

*Preamble: The purpose of all three of these items is really for the body of the Senate to frame how these discussions should take place that might lead to a collective decision. So, these are discussions to set up discussions which might lead to action.*

## II. Syllabus Policy

Background: A few years ago during a period in which the college was revising all board policies, a senate-appointed faculty member and a AA-appointed administrator undertook revisions of the syllabus policy. The content of the revisions was contentious itself, but a more fundamental contention arose that argued we shouldn't have a board policy/procedure on the syllabus at all. Aspects of the issue include the following.

The Contract contains stipulations for the syllabus:

Article 17.05, #4. "Issues a syllabus at the start of each class, including: course description and organization following the approved course outline of record; reading and lecture schedule; assignment structure; written grading policy; and an electronic link or direction to the approved course outline of record."

Current Board Policy 3.9P says

1. All instructors must provide a syllabus to students for every class they teach within the first week of each class.
2. Each syllabus will include the following:
  - Course description including student learning outcomes once they have been added to the course outline of record, office location, office hours, alternative student contact hours, and instructor contact information
  - Required texts and supplemental materials
  - List of assignments
  - Grading policy including grading scales, late work policy
  - Attendance and lateness policy

### Optional Best Practices:

- Overview of topics
  - Calendar of assignments with language indicating that dates are tentative
  - Instructor's pedagogical philosophy
  - Link course objectives with student learning outcomes (SLOs)
3. It is the faculty member's responsibility to provide a copy of each class syllabus, preferably in electronic format, to the department chairperson and supervising administrator or off-campus manager where the course is being taught, within the first week of the class including intersession and summer terms.

4. Each course syllabus must be in compliance with the course outline of record in terms of student learning outcomes, course content, assignments, and methods of evaluation. (See the AFA Contract, Article 14: Evaluations and Article 17: Job Descriptions.)

5. If the instructor of record changes once the course has begun, the substitute will consult with the department chair and supervising administrator to insure that the students will be served consistent with the syllabus of the original instructor of record.

6. If the original syllabus is not in compliance with the course outline of record, then the substitute will consult with the department chair and supervising administrator to insure that the students will be served consistent with the course outline of record.

7. Since the syllabus represents the contract between the faculty and students, changes to required assignments, grading policy and scales, late work policy, attendance and lateness policy, texts and materials and any other policy within the syllabus that changes the student's expectation of workload or grading policy are prohibited.

#### **Questions:**

- Is it necessary, desirable, appropriate to have a Contract stipulation and Board Policy on the same item?
- What are their respective functions?
- Since Contract (legally) trumps policy, is the policy superfluous or redundant?
- Is advise ("best practices") appropriate as a subject for policy?
- Is # 7 in the policy/procedure something we all agree with? Agree to?

#### **Most important question:**

- Is the Syllabus a Ten-plus-One item?

#### **Options:**

A. Keep the Contract and Board Policy and amend both as needed

B. Request AFA to negotiate for changes in Contract article per Senate's point of view, recommend deletion of Board Policy, and develop "best practices" or "sample templates" or just "suggestions" for faculty who wish to use them for the Senate website

Note: The Senate does not have authority on this in any case. The Senate recommends to the Board on Policy; the Board has a legal obligation to follow the Senate's advice when it is a 10 + 1 issue, but it doesn't when it is not. The Senate can also request its faculty representative, AFA, to negotiate Contract items but does not itself negotiate.

Note also the Canvas Syllabus Template