

**Annual Report, 1996-1997**  
**University Committee on Academic Policy**  
**Steven A. McCornack, Chairperson**

Meetings held: 9/5/96; 9/19/96; 10/3/96; 10/31/96; 11/14/96; 12/5/96; 1/9/97; 1/23/97; 2/6/97;  
3/27/97; 4/24/97.

**Committee Actions and Activities**

- (1) On 9/19/96, the UCAP approved a modification of the Tier 1 Writing Requirement, such that a new course (i.e., AL 192) will be created and offered. This course will be a modified version of AL 192H. The goal of this course offering is to expand opportunities for freshmen students to have contact with faculty beyond ATL. Honors sections of AL 192 still will be offered.
- (2) On 10/3/96, the UCAP approved a motion that the UCAP Chair draft a letter to the Provost recommending that a formal notice be sent to Chairs and Directors of all units which recognize transfer equivalent courses currently being taught in the Vet Tech program, describing the nature of this program as part of the LCC/MSU consortial arrangement. The goal of this motion was to forestall future confusion regarding the nature of this program, as many campus units appear to be unaware that MSU equivalent courses currently are being taught on the MSU campus by LCC staff.
- (3) On 10/31/96, the UCAP approved a motion requesting that a moratorium be placed on the admission of undergraduate students to the Program in Professional Accounting. This motion was based upon changes in the Professional Accounting curriculum, whereby applicants for graduate study will be able to pursue either a two-year MBA program with a major in Accounting or the newly approved one-year MS program in Professional Accounting. Students entering the MBA program will be required to have relevant work experience prior to being admitted into the program.
- (4) On 11/14/96, the UCAP Chair presented a report to the full committee analyzing the activities of the UCAP since the 1990-1991 academic year. This report was developed in response to the call for a review of the UCAP's role in academic governance. This report demonstrates that the UCAP is consistently busy, and shares little in the way of redundant action with other University Standing Committees. This report is included in Appendix A.  
Based upon this report, the UCAP concluded on 12/5/96 that it should continue as a University Standing Committee. The Chair then drafted a formal description of the UCAP's self-perceived purpose/goals, and presented this document (along with the action report) to the ECAC during its retreat on January 6, 1997.
- (5) On 1/9/97, the UCAP expressed formal support for a proposed change in the readmission policy, whereby students who stop out will have continued enrollment without having to formally reapply for admission to the university, provided they (1) do so within twelve months of the end of the last semester in which they were enrolled, (2) were in good academic standing with the university, and (3) have not changed class level.
- (6) On 1/23/97, the UCAP expressed formal support for a proposed academic program change within the College of Engineering (specifically, the area of manufacturing engineering), in collaboration with the Eli Broad College of Business. Features of the program include admission of students starting in the freshmen year (or soon thereafter), formation of a residential college-like community, change in entry requirements, and the inclusion of three mandatory co-op experiences.

(7) On 2/6/97, the UCAP approved a motion to reconsider the Fall 1995 UCAP recommendation that the one-year limit on English Language Competency be removed. Specifically, the approved motion argued that the present one-year expectation for attaining English Language proficiency should be retained.

(8) On 3/27/97, the UCAP Chair presented an informal report analyzing data that he had collected regarding proctoring practices on the MSU campus. The impetus for this survey was the concern expressed in the Fall of 1996 by UCAP members that decreased numbers of graduate proctors in large lecture exams may compromise exam integrity. Eighteen units completed the Chair's questionnaire. Of these, one-third felt that there was a substantial problem with lack of proctoring within exams. Of the two-thirds who felt that there was not a proctoring problem, 12% felt that there was a problem within large lecture courses, and 90% of the "satisfied" departments only administer exams within small lectures. The data also suggest that there is no perceived problem amongst units related to penalty grades.

(9) On 3/27/97, the UCAP approved a motion that would allow the program in Professional Accounting an exception to the current dual enrollment limitation policy. This would allow undergraduates intending to enter the MS program to take a mixture of undergraduate and graduate courses in their fourth and fifth years in the program.

#### **Presentations**

(1) On 9/19/97, the UCAP hosted Prof. Linda Jackson from Psychology, who reported her findings from her analysis of more than 8,000 SIRS forms. These findings can be found in her book, "Inside the college classroom: What college students really think about their professors."

