

**FACULTY MEETING AGENDA**

December 7, 2016

3:35 PM

Heritage Commons, Samuel Reed Hall Building

**Meeting called to order**

- I. Acceptance of the draft minutes** of the October 5, 2016 meeting.  
*(The minutes were sent together with this agenda as an email attachment.)*
- II. Reports**
- A. President  
*(The report will be distributed via email before the meeting. The president will be available to answer questions during the meeting.)*
- B. Academic Deans  
*(The report will be distributed via email before the meeting. Dean Parker will be available to answer questions during the meeting.)*
- C. Athletic Council  
Ryenne Carmichael, chair  
*(There will be a short in-person report. Supporting documents are attached at the end of this agenda: Athletic Philosophy of Plymouth State University, Class Attendance Policy, pages 3-4)*
- D. Principal Policy Making Committees
- Hilary Swank, Curriculum committee chair
  - Wendy Palmquist, General Education committee chair
- (There will be short in-person reports from the Curriculum and General Education committees. Written reports by the Curriculum (pages 5-7), General Education (page 8), and Academic Technology (page 9) committees are included with this agenda. All committee chairs will be available to answer questions during the meeting.)*
- III. Old Business**  
None
- IV. New Business**
- A. **Resolutions of Standing Committees**  
None
- B. **Other New Business**

*Reminder:*

*The Faculty Steering Committee has advised to put a time limit of half an hour on conversation topics. The conversation can continue with a motion to override the time limit. On the other hand, the conversation can end naturally or be stopped before the half hour limit with a motion to stop the discussion.*

1. **Discussion topic** submitted by faculty member Dennis Machnik

**Topic:** Block scheduling

Dennis would like the faculty to have a chance to discuss if we want to go to block scheduling, with the intention of having a vote in a future meeting.

*Note: A vote in an upcoming meeting would most likely be a vote of support, rather than approval. For your information, this is what our bylaws say about the role of the faculty:*

*Article II.B*

*The distinctive responsibility of the faculty is the academic mission of the university. In particular, the Statement asserts in Section V. The Academic Institution: The Faculty that, "The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process. On these matters the power of review or final decision lodged in the governing board or delegated by it to the president should be exercised adversely only in exceptional circumstances and for reasons communicated to the faculty.*

*(The Statement refers to the 1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities, described in Article II.A)*

2. **Discussion topic** submitted by faculty member Jeremiah

**Topic:** The formation of a calendar advisory task force

Jeremiah would like to have a conversation about forming “a task force to provide recommendations on aligning our academic calendar breaks to those of the surrounding schools”

*Note: Per the faculty bylaws, the signature of at least ten faculty members is needed to form a task force that has not been requested by the steering committee, a principal policy making committee or the administration. Jeremiah will be seeking to collect signatures during/after the faculty meeting.*

*The proposed task force charge, composition and timeline are included with this agenda (page 10)*

**Adjournment**

**Announcements**

**Faculty Scholarship Fund raffle**

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## **Athletic Philosophy of Plymouth State University:**

Plymouth State University endorses the NCAA Division III Philosophy:

### **NCAA Division III Philosophy Statement**

Colleges and universities in Division III place highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of all students' academic programs. They seek to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete's athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete's educational experience. They also seek to establish and maintain an environment that values cultural diversity and gender equity among their student-athletes and athletics staff. (Revised: 1/10/95)

### **Class Attendance Policy (effective May 2008)**

Plymouth State University students are held accountable for meeting all course requirements, which may include both in-class and out-of class experiences, as well as both individual and group-based activities. Students must therefore realize that they are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of courses in which they are enrolled. During the first regularly scheduled class meeting, all instructors must explain class attendance policies and explicitly document, in writing on a course syllabus, whether or not unexcused absences will be used in computing grades. Students are urged to recognize the importance of participation in class activities and to be aware that their course grade may be affected by unexcused absences. It is the option of the instructor to determine the attendance policy for classes and to decide whether to allow students to make up missed work for unexcused absences. Unless the course instructor states otherwise, students should assume that there will be academic consequences for every absence deemed unexcused by the instructor.

### **Excused vs. Unexcused Absences**

Student absences are defined as excused or unexcused. Unexcused absences are those that occur without adequate reason. Unexcused absences may be used in the computation of grades.

