Faculty Senate

Steering Committee

Agenda for meeting of Thursday, February 1, 2024, 3:00 pm
Location: In person in the Charge on Chamber, Student Union Room 340
For those unable to make the in person meeting due to travel, distant locations, or health issues, there is a Zoom option:
https://ucf.zoom.us/j/99508061720?pwd=MGFBcjJHNGJ0UU0vNTA0bXJpUE40QT09
Passcode: 832793

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call via Qualtrics:

3. Approval of Minutes of January 4, 2024

4. Recognition of Guests

5. Announcements

6. Report of the Senate Chair

7. Report of the Provost

8. Unfinished Business

9. New Business
   a) Chair Report on Recent Activities
   b) Chair Report on Senate elections and apportionment
   c) Resolution 2023-2024-7: Faculty Involvement and Transparency in the Hiring of Tenured/Tenure-Earning/Research (T/TE/R) Faculty
   d) Resolution 2023-2024-8: Evaluating Faculty Instruction
   e) Senate Agenda for February 15, 2024
      i) Letter Grade Policy
      ii) Research Space Utilization

10. Committee Reports
    a) B&A Committee: Keri Watson, Chair of B&A Committee
    b) IT Committee: Joe Kider, Steering Liaison for IT Committee
    c) Personnel Committee: Kristina Tollefson, Steering Liaison for Personnel
    d) Research Committee: Linda Walters, Chair of Research Council
    e) Graduate Council: Danny Seigler, Steering Liaison for Graduate Council
    f) Undergraduate Council: Tina Chiarelli, Chair of UCRC, Steering Liaison for UG

11. Other Business

12. Adjournment

Apportioned Senators by College

	2023	2024	Change	Ratio
CAH	13	12	-1	7 to 5
CBA	6	5	-1	3 to 2
CCIE	9	8	-1	6 to 2
CDL	*	2	+2	2 to 0
CECS	10	10	0	6 to 4
CGS	2	2	0	2 to 0
CHPS	4	4	0	2 to 2
COM	7	6	-1	5 to 1
CON	2	3	+1	3 to 0
COS	15	15	0	9 to 6
CREOL	2	2	0	1 to 1
CUGS	*	2	+2	2 to 0
RCHM	3	2	-1	1 to 1
UL	2	2	0	1 to 1
Total:	**75**	**75**	**0**	

Resolution 2023-2024-7: Faculty Involvement and Transparency in the Hiring of Tenured/Tenure-Earning/Research (T/TE/R) Faculty

Whereas, studies have consistently and overwhelmingly found that faculty across the U.S. believe in shared governance as an integral part of their institution's values, identity, and culture (Tierney & Minor, 2003; see also Williams et al., 1987; Gore et al., 1987, Miller 2002); and

Whereas, shared governance has been recognized as a central feature of higher education since the 1966 *Statement on Government in Colleges and Universities* (SGCU) from the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education, *and* the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. The SGCU stipulates the responsibilities and authority that should be conferred upon faculty and legitimates their involvement in institutional governance (Birnbaum, 2004 as cited in Jones, 2011). This includes the proviso that "*faculty status and related matters are primarily a faculty responsibility; this includes appointments, reappointments, decisions not to reappoint, promotions, granting of tenure, and dismissal*;" and

Whereas, this responsibility and authority stems from the recognized expertise of faculty that is cultivated through the publication and peer review of research and creative activities, preparation and acquisition of grants, and national/international conference research/creative presentations; and

Whereas, the recruitment, hiring, and retention of the best talent depends on the input of those who have direct and current knowledge of and expertise in the discipline and other responsibilities expected of the hire; and

Whereas, the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) and Human Resources (HR) search, screening, and hiring guidelines do not specify certain important aspects of transparency and faculty involvement in faculty searches; and

Whereas, a substantial majority of unit bylaws defer to the OIE and HR search, screening, and hiring guidelines and/or do not specify important aspects of transparency and faculty involvement in faculty searches; and

