policies would need to be revised if changes are made to the Faculty Sanctions Policy.

The Deans’ comments and concerns will be shared with Jay Wright in order to determine the next steps.

3. Faculty Senate Issue AY18-14-G: Guidelines for Annual Evaluation When Faculty Do Not Submit FIS

Council members discussed the recommendation from the Faculty Senate for revisions to the policy on Evaluation of Tenured Faculty to address situations when a tenured faculty member does not provide a faculty information sheet. The Deans were supportive of the change and suggested a revision of the wording as follows.

If the faculty member fails to submit his or her annual evaluation materials, the chair and dean have the discretion to evaluate the faculty member's performance based on available evidence.

The revised wording will be shared with the Faculty Senate.

4. Credit Sharing Proposal for Undergraduate Majors and Concentrations

Judy Bowman explained the proposal on credit sharing for undergraduate students. The first three items included in the proposal – credit sharing between a major and a minor, credit sharing between a major and an interdisciplinary minor, and credit sharing for general education – reflect current practice and policy.

The fourth item on credit sharing between two majors or two concentrations is new. Department chairs, faculty, and advisors are asking questions about double majors/concentrations and how many courses can count toward both. Having a document that addresses the criteria for double majors or double concentrations is needed to ensure consistency across all programs and majors. The document will also be useful to the Registrar's Office as they answer questions and certify degree completion.

The Deans supported the proposal. Gail Dodge will share the proposal with the associate deans. If they agree with the proposal, it will be implemented and shared with associate deans, department chairs, and advisors.

5. Policy on Title IX – Sexual Harassment and Sex or Gender-Based Discrimination (Interim Policy)

Kate Hawkins made Council members aware of the new interim policy on Title IX. Major differences in the new policy are as follows.

- There are changes in what matters fall within the jurisdiction of Title IX.
- All formal complaints must include a hearing.
- Hearings allow for cross-examination by advisors.
- Training is required for those who serve on hearing panels.

Austin Agho will check on whether the composition of hearing panels is included in the new policy.

6. SPEAK Test

Robert Wojtowicz described challenges the English Language Center is facing in order to be self-supporting. One way to assist the Center is to charge for the SPEAK Test and have the colleges pay for the test for their students. The test costs \$65, and the Center is asking to charge \$100 per test in order to address administrative costs. The Deans asked if there is a cost for students who are required to retest. They also asked for data on the

number of students in each college who take the SPEAK test to get an idea of the costs they would incur. Kate Hawkins will obtain this information and share it with the Deans.

7. Update on Spring 2021 Calendar

Austin Agho said there have been a few concerns about the elimination of spring break in the upcoming spring semester and asked if the Deans are aware of any concerns. The Deans have not heard concerns at this point. The spring semester will proceed as planned with the elimination of spring break.

8. Office Coverage After Thanksgiving

Austin Agho reported that there is no guidance yet from Human Resources on office coverage after Thanksgiving.

9. Final Exam Time Window for Fall 2020

Questions were raised about guidance for exams for those classes that meet face-to-face on campus. The exam schedule posted on the Registrar's website includes options for administering exams over a period of time instead of requiring attendance during the specific exam slot. In addition, the Library will be open after Thanksgiving, and the Testing Center will be open to allow for testing of students.

10. Announcements

- A. Austin Agho reminded the Deans of the Town Hall on October 16 to answer questions about diversity and inclusion efforts at ODU. Narketta Sparkman-Key will introduce the panel and ask the questions.
- B. Austin Agho stated that he will meet with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. One of the items for discussion will be phased retirement.
- C. Austin Agho reported that Earl Nance and Jay Wright are reviewing the Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping to see if the order applies to higher education. September Sanderlin, Narketta Sparkman-Key, Lesa Clark, and Veleka Gatling are reviewing our materials to see if we are disparaging any ethnic groups.
- D. Austin Agho stated that he has asked the Registrar's Office not to accept any course cancellation forms directly from faculty and to refer such requests to the Deans. Department chairs and associate deans should continue to submit the course cancellation forms for review.
- E. Austin Agho announced that there will be a virtual graduation ceremony in December. Hopefully Commencement ceremonies can be held in spring 2021. These ceremonies will include graduates from spring and fall 2020.

- F. Brian Payne noted that winter term can start the week after Christmas since spring semester has been pushed back a week. Discussion on whether to delay the start of winter term will take place at the October 19 meeting of the Academic Affairs Leadership Team.