

University Committee on Academic Policy (UCAP)
ANNUAL REPORT
2000-01

Chairperson: Jeanne Wald

(Meetings every other Thursday throughout the academic year.)

UCAP issues/actions discussed or finalized in 2000-01

1. SOCT (Student Opinion on Courses and Teaching): instruction and course evaluation forms with results accessible to the university community so that students could better choose their future classes. Further policy recommendations were discussed in the September. UCAP presented and discussed the SOCT proposal at both Academic Council and Faculty Council. In the fall Academic Council passed UCAP's proposal to distribute these evaluation forms to all undergraduate classes taught by university faculty and specialists, and to make available the results to students and other members of the university community. UCAP finalized the questions for the form and the forms were distributed at the end of the fall and spring semesters. UCAP requested informal feedback at the end of the year and discussed mechanisms for obtaining and incorporating feedback in the future.

2. Report on evaluating and valuing instruction by faculty: UCAP worked throughout the year on an advisory report to the Provost regarding teaching at MSU. A main focus was directed toward the question of how to enhance the value of teaching and assure appropriate recognition of teaching in the reward structure.

3. UCAP/ICTC subcommittee: In UCAP's previous year's report to the Provost, UCAP had recommended the formation of a diverse group of people to oversee implementation of the computer requirement. The Provost asked UCAP and ICTC to form such a committee, specifically to discuss issues relating to student and faculty preparation for the computer requirement. Throughout the majority of the year this committee (consisting of 4 UCAP members and 4 ICTC members) met weekly. Two surveys were completed and analyzed and the booklet *MSU Wired: A Guide to MSU's On-line Resources* was produced. A faculty version of this booklet is currently under consideration.

4. Reading Days/ Academic Calendar: UCAP discussed possible scenarios for the incorporation of reading days at the end of each semester. College faculty were polled to see if there were support of this idea. Results were mixed. Given the lack of substantial faculty support in most colleges, UCAP decided not to pursue action on the proposal.

5. Field Trip Policy: In response to a communication from the Academic Governance Office, UCAP addressed the question of the need for a more extensive policy statement on field trips that cause students to miss other classes. Discussion by the present committee led to the conclusion that there doesn't appear to be a clear-cut nor an expansive problem, so the committee again chose not to recommend any additions to the two current expectations: field trips that imposed an additional cost to students are to be part of the legislation provided in the curricular approval process; and faculty inform their deans so as to validate any

necessary student absences.

6. Scholars Program (Academic Enhancement Program for Accomplished Students): Professor Ron Fisher, director of the Honors College, brought before UCAP a proposal for a scholars program. Essentially this would accommodate students who might not have quite qualified for the Honors Program, but who were talented and interested in more demanding courses. UCAP considered various implementation issues and whether the resources to support such a program existed. UCAP supported initiating a two-year pilot project, encouraged provision of sufficient resources, and recommended a program evaluation upon completion of the pilot program. UCAP also recommended feedback to UCAP after year one.

7. Final Exam Outside of Finals Week: There was anecdotal evidence that some professors do not follow current University policy which mandates that final exams be administered according to the established schedule and that faculty be available to meet with their students during that time, in the absence of a regular final. UCAP supported enforcement of the current policy.

8. Integrative Studies: Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities Proposed Policy Change: IAH representative Kitty Geissler addressed the committee on the proposed Policy Change in Integrative Studies in Arts and Humanities. The proposal broadens IAH 201 (Course A) offerings to meet student requests for alternatives to the current offerings. Two new courses are proposed at this time, and three more are in development. UCAP supported this proposal.

9. Martin Luther King Day: UCAP continues to support of the cancellation of classes on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day to promote commemorative activities on the MSU campus, and strongly suggests the chronicling of data concerning the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day events, immediately past and future.

10. Copyright Policy: UCFA distributed its proposal regarding copyright issues. UCAP had some concern regarding University's copyright policy regarding web materials. UCAP recommended that an existing committee within the academic governance system be charged with (a) making a comparative study of MSU peer institutions for the issue of university/faculty sharing of intellectual property which is copyrighted, (b) gathering full input on the desires of the MSU community on the issue of copyrighted material sharing, and (c) presenting a report of their findings and a recommendation for university/faculty sharing of intellectual property which is copyrighted. Moreover, that the first review, fact finding, and submission of a recommendation be accomplished by May, 2002, and that periodic biannual reviews be undertaken thereafter.

11. Reorganization of Religious Studies: The College of Arts and Letters forwarded to UCAP a proposal to disband the Religious Studies Department but to maintain the undergraduate academic program in religious studies. The members of the department would be relocated. Dean Wilkins, Professor Hinnant and members of the college task force presented arguments to UCAP. UCAP expressed some concern regarding procedures. The proposal was withdrawn and there was no UCAP action.

12. Criminal Records Question: UCAP discussed the phrasing and issue of inclusion of a question regarding criminal history on the application form for admission. UCAP members were willing to endorse, at most, narrow framing of

questions related mainly to serious levels of offenses.

13. Admission Requirement: Bachelor of Science in Manufacturing Engineering. Tom Wolff summarized the Request to Change the Admission Requirement: Bachelors of Science in Manufacturing Engineering and addressed UCAP questions. UCAP approved the change.

14. Reorganization of Materials Science and Mechanics Department: Dean Fouke, Thomas Bieler, and representatives from the MSM Department presented conflicting views regarding the reorganization of MSM. UCAP reviewed materials presented by all groups and supported the reorganization proposal.

15. Request for Moratorium: Special Education - Visually Impaired. Cass Book, College of Education Associate Dean, presented a request for a one-year moratorium on admissions to Special Education: Visually Impaired Emphasis programs to provide time for basic consideration of staffing and programming. UCAP supported this request.

Pending matters from 2000-2001 to be discussed in 2001-2002:

1. Continued oversight of SOCT

2. Group Work: recommendations regarding criteria for group projects and grading.