Whereas, the current search and hiring process makes the process vulnerable to misinformation and/or arbitrary decision making (e.g., not collecting or sharing faculty input, search committees neglecting to provide search updates to relevant unit faculty, allowing staff to vote on faculty research cluster appointments); and

Whereas, per the Chief Human Resources Officer, the posting of faculty search committee meetings to the UCF Human Resources website only requires that the notice "should be sent to Talent Acquisition a minimum of 48 hours prior to the meeting via a Workday Help ticket," thus preventing a reasonable amount of time for other faculty members to schedule attendance, and "there are no other requirements to post meeting notifications beyond the UCF HR website;" and

Whereas, per the Chief Human Resources Officer, "the responsibility for forwarding information to HR about the upcoming meeting varies, as it can be submitted by the search chair, search assistant, and/or the HR Business Center/HRBC, in the College," thus creating the potential for uncertainty, delays, and discrepancies in reporting; and

November, 2023

Whereas, per the Chief Human Resources Officer, "search meeting minutes are not posted and only added as part of the hire documents for the selected candidate," therefore

Be it Resolved that the University of Central Florida OIE and HR delineate and expand its' search, screening, and hiring guidelines for new or appointed Tenured/Tenure-Earning/Research (T/TE/R) faculty who will be required to conduct research and prepare and/or publish research-related [or discipline specific] deliverables, such as academic publications, as part of their annual assignment of duties in the following ways:

- The hiring official shall notify all full-time faculty in the unit before commencing a search or an appointment for T/TE/R faculty.

- The hiring official shall appoint members of the search committee who are preferably T/TE/R faculty and/or faculty who are best positioned to gauge the potential success of the candidate, are best informed about the criteria used for tenure and promotion and will be responsible for the decision making on the tenure and/or promotion of that faculty member, unless unit bylaws expressly state that other faculty may serve on search committees for T/TE/R faculty positions.

- The chair of the search committee shall notify the members of all units involved (e.g., in cases of cluster hires), via e-mail or other readily accessible means, of all search committee meetings as soon as they are scheduled but not less than 48 hours in advance of the meeting to allow faculty members to schedule attendance.

- Following candidates' on-campus (or virtual) visits, all full-time faculty, support staff, students, or community members who have met with the candidate or attended their presentations shall be given the opportunity to provide written feedback to the search committee on the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate.

- Upon receipt of all the feedback noted above, and upon request of a faculty member who will ultimately be responsible for voting on the tenure and/or promotion of the new hire, the feedback shall be made available for review.

- The search committee shall invite all T/TE/R faculty and/or faculty who will be responsible for voting on the tenure and/or promotion of the new hire to the search committee meeting where the committee will review and discuss the survey input and finalize the list of strengths and weaknesses for each visiting candidate that will ultimately be presented to the hiring official.

- Understanding that any committee has an advisory role, if a consensus view is expressed by T/TE/R faculty or the search committee in the final recommendations on the hire, and the hiring official departs from the consensus view, then the hiring official shall provide faculty with an explanation for the departure.

Be it Further Resolved that a unit vote shall be taken for other forms of faculty hiring with the potential for tenure (e.g., academic partner hires, dual unit appointments, research cluster or administrator appointments), and that unit voting privileges on any matter concerning the potential hiring shall only extend to T/TE/R faculty and/or faculty who are responsible for deciding on the tenure and/or promotion of faculty.

November, 2023

Resolution 2023-2024-8: Evaluating Faculty Instruction

Whereas, despite UCF Regulation 3.010 indicating that Student Perceptions of Instruction (SPIs) should not be the only source of evaluating teaching, SPIs remain one of the primary and most convenient methods of evaluating faculty instruction for purposes of annual evaluation, tenure and promotion, and teaching awards at UCF; and

