

M I N U T E S

COMMISSION ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

January 26, 1976

3:00 p.m. - Board Room
Burruss Hall

PRESENT: Dr. J. D. Wilson, Chairman; Deans Atwell, Gilmer, Gray, Lacy, Mitchell and Quam; Professors Batie (for Professor Carson), Gurel, Herakovich, Houck, Nurse, Oyler and Salmon; Senators Boese and Stout; Student Representatives Krivoruchka, Lewers. and Shoemaker.

ABSENT: Deans Ferrari and Johnson; Professor Gary; Senator Maxwell; Student Representative Conroy.

1. The agenda was modified and APPROVED.
2. The minutes of the January 12, 1976 meeting were APPROVED.
3. University Council activities were reported by Dr. Wilson. Principal items dealt with student life policies. Excepted items from CUS minutes included multiple-section examinations and the University Honors Program.
4. The ongoing study by CUS to improve undergraduate education continued with particular attention to the recommendations of the Task Force for Innovation in Instruction of January, 1973. Dr. Wybe Kroontje, Chairman of the Task Force, was welcomed by Dr. Wilson and invited to present a resume of the report. Dr. Kroontje gave a very lucid, comprehensive report emphasizing the overall general impression of the findings of the Task Force and detailing a few of the highlights. Speaking to recommendations 2, 5 and 31 of the report, he said that the quality of instruction was weak at the lower levels where, in fact, the best teaching is needed particularly in today's climate of larger classes. There are some pockets of excellence and some departments have made major efforts to provide high quality instruction; unfortunately, often only the weaknesses are remembered. He pointed out that large classes have a great impact on many students and that high quality instruction must receive priority attention and support from top administration as well as department heads and faculty. Quality in teaching must be encouraged and rewarded in a way that matches support for research. The creation of a position of Dean for Instructional Development is still a viable recommendation.

The balance of the hour was spent in discussion of questions posed by members of CUS to Dr. Kroontje. These dealt with the experimenting college, freshman orientation, student quality, experimental programs, long-range planning, implementation of the Task Force recommendations,

measurement of teaching quality, peer evaluations, rewards for teaching excellence, and rank of the University in national prominence. Dr. Wilson expressed appreciation to Dr. Kroontje for his very fine report and assistance to the CUS.

5. Course approvals:

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

New Courses

1. GER 4790 - Senior Seminar in German Studies (3H,3C). Effective Fall, 1976.
2. SPAN 4790 - Senior Seminar in Spanish Studies (3H,3C). Effective Fall, 1976.
3. HIST 3660 - The Chinese Communist Movement (3H,3C). Effective Fall, 1976.
4. HIST 4100 - Historic Preservation (3H,3C). UG&G. Effective Fall, 1976.
5. LASC 1101, 1102, 1103 - Introductory Humanities (4H,4C) each. Effective Fall, 1976.
6. LASC 3100 - Humanities for Students in the Life Sciences (3H,3C). Effective Fall, 1976.
7. LASC 3120 - Humanities for Students in the Physical Sciences and Technology (3H,3C). Effective Fall, 1976 (Note the slight change in title from that originally proposed.)
8. LASC 4100 - Topics in the Humanities (3H,3C). Effective Fall, 1976.
9. MUS 4141, 4142, 4143 - Advanced Compositional Technique (3H,3C) each. Effective Fall, 1976.
10. PHYS 2100 - Physics in Daily Experience (3H,3C). Effective Fall, 1976.
11. PSCI 3410 - Analyzing Public Policy (3H,3C). (Deferred from January 12 meeting of CUS.) Effective Spring, 1976.
12. PSCI 4210 - Selected Topics in Public Policy (3H,3C). (Deferred from January 12 meeting of CUS.) Effective Spring, 1976.

Revised Courses

1. BIOL 3111, 3112 - Introductory Physiology (4H,4C). (Increased content from 3C to 4C.) Effective Fall, 1976.

Note: LASC courses have not been assigned to any department. Correspondence should be directed to Professor W. H. Lane, Adviser.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

New Courses

1. EDCI 4230 - Curriculum and Instruction in Elementary Mathematics (3H,3C). (Developed from topics previously included in EDCI 4210.) Effective Spring, 1976.
2. EDCI 4240 - Curriculum and Instruction in Elementary Science (3H,3C). (Developed from topics previously included in EDCI 4210.) Effective Spring, 1976.

Course to be dropped

1. EDCI 4210 - Curriculum and Instruction in Elementary Science and Mathematics (5H,3L,6C). Effective Summer, 1976.
6. The report of the ad hoc Committee on Common Final Examination Times was presented by Dean Atwell. After discussion pointing out the concerns of students and faculty, and noting the committee's recommendation to modify the CADAP proposal (CUS minutes, October 27, 1975), a motion was made by Dean Atwell, seconded and PASSED that:

"Departments shall be given the option of offering final examinations at one common time for lower-division courses which utilize common texts and syllabi. Departments wishing to schedule times for common examinations must notify the Registrar at the time that timetable materials are submitted. University policies relative to adjustments for three examinations in one day will be fully observed. Effective Fall, 1976."

Further, a motion was made by Dean Atwell, seconded and PASSED that:

"This action shall be reviewed by CUS in the Fall, 1977 after one year of operation to test its effectiveness." (Copy attached)

7. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

George A. Gray
Secretary

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VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

DIVISION OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

January 21, 1976

MEMO

TO: Dr. John Wilson
VPAA

FROM: Charles A. Atwell *C A A*
Chairman, CADAP

SUBJECT: Review of CUS Action on Common Final Examination Times

As you know, our sub-committee was asked to review the recent (October 27, 1975) action relative to common final examination times for multiple-section courses. In addition to the regular student members of the sub-committee, two representatives of SGA were also invited. While conflicts prevented full attendance, Todd Lewers of CUS represented the student view ably.

There seems to be little controversy concerning the concept of common examination times for multiple-section courses. Indeed, the rationale for the adoption of some such policy seems compelling. There is less consensus, however, about the implementation of such a policy. Some students -- and perhaps some faculty -- fear a lengthened examination day and/or week. Others fear -- unnecessarily, I believe -- an inundation of requests for common exam times.

In an effort to alleviate some of the potential or perceived problems associated with the implementation of the proposed policy, the committee suggests that the policy statement be re-worded as follows:

The committee recommends that departments be given the option of offering final examinations at one common time for lower-division courses which utilize common texts and syllabi. Departments wishing to schedule times for common examinations must notify the Registrar at the time that timetable materials are submitted. The scheduling of three final examinations during any 24-hour period shall be considered a conflict and shall be resolved according to existing University policy. Effective Fall, 1976.

MEMO

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The committee realizes that the administration of such a policy is the responsibility of the Registrar. While we do not presume to instruct him in this regard, it seems appropriate to say that the committee feels strongly that courses offered on a common-times basis should not necessarily be relegated to evening exam times. For example, at such time that the volume of requests warrants, common-time examinations might well be scheduled at "prime" time.

I hope this report is responsive to the Commission's charge to the committee.

CAA:msh