(2) On 10/31/96, the UCAP hosted Vice Provost Paul M. Hunt, and Asst. Vice Provost Robert L. Church, who spoke about the new technology guarantee, the virtual university, and the virtual automotive college. Drs. Hunt and Church also returned on 1/9/97 to field questions that the committee had regarding implications of the virtual university.

#### **Items for Future Discussion**

- (1) Policies regarding virtual university
- (2) Formal investigation of proctoring problem
- (3) Periodic review of SIRS

**Appendix A**

**Report on UCAP action items since 1990-1991  
Steven McCornack & Rachel Schiffman**

As an initial step in defining UCAP's charge and scope, we collaboratively reviewed the UCAP annual reports since the 1990-1991 academic year. We decided that our review would focus exclusively upon action items, rather than topics of discussion, so to as focus upon what UCAP *has done*, rather than simply what UCAP *has discussed*. At the suggestion of Dr. Schiffman, all UCAP actions since 1990 were coded in terms of how they aligned with the UCAP charge articulated in the University Handbook. Specifically, upon examining the UCAP by-laws (i.e., section 4.5), we found there to be eight primary (albeit general) charges of the UCAP. Below is a list of these charges, with examples of actual action items (and the corresponding year during which they occurred) that we identified as representative of them:

- (1) delegated authority with regard to undergraduate and graduate grading policies (for example, examining grades and the grading history at MSU, and requesting units to conduct internal discussion of grading practices; 1994-1995)
- (2) Provost consultation with regard to establishment, disbandment, or merger of academic programs (e.g., consulting with the Provost regarding placing a moratoria on the admission of undergraduates into the Department of Religious Studies; 1991-1992)
- (3) Provost advising with regard to curriculum issues (e.g., providing commentary regarding the guidelines for review of Graduate curriculum; 1990-1991)
- (4) Provost advising with regard to instructional issues (e.g., survey of faculty regarding incentives and awards for teaching; 1990-1991)
- (5) Provost consultation with regard to admission and retention (e.g., passing a motion requiring a defined score on place tests to satisfy MSU's math graduation requirement; 1993-1994)
- (6) Provost consultation with regard to financial aid and distribution of educational/research resources (e.g., providing commentary regarding the Block Tuition Proposal; 1990-1991)
- (7) Provost consultation/advising with regard to "all other matters of academic policy" (e.g., a motion supporting the restoration of the practice of providing for student ID cards with pictures; 1990-1991)
- (8) Provost consultation/advising with regard to research development policies (e.g., providing commentary on the CORRAGE report; 1991-1992)

All activities of UCAP since the 1990-1991 year then were classified into one of these eight categories, so as to provide a detailed assessment of patterns of action. There was 100% agreement between Drs. McCornack and Schiffman as to action-category assignment. The results of this categorization process are displayed below, in Figure 1:

Figure 1

	1990-1991	1991-1992	1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995	1995-1996	TOTAL
grading	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
programs	4	8	2	6	2	3	24
curriculum	1	0	0	2	1	0	4
instruction	2	0	0	0	2	2	6
admission	0	0	2	0	2	1	5
financial	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
other	1	2	5	1	1	2	12
research	0	1	0	1	1	0	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>58</b>

Several preliminary observations can be made regarding the data displayed in Figure 1:

- \* UCAP has maintained an almost perfectly consistent record of annual action over the last six years, with between 9 and 11 action items dealt with annually. This implies that UCAP is both consistent and busy.

- \* despite potential procedural overlap (i.e., items being routed through several different committees consecutively), there is very little data to support the claim that UCAP addresses issues that overlap upon the University Curriculum Committee. Only 6.8% of items acted upon over the last six years have directly involved curriculum issues.

- \* the dominant form of action in which UCAP is involved is action related to Provost consultation with regard to establishment, disbandment, or merger of academic programs; action that is decidedly focal to UCAP's purported function. In fact, this type of action comprises 41.37% of all action taken by UCAP in the last six years.

- \* UCAP rarely (i.e., 3% of action items) enacts action items relevant to its one area of delegated authority: grading policy.

- \* several of the items that we classified as "other" (a category constituting 20.68% of action items) did *not* appear to fall directly under UCAP's purview, and (consequently) are items that (perhaps) UCAP should not address in the future. For example(s), we could find nothing in UCAP's charge to explain why UCAP acted with regard to each of the following items: (1) faculty awards (1991-1992), (2) achievement awards for transfer students (1993-1994), and (3) replacement of the term "foreign students" with "international students" (1992-1993).

Prepared by Steven McCornack