Whereas, empirical research has shown that SPIs are biased against women, with women being judged more harshly than their male counterparts (Boring, 2017; Centra & Gaubatz, 2000; Kogan, Schoenfeld-Tacher, & Hellyer, 2010; Laube, Massoni et al., 2007; Mitchell & Martin, 2018). Empirical research has equally shown that SPIs are biased against ethnic and minority groups, resulting in African American professors being rated, on average, as 21% more mean spirited and 24% harder as compared to Caucasian faculty ratings (Harlow, 2003); and

Whereas, a recommendation of the 2020 report of the UCF SPI Task Force states: "As one of the largest and most innovative universities in the U.S., a designated Hispanic-Serving and Minority Serving institution that is committed to access, inclusion, and diversity, UCF should discontinue the use of SPIs, which perpetuate race- and gender-based biases, in the process of Faculty Performance evaluations" (p.6). The rationale for this recommendation was based in part on an argument that appeared in an issue of Inside Higher Ed, which stated: "Relying on biased instruments to evaluate faculty members is institutional discrimination." (Owen, 2019); and

Whereas, empirical research, including a recent meta-analysis (Uttl, White & Gonzalez, 2017), has shown that SPIs are a poor measure of teaching effectiveness, primarily measuring perceptions of students who are not experts in pedagogy, and are influenced by non-teaching based factors like time of day, subject, and class size (Boring, Ottoboni & Stark, 2016; Flaherty, 2020; Lederman, 2020; Stroebe, 2020); and

Whereas, empirical research has shown that students rate teaching methods that have been proven effective [such as active learning] as less effective than passive learning strategies (Deslauriers, McCarty et al., 2019); and

Whereas, UCF research has shown that less than 60% of students complete SPIs, despite continuous reminders and subsequent barriers to enrollment and other university activities for those failing to complete them (Dziuban, Moskal, Self, & Hubertz, 2022); and

Whereas, UCF research has shown that 66.1% of students from 2017 to 2021 straight lined their SPI responses (Dziuban, Moskal, Self, & Hubertz, 2022); and

Whereas, empirical research has shown that "up to a third of students use instructor ratings to get revenge on instructors they do not like, even to the extent of submitting false information" (Clayson & Haley, 2011; as cited in UCF SPI Task Force Report, 2020:7).

Whereas, empirical research has shown that student grade satisfaction, receiving expected grades, perceived and actual grading leniency, and/or "consumer satisfaction" are important drivers of [positive] faculty evaluations (Johnson, 2002; Eizler, 2002; Felton et al., 2008; Braga et al., 2014; Stroebe, 2020); and

Whereas, empirical research has shown that SPIs, especially when used in high-stake personnel decisions, encourage grade inflation (Johnson, 2006; Shouping, 2005), ultimately affecting the credibility of institutions and creating dubious impressions of student learning and teaching effectiveness; and

Whereas, at UCF, from 2018 to 2023, in lower-level undergraduate courses, 46.8 percent [range of 42.3 - 49] of grades were A's (A /A-) and 26.2 percent [range of 25.3 – 28.2] were B's (B+/B/B-). From 2018 to 2023, in upper-level undergraduate courses, 47.2 percent [range of 44 – 48.9] of grades were A's and 26.1 percent [range of 25.7 - 27.9] were B's (Source:IKM); and

Whereas, at UCF, from 2018 to 2023, the average percentage of A's received in upper-level undergraduate courses was at or exceeded 55 percent [range of 55 – 65] in 6 of 10 colleges. In the remaining 4 colleges, which are responsible for 62% of all grades at UCF, the most commonly reported percentage of A's for upper-level undergraduate courses was 45 percent [range of 31 – 46] and 26 and 36 percent for B's (Data Source: IKM; College of Medicine and Graduate Studies, and Honor's College, where 80 percent of grades are "S," are not included in these figures).

