

AcademicAffairs Committee: No report.

Faculty Affairs Committee: The committee's report, a compilation of comments received relative to the issues of office hours and communications, were sent to the Senate via email in advance of the meeting. (Statement A.)

Faculty Attitude Survey Committee: Craig Robertson reported that the survey is being finalized. The committee's goal is to begin data collection by late February and have the report completed before the end of the semester.

Unfinished Business:

Office Hours/Communication : President Franklin reminded the Senate that Faculty Affairs was charged with having a workable draft on this issue by the February meeting. Richard Hudiburg moved that whatever draft presented does not increase the number of office hours as stated in Leah Graber's motion. The motion passed. George Makowski moved that we recommend that our committee excise all mention of a prescribed number of hours for responding to communications. Lesl Peterson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Sick Leave: Doug Barrett moved that Faculty Affairs provide a proposed draft policy at the March meeting. George Makowski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjournment: Richard Hudiburg moved adjournment. Scott Infanger seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 4:18 pm.

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Amy Butler
Secretary
Faculty Senate

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No/Minimal Changes

Communication

Enforcement

Hrs Post/Enforce

Hrs Length

Hrs Form

Hrs Language

Off Hrs/Comm Report from Sen Fac Affairs
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Peer Institutions

Office Hours

Communication with Students

Office Hours and Student Communication Feedback

No Changes

The [...] Department is fine with the office hour policy as is.

I personally think this policy should be left alone. I teach an online and face-to-face course, and how to manage my office hours was clearly discussed with the chair.

Keep the language of the faculty handbook as is with perhaps one insertion as indicated below.

Rationale:

Students are able to and do communicate with faculty members in addition to posted office hours through electronic means. (This proposed change implies that faculty are not as available to students as they actually are.) Perhaps _____ of the first sentence should be inserted in the Handbook.

Communication with Students

one of the suggestions we need to make with regard to any policy on communication with students we need to make it clear to the COAD that they need to communicate with their faculty. Whether they do it through their chairs or actually have a faculty meeting is up to them.

Suggested rewrite: Faculty are encouraged to respond to student messages: a) from the learning management system in no more than 72 hours; b) from email in no more than 48 hours; and c) from telephone during the office hour.

Regarding any particular given situations, the example can be "Faculty should use the out-of-office message when they are not available (e.g., participating in conference)."

Suggested rewrite: Faculty-student communication outside the classroom is an important part of student learning. This communication can take the form of a face-to-face meeting, emails, text messages and phone calls.

Suggested rewrite:

- the 72-hour response time is arbitrary and unnecessary.
- lack of responsiveness can be measured with discretion by the appropriate supervisors and administrative chain of authority (ideally within the department first).

also, even if we state that there is a time frame, would an auto-reply or form reply meet the intent? is there required content too?

I would prefer not to see wording in a policy that could be interpreted as a charge to respond to all student e-mails. Some student e-mails are best met with no response. Forcing a response to meet some deadline can be seen as a trap (a good response may be hard to formulate). For example, I am not comfortable responding to [end-of-semester pleas for extra credit to raise grade]. To respond [...] with a "No" is easily seen as uncaring. To expound on the answer "No" is difficult do to in writing without pitfalls.

The policy should explicitly state that faculty are not expected to respond to students over the weekend.

I have discussed the Office Hours and Communication with Students policy changes [identifying information removed]. The consensus is that the issue of faculty response time to student communications should be handled at the department level and that a statement specifying a time frame (72 hours) for response should not be outlined in the Faculty Handbook. If a statement must be included in the Faculty Handbook we recommend 2-3 business days as opposed to 72 hours.

I would like to see some wording about the requirement for student email to professors being appropriately worded and presented as to indicate that the student is competent to communicate in a professional manner. I state in my syllabi that I will not respond to "texting."

In the last line of the document, make the following change to add the word **business** so that the line reads: typically respond in no more than 72 **business** hours.

I am satisfied with most of the document except the last paragraph (Communication) It will probably become more understandable when the document describes how to communicate with students in a more concrete way. The document can explain how to

the University is closed. If the University was closed over Christmas from December 17 – January 4, are we still expected to follow the policy? I think if the University is closed, our communication should be worded “should respond in a reasonable timeframe when University is closed.”

Office Hours Posting and Enforcement

Suggested rewrite: Faculty will post their office hours at the beginning of each semester in their syllabus and on their door.

Suggested rewrite: After approval by the department chair and consultation with the dean **at the beginning of each semester**, faculty members will list their office hours on all syllabi **at the beginning of each semester and post these hours on or near their office doors**. The respective department chair and dean should **will** also

Length

Suggested rewrite: These office hours should be at the discretion of the faculty member with approval by the department chair in consultation with the dean, keeping the needs of the students availability in mind. Faculty who teach online full time can satisfy this requirement by identifying seven hours a week they will be available to communicate with students.

In general, we do not feel that the office hour requirement (7 hours) needs to be lowered, but off-campus appointments with students and area schools should be taken into consideration

I am partial to the 1 hour per course with a limit on 4 hours, but [there may be] problems with the wording "not to exceed."

Based on what I have seen in other schools' requirements, we might want to include comments about lab courses, overloads, or high enrollment sections.

This is what one school states:

Faculty should hold ~~we~~ ~~ET d~~

apportioned relative to the type of course being taught. That is, two office hours for each course. I suggest that if a course is traditional, its two corresponding office hours must also be traditional in the sense that the instructor will be in their campus office during that time period. If the course is hybrid or blended one of the two office hours will be traditional and the remaining hour will be online. Online office hours should be conducted in an open chatroom within the learning management system. If the course is online the two office hours shall be conducted in an open chatroom during the week. Instructors need not have those two online office hours consecutively. During the summer terms or during a mini-semester, two office hours should be required for each course taught by faculty.

Form

All please be reminded that under increased expectations to publish, faculty members need blocks of time in which to conduct or write up research projects. Many research projects require time to be "in the field" whether in the sciences, mathematics, arts, education, or business disciplines. Certainly, many need to write in blocks of time where they may focus on their work.

Language

Suggested rewrite: ~~Faculty members are not required to~~ **Faculty members will maintain** ~~have~~ **office hours on days when they do not have that they teach classes on campus.**

We definitely do not support removing the language in the existing policy that protects faculty from being asked to come in for office hours on days they do not have class on

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Rewritten Versions

Faculty-student interaction outside of the classroom is one of the most important relationships on a college campus. The purpose of clearly defined, publicly posted office hours is to facilitate this interaction through consultation, discussion, and advisement with individual students. In keeping with that goal, faculty members will be available for consulting and advising with students. As a part of their regular assignment, faculty will schedule a minimum of seven hours per week durin