Excused absences are defined as absences stemming from (a) participation in University sponsored activities and (b) compelling and extenuating circumstances beyond a student's control. Documented excused absences may not be used in the computation of grades. Instructors must allow students to make up missed examinations, quizzes, writing assignments, and other course work for documented excused absences. Examples of excused absences include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Documented student's participation in university-sponsored events
2. Student's documented illness
3. Student's documented injury
4. Documented death in a student's immediate family
5. Documented illness or injury in a student's immediate family
6. Documented student's required military duty
7. Documented student's required jury duty

Instructors are not obligated to excuse an absence if a student fails to provide requested documentation. Instructors also reserve the right to determine when the number of excused absences exceeds a reasonable limit to the extent that it significantly interferes with a student's satisfactory mastery of course content/skills. Excused absences do not exempt a student from course requirements, and therefore in circumstances that entail excessive excused absences the instructor may reasonably recommend that a student consider withdrawal from a course.

*Class Attendance Policy (effective May 2008) page 1 of 2*

### **Procedures for Reporting Absences**

It is the **responsibility of the student**, where possible, to notify instructors regarding absences for whatever reason or period of time. This should take place before leaving campus, during an illness or upon return to campus. If there are extenuating circumstances that make such communication difficult, students should contact the Undergraduate Studies Office. The Undergraduate Studies Office will send absence notices to a student's instructors, but such notices are for information purposes only and do not serve as documentation for absences.

### **Additional Attendance Considerations**

Students are reminded that they have the responsibility to choose their extracurricular activities at times not in conflict with their academic classes.

Students who do not appear for the first class of the semester and do not notify the instructor before the class meeting that they will be absent, may be dropped from the course by the instructor and that their place may be given to another student. Students should not, however, assume they have been dropped if they miss the first class.

Student teachers are subject to the same attendance rules as the regularly employed cooperating teachers, within the bounds of the University catalog. Absences because of sickness of the individual or a family member can be excused by the principal or superintendant of schools. Absences for other causes have to be agreed upon jointly by the principal or superintendant and the University's Coordinator of Teacher Certification and Clinical Experiences.

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## **Report from the Curriculum Committee** (submitted by Hilary Swank, committee chair)

### **Transitioning to Four-Credit Model**

The committee welcomes proposals for program changes to the four-credit model. The deans have indicated that the system can support such changes. The committee has developed the following guidelines for departments as they prepare proposals:

- The overall degree requirements must remain at 120
- The requirement for a *minimum* of 15 free elective credits remains in effect
- The degree program should not increase in size (number of required credits.) Change to a four-credit model should rearrange existing content, rather than merely add content, open lab, or field experiences to existing three credit courses. Proposals should demonstrate how existing three credit program content maps onto the proposed four-credit program.

### **Proposed changes to Experimental Course Procedures**

The Curriculum Committee intends to alter the experimental course proposal procedures in the ways indicated below. The committee wants to encourage curricular innovation and experimentation, but prevent the experimental course process from becoming a way to circumvent faculty oversight of the curriculum (via the Curriculum Committee).

#### **Experimental Course Proposal**

An experimental course is one which lies outside the area of an already established course either in terms of perspective, subject matter, or audience.

- 1<sup>st</sup> offering: Experimental Course proposals are ~~submitted to and~~ approved by the ~~Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs~~ **Department, the Dean** (who may also approve a General Education attribute) **and the Curriculum Committee. The instructor is expected to conduct a course evaluation at the close of the experimental course offering. A summary and interpretation of the evaluation are then forwarded with the Experimental Course Report to the Department Chair, the Dean, and--if a 2nd offering is planned--to the Curriculum Committee.**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offering: Experimental Course proposals are submitted to the **Department, the Dean (who may also approve a General Education attribute) and the Curriculum Committee**, with an Experimental Course Report of the first offering and student evaluations. **An experimental course cannot be offered in the semester immediately after the first offering since the instructor will not have an opportunity to collect and interpret course evaluations until the end of the first offering.**

Experimental courses are not included in the Academic Catalog.

- The Registrar's office enters Experimental Courses into the appropriate schedule of classes (Fall, Winterim, Spring, summer).

The syllabi for Experimental courses should be kept on file by the department offering the course so when students need information about these courses, it can be accessed easily, even after several years have passed.

Current version:

#### **Experimental Course Proposal**

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- 1<sup>st</sup> offering: Experimental Course proposals are submitted to and approved by the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, who may also approve a General Education attribute.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offering: Experimental Course proposals are submitted to the Curriculum Committee, with an Experimental Course Report of the first offering and student evaluations

Experimental courses are not included in the Academic Catalog.

- The Registrar's office enters Experimental Courses into the appropriate schedule of classes (Fall, Winterim, Spring, summer).