Whereas, research by scholars from Brigham Young, Purdue, and Stanford University (Denning, Eide, Mumford, Patterson & Warnick, 2023) found that the "no direct cost to the university" practice of grade inflation [not changing enrollment patterns, better performance on standardized tests, student-to-faculty ratios or instructional expenditures] is most responsible for increased graduation rates ("The Grade Inflation Conversation We're Not Having .....," April 13, 2023 issue of Chronicle of Higher Education); and

Whereas, four other universities (Colorado-Boulder, Southern California, Oregon, and Kansas) have made substantial changes to the evaluation of faculty teaching, which includes elimination of SPIs as a primary source of evaluating teaching (UCF SPI Task Force, 2020:8-9)

Be it Resolved that UCF abandon use of SPIs in faculty annual evaluations, promotion and tenure, and awards, and require committees, unit/department heads, deans, and other university personnel to employ more objective measures of *teaching quality and commitment* in assessing faculty instruction. Examples of alternative measures include, but are not limited to:

- quality course designations from IDL
- use of evidence-based practices or innovative or FCTL recommended teaching strategies
- creation of new courses for department curriculum
- syllabi, classroom assignments, exams
- grade distributions
- students supervised on independent studies/theses/dissertations
- publications, presentations and/or research with students
- In-class peer observation

Be it Further Resolved that UCF retain use of SPIs for faculty members' personal use in guiding their instruction and in post-tenure review, which complies with current BOG regulations and policies.

Policy Text

The University uses an alphabetic system to identify student grades and other actions regarding student progress or class attendance. Beginning Fall 2001, a plus/minus grading system became effective, with a grade point equivalent per semester hour as follows:

Grades	Grading Points Per Semester Hour of Credit
A	4.00
A-	3.75
B+	3.25
B	3.00
B-	2.75
C+	2.25
C	2.00
C-	1.75
D+	1.25
D	1.00
D-	.75
F	0.00
NC - No Credit	*

*Available only in CHM 1032, CHM 2040, CHM 2041, CHM 2045C, CHS 1440, ENC 1101, ENC 1101H, ENC 1102, ENC 1102H, MAC 1105CH, MAC 1105H, MAC 1114C, MAC 1140C, MAC 1140H, MAC 2147, MAC 2233, MAC 2241, MAC 2253, MAC 2281, MAC 2281H, MAC 2311C, MAC 2311H, MAT 1033C, and STA 2014. In these classes NC replaces the use of D+, D and D-.

Legend	Action	Grade Points
G	Repeated Course (Grade Forgiveness, multiple attempts)	-
I	Incomplete	-
K	Repeated course (Latest Attempt)	-
N	No grade reported by instructor (followed by grade)	-
P	Repeated Course (Not Grade Forgiveness)	-
R	Repeated course (Grade Forgiveness)	-
S	Satisfactory (w/credit)/Satisfactory Progress (Research, Thesis, or Dissertation)	-
T	(followed by grade) Subsequently repeated (no credit)	-
U	Unsatisfactory (no credit)	-
W	Withdrawn	-
WL	Late Withdrawal	-
WH	Health Form Withdrawal	-

WM	Medical Withdrawal	-
X	Audit (no credit)	-

The designation of "N" will be assigned temporarily by the Registrar's Office only in the case when a grade has not been submitted by the instructors by the grade submission deadline. The designator will be replaced by the earned letter grade at the earliest opportunity in the term that immediately follows and prior to graduation. The "N" designator may not be assigned by the instructor.

In the event of academic dishonesty, instructors may assign a Z in front of a final course grade on a student's academic record. For further information regarding the addition, removal and appeals process of the Z designation, see *https://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/64/2020/10/2020-2021-Golden-Rule.pdf#page=67*

The Grade Point Average (GPA) is the average number of grade points per semester hour attempted. **GPA is computed by dividing the total number of grade points assigned by the total number of credit hours attempted, less hours resulting from NC, W, WP, S, U, and I grades**. GPA is recalculated after each term; for Summer GPA is recalculated only after all Sessions and end of term. The GPA for graduation requirement is a minimum UCF 2.0 ("C").

