Meeting Minutes
Committee on Instruction
College of Environmental Science and Forestry
Thursday, 6 February 2003
229 Bray Hall


Meeting called to order at 1:04 pm. Minutes approved as submitted.

Subcommittee on Instructional Quality – D. Keller reported on the Symposium on Teaching and Learning will take place on Friday, 14 February 2003. R. Yanai discussed activities of the learning action forums (LAF). Meeting notes of 2/6/03 LAF meeting were distributed by email to COI members.

Subcommittee on Academic Standards – C. Davis will convene the committee to examine the review process.

AP Credit – S. Sanford distributed the current policies for granting transfer and/or advanced placement credits earned from non-institutional sources to students who have been accepted to ESF. Specific issues include:

- At present, ESF follows the rule-base established by SU. Do we continue to use SU standards?
- Coursework transferred to ESF earned at SUPA and Ranger School are not restricted by the “C-grade” policy, but courses transferred from any other program must meet the C-grade standard.
- CLEP credits are earned by scores on a standardized exam; AP credit usually results from taking an AP course but some students take the AP without taking the course and its laboratory.
- The policy for acceptance of any transfer credit should be consistent based on the type of evaluation measure used. Do we give the same weight to credits transferred from a community college as we do for AP scores?
- We must acknowledge the potential for “comparison shopping,” when students determine what college they will transfer to depending on how much credit an institution will award. What are the policies of comparable colleges? How will this affect students from feeder programs?
- Should the acceptable score for AP credit vary according to course? Should the acceptable score vary by discipline?

The COI will examine the issue and more data is required. G. Scott will contact M. Fellows to get data on the scores for seven AP courses commonly accepted for transfer credit and compare those scores to the grades earned in ESF courses by students who accepted the transfer credit. The COI will also seek similar data for students who decided NOT to bring in credits from non-ESF sources.
Curriculum and Course Proposals – C. Davis moved and T. Amidon seconded the motion to approve proposals to drop FOR courses, add FOR 415 and 615 and re-activate the MF graduate degree. Motion carried.

R. Blaskiewicz reminded the COI members of the list of inactive courses sent to Faculty Chairs. M. Bennett will send a copy of the college policy on inactive courses to R. Blaskiewicz, D. Raynal and G. Scott for end of semester action.

Graduate Policies -- Draft 5 of the Graduate Academic Policies were discussed at the 12 December 2002 meeting of the ESF Faculty. Comments received clustered on five issues:

Time limits for PhD Discussion changing “time limit” to “number of credits completed before candidacy exam” is not workable because so many students bring in credits from MS programs. After much discussion, COI kept with draft 5 version of time limits for doctoral students.

Summer break exams Most controversial and complex issue involving contractual obligations for 10-month faculty, restrictions on international students visas, constraints on faculty time during academic year, students and faculty adherence to current protocol, fairness of exams, consistency in applying academic standards, committee members (ESF v non-ESF) and dissemination of information to students. COI altered the wording of the policy on draft 5, page 4: “To ensure the integrity of the examination process, oral examinations will generally take place during the academic year and all members of the examination committee appointed by the Dean of Instruction and Graduate Studies will be present at the oral examination.”

Major Professors COI agreed that adjunct and emeriti faculty should not serve as the sole major professor for graduate students and that the major professor for doctoral students must hold the doctoral degree. COI recommended the addition of the following language to the description of the Major Professor in the Graduate Academic Policies: “The major professor shall be full-time member of the ESF Faculty. The major professor, or at least one of the co-major professors, must hold a degree equal to or higher than the degree sought by the student.”

Length of Exam The wording in draft 5 remains unchanged. Complete exam within 6 months The wording in draft 5 remains unchanged.

M. Bennett will make changes to the draft policies, get approval from G. Scott and D. Raynal, send them to the COI for approval, then post Draft 6 of the Graduate Academic Policies to the COI website. G. Scott will seek faculty action at the 20 February 2003 meeting of the Faculty.

Other COI Business

D. Raynal reported that operational oversight for the State University General Education Requirements (SUNY GER) -- aka GenEd -- is being returned to campuses. Each campus will present guidelines for the approval of SUNY-GER offerings and when ESF adopts the guidelines (through Faculty Governance), the SUNY Provost’s Office will assume that ESF’s GenEd offerings will conform to those guidelines.

Adjourn 2:59 pm

Meetings for spring 2003: 6 March 2003 & 10 April 2003 --- 1-2:30pm, 229 Bray Hall