The syllabi for Experimental courses should be kept on file by the department offering the course so when students need information about these courses, it can be accessed easily, even after several years have passed.

### **Requests for Information**

The Curriculum Committee requests that departments inform the committee of any significant anticipated proposals and the planned timeline for submission. This will help the committee to plan its work for the rest of this academic year and beyond. Email [hkswank@plymouth.edu](mailto:hkswank@plymouth.edu) with a summary of planned changes.

In order to be as productive as possible in adapting to Integrated Clusters the committee requests faculty input on the following:

- The kinds of credit-bearing cluster experiences you hope to provide students and the perceived existing barriers to doing so
- Ideas for procedural and structural changes to curriculum that you believe would be productive

General inquiries and suggestions are, of course, always welcome. Send your input to [hkswank@plymouth.edu](mailto:hkswank@plymouth.edu)

### **Reminders, Meeting Times and Deadlines**

This is a reminder about meeting days/times, submission deadlines, and procedures. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns about the committee generally or about specific proposals you wish to bring before the committee.

Remaining Curriculum Committee meetings this academic year will be as follows at the specified locations:

December 16<sup>th</sup> HUB Student Senate Room  
 February 17<sup>th</sup> HUB Student Senate Room  
 March 17<sup>th</sup> Lamson Tower Room  
 April 21<sup>st</sup> Lamson Tower Room  
 May 19<sup>th</sup> HUB Student Senate Room

The committee will be voting electronically on all proposals. Only those proposals requiring discussion (as determined by committee members) will be voted on in-person at committee meetings.

Proposals will be collected and sent out for electronic votes after each of the following deadlines:

December 7<sup>th</sup>  
 January 25<sup>th</sup>  
 February 8<sup>th</sup> **CATALOG DEADLINE** for proposals needing approval beyond departments.  
 February 22<sup>nd</sup> **CATALOG DEADLINE** for changes needing only department approval.

March 8<sup>th</sup>  
April 12<sup>th</sup>  
April 26<sup>th</sup>  
May 10<sup>th</sup>

Please submit one electronic file (PDF) of all *complete* materials (with appropriate required signatures, recorded votes, etc.) for each proposal to [hkswank@plymouth.edu](mailto:hkswank@plymouth.edu) by the deadline indicated. When your department has one or more items on the agenda, I will inform the department chair if there are questions and if a representative will need to attend the meeting.

Course proposal forms are available here:

<http://www.plymouth.edu/committee/faculty/faculty-committees-and-appointed-groups/curriculum/forms-and-documents/>

\*\*\*These forms will continue to be updated as we adjust to the new administrative structure so please retrieve the most up-to-date forms from the link above instead of recycling proposal forms stored on your desktop.\*\*\*

The syllabus checklist can be found at the link below. *There is a new ADA statement, sent to all faculty by David Zehr that must be used.* The checklist has not yet been updated to account for the new statement.

<https://www.plymouth.edu/committee/faculty/files/2010/08/PSU-Syllabus-checklist-Appvd-06Feb2012.pdf>

There are two useful documents that will help you as you prepare proposals. The first is the Curriculum Change Procedures document and the second is the 2016 Curriculum Guide. They are both available at the following link:

<http://www.plymouth.edu/committee/faculty/faculty-committees-and-appointed-groups/curriculum/forms-and-documents/>

Please make sure any new or revised course syllabi attend to all items on the list. Syllabi which do not include the items on this checklist will be returned for revision/completion. Most syllabi we see at present already include most if not all of these items – it is not an onerous checklist. If you have any questions about any of the items on this list, please send them to me.

With electronic voting, the committee hopes to have more time during monthly meetings to discuss general curricular matters related to the four credit model, clusters, and changes to general education.

Thank you.

-Hilary K. Swank

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**Report from the General Education Committee**

*(submitted by Wendy Palmquist, committee chair)*

Report for the December 7 Faculty Meeting

General Education Committee

During October and November the General Education Committee has continued its normal business of approving new courses for Gen Ed, and looking at a limited number of Sunset Renewals. The changes in Academic Affairs has also raised the need for some Bylaw changes, particularly for the “title” of the Representative from Academic Affairs, which is still being worked on across all committees that had such a representative. Every meeting has also involved reports and interactions with the two working groups, FYS and Gen Ed; the associated Guides attend the meetings to participate in those discussions. The campus meeting on Nov. 30 was based on those discussions, and I expect our December meeting to spend time on the results of the discussions at that meeting.