Example: A student has completed 13 credit hours for a given term. To calculate the Term GPA:

1. Multiply the number of credit hours per course by the number of grade points per grade. Then add each amount to arrive at the total number of grade points earned for that term:

Course #1	B+	3 credit hours X 3.25 grade points =	9.75
+ Course #2	A-	3 credit hours X 3.75 grade points =	11.25
+ Course #3	A	4 credit hours X 4.00 grade points =	16
+ Course #4	B	3 credit hours X 3.00 grade points =	9
		= 13 credit hours	= 46 total grade points

2. Divide the total number of grade points by the total number of credit hours earned that term: 46.00 total grade points / 13 credit hours = 3.54 GPA for that term.

UCF Cumulative GPA. If prior to this term the student had earned a total of 162 grade points for a combined 54 term hours of coursework, his or her cumulative grade point average entering this term would be 162/54= 3.00. Including this term of coursework, the cumulative grade point average would be (162 + 46) / (54 + 13) = 3.10.

Rationale

The C- grade causes a tremendous amount of confusion. Many majors require students to earn at least a 2.0 in major courses. This means that a C- equates to an unsuccessful completion of a course.

To add to this confusion, since the +/- system is optional, the current system leads to a situation where students with the exact same average could have vastly different results for their academic career. This is best explained with examples.

- Student A takes AMH 4170 in spring 2022. Their professor does not use the +/- system. They earn a 72 in the course and receive a C. The class counts for the History major.
- Student B takes AMH 4170 in summer 2022. Their professor does use the +/- system. They earn a 72 and receive a C-. The class does not count for the History major.

Also, imagine if Student A and B were both on probation. Student A would remain on probation while student B would be dismissed from UCF.

In theory, this could even happen if the students took different sections of the same class in the same semester.

Similarly, as we expand the use of the S/U system, the C- (which equates to U) is potentially going to cause more problems.

Eliminating the C- would also help improve our graduation rate (as students are not forced to retake these classes.) While this might be seen by some as "watering down" our requirements, in reality, many professors who award C- do not realize the consequences of the grade. And, we must consider whether the current policy makes sense: does a C- reflect an unsuccessful completion of a course? It is easy to make an argument that instead it reflects a minimally successful completion of a course.

Perhaps because of these complications, the C- is rarely used. In Fall 2021, only 0.51 percent of all grades at UCF were C-. (D- and D+ are used even less--0.14 and 0.49 percent). So, in total this change only impacts 1.14 percent of the grades given at UCF.

Note: At least one of our fellow SUS institutions (FIU) does not use the C-/D+/D- grades. They stopped using these grades in 2016.

UGGradeSystem
Grade System

Under Review | Fall 2024

Proposal Information

Workflow Status

In Progress

Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee (UPCC), Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee (UPCC)   expand ▲

Waiting for Approval | Committee Chair

Jeffrey L. Kauffman

Changes

- participants
- Policy Text
- Effective Date
- Rationale
- Catalog Activation Date

Proposed
Effective Date
Fall 2024

Existing
Effective Date
Fall 2023

Code

UGGradeSystem

Title

Grade System

Academic Level

Undergraduate

Policy Family

Academic Regulations and Procedures

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Catalog	Proposed
Include in Catalog	**Catalog Activation Date**
	2024/08/01
	Existing
	Catalog Activation Date
	2023/08/01

Changes

Rationale

~~Allows~~**The** ~~in~~**C-** ~~specific~~**grade** ~~instances~~**causes** ~~students~~**a** ~~to~~**tremendous** ~~opt~~**amount** ~~to~~**of** ~~receive~~**confusion.** ~~and~~**Many** ~~S/U~~**majors** ~~grade~~**require** ~~in~~**students** ~~lieu~~**to** ~~of~~**earn at least** a ~~letter grade~~**2.0** ~~To~~**in** ~~provide~~**major** ~~students~~**courses.** ~~the~~**This** ~~ability~~**means** ~~to~~**that** ~~minimize~~**a** ~~negative~~**C-** ~~impacts~~**equates** to ~~GPA~~**an** ~~and/or~~**unsuccessful** ~~to~~**completion** ~~try~~**of** ~~new~~**a** ~~courses~~**course**.

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