Our most recent meeting brought to us a new issue from the Council of Chairs, on decisions about Gen Ed made when a student makes a change of major from a major with a Directions waiver to a major without one. This semester that has meant that the chair of the new major signs off on a Student Request if the student has completed many courses in the old major (that has a waiver) and would like some of them to replace the Directions courses. The Chairs worry about consistency in such decisions, and brought the issue to us. We will spend our December meeting talking to David Zehr about how he made those decisions in the past; our plan right now is that in the spring semester a sub-group of three members of the Gen Ed committee would review such Student Requests and vote to approve or deny the requests.

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## **Report from the Academic Technology and Online Education Committee**

*(submitted by Lynn Johnson, committee chair)*

### Announcements and Reminders:

1. The 2017 Academic Technology Summer Institute will be held at Plymouth State University, May 31<sup>st</sup> - June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Additional information will be available during the Spring 2017 semester.
2. Open Lab Report: over 100 events have occurred in the Open Labs in Lamson Library during the Fall 2016 semester.
3. A reminder to all faculty that there are two technology funding opportunities available:
  - a. **Technology Innovation Project:** ATOEC is inviting proposals to support innovative projects that advance how we think about and use technology to enhance student learning and the student experience. Applications for Technology Innovation Projects are reviewed monthly during the Fall and Spring Semesters. Projects applications are due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for review by the committee at its next monthly meeting.
  - b. **New or Modification to a Technology-Enhanced Space:** In the Spring of each year, ATOEC reviews the usage of existing Technology-Enhanced Learning Spaces in order to determine priorities for upgrades and changes to those spaces, and to determine which new spaces, if any, should be created.  
**DUE DATE:** Proposals for upgrades and changes to existing Technology Enhanced Learning Spaces, requiring significant budgetary resources, are due on **February 15<sup>th</sup> annually** for a scheduled implantation in the Summer of the following academic year.
  - c. Additional information regarding either of these funding opportunities can be found at: <https://www.plymouth.edu/committee/faculty/faculty-committees-and-appointed-groups/academic-technology-and-online-education-committee/proposals-to-atoec/>

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## **Proposed Advisory Calendar Task Force**

*(submitted by faculty member Jeremiah Duncan)*

Proposal: to form a task force to consider our current academic calendar in relation to the academic calendars of surrounding primary and secondary schools, and to make recommendations about how Plymouth State University might adjust its calendar to better overlap with theirs.

Motivation: Many of the faculty and staff of Plymouth State University have school-aged children. The primary and secondary schools that these children attend have substantially different academic calendars, particularly with regards to week-long breaks in the winter and spring terms, than Plymouth State University. As a result, these faculty and staff have to navigate significant childcare issues when their children's schools are on break but these parents are not. Additionally, these children must be pulled out of school during Plymouth State University's spring break to go on any kind of family vacation. Since it would be impossible to change the academic calendars of dozens—possibly hundreds or thousands—of schools in New Hampshire and New England, it makes sense to consider changing the calendar of Plymouth State. What is more, many families in New England take a week off, corresponding to their children's school break, as a ski vacation in New Hampshire. Many Plymouth students work at ski resorts and in related service industries, and they would be able to work more during these high-peak weeks, if Plymouth's break corresponded to them.

Composition: The final composition of the task force shall be determined by the Steering Committee, and shall consist of at least three full-time faculty and one administrative representative familiar with academic calendar scheduling. At least two of these faculty should have children in grades K – 12.

Charge: The task force shall:

1. Research and prepare a report on the academic calendars of schools in the Plymouth, New Hampshire, and New England areas. The report should be as detailed as possible for primary and secondary schools in the Plymouth and immediately surrounding areas, where the vast majority of faculty and their families live. For the broader New Hampshire and New England areas, a sampling and general overview is sufficient. Academic calendars of UNH, Keene State College, and a selection of other regional institutions of higher education should also be reviewed to form a basis of comparison and inform what influence changes in Plymouth's calendar would have on families with college-aged children.
2. Survey the faculty and staff of Plymouth State University to determine the impact of the current academic calendar on families, as well as the level of agreement on whether the current calendar should be changed to better align significant breaks and vacations between Plymouth and the surrounding area schools.
3. Develop one or more proposals for changes to Plymouth State University's academic calendar that would provide overlap in the significant breaks and vacations between Plymouth and the surrounding area schools. Along with relatively simple adjustments to the scheduling of breaks, more significant changes to the overall academic calendar might be considered, such as moving to a trimester or quarter system, and how this might interact with other ongoing changes, such as the development of Clusters and moving to block scheduling.

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