

Standards for Students Annual Report, 2006-07

The Standards for Students committee met four times during the 2006-07 academic year. The issues addressed are as follows:

1. Addressed unresolved item remaining from 2005-2006: “Unearned” E and W grades that result in petitions for late drops and withdrawals (referred by the Office of Academic Standards in conjunction with the Academic Appeals Committee). Commonalities among such petitions were references to problems with the waitlist function and the shut down time of the drop/add function in SABRE. A full and lively discussion regarding the realities and myths of SABRE took place in committee, clarifying the need to seek additional information on a number of registration and technology-related issues: possible glitches in the waitlist function, student responsibility and access to technology, faculty and administration involvement in the waitlist-to-enrolled process, and the effectiveness of communication to students regarding SABRE functions, deadlines, etc. Through consultation with Heather Maldonado, Assistant to the Dean for Academic Standards, the committee learned that a proposal for a paper Late Drop Process had been developed to address E and W grades resulting from non-attendance. The Late Drop Process would enable students to submit a paper form to drop unwanted classes after the last day of schedule adjustment, similar to the paper Late Add process that already takes place. The Late Drop Process had previously been proposed to the Registrar’s Office, but not approved. While the S4S committee was exploring this proposal, the college began discussing the possibility of replacing SABRE with the Banner system. Information was gathered on Banner’s options, shared with committee members, and questions arose as to the appropriateness of proposing a new registration-related process in the midst of such major technological and procedural change. When the decision was finalized to evolve to Banner, the S4S committee consulted with the Assistant to the Dean for Academic Standards, who agreed that the proposal could be tabled. The committee will readdress the option of a late drop process in the future once Banner has been more fully implemented, its options more fully explored, and updated information is gathered regarding petitions for E and W grades related to non-attendance.
2. Considered a request from the Academic Appeals Committee that American Sign Language be automatically approved for fulfillment of the Foreign Language requirement by ALL majors. It had been the understanding of the Academic Appeals Committee that SUNY General Education Guidelines allowed for the acceptance of ASL for ALL majors, yet Buffalo State approved ASL for a limited number of majors only. Petitioning was therefore necessary at BSC for students outside of these few majors to gain approval to use ASL. Review of SUNY guidelines by the S4S committee clarified that the college’s acceptance of ASL, does, in fact directly follow SUNY guidelines:

American Sign Language may be used to satisfy this category [FL] only by students in the following programs: programs leading to certification in elementary and secondary education, and programs leading to careers where there is likely to be significant contact with the hearing-impaired. *

Since no disparity was found between SUNY and BSC guidelines, the S4S committee consulted with the Office of Academic Standards, and it was agreed that the issue be tabled. In the meantime, an increasing number of majors have given approval to automatically accept ASL for FL without the need for petitioning. As of 5/4/07, 10 degree programs, including Education programs in general, have given approval to accept ASL for FL in both GE2K and IF.

* From *Guidelines for the Approval of State University General Education Requirement Courses* accessible through Intellectual Foundations website as link to “SUNY Guidelines.”

3. Consideration of Revision to Non-Attendance Policy: The S4S committee offered to review the Instruction and Research Committee's proposal to revise the Non-Attendance Policy, since the policy dealt with concerns related to the Late Drop Process proposal that had recently been reviewed. Discussion began electronically within the S4S committee, which produced questions regarding implementation procedures and the technological capacities of Banner. Discussion was put on hold after the Non-Attendance Policy was sent back to the I & R committee by the College Senate for further investigation and possible modification. S4S tabled their discussion of the motion until the I & R committee has further studied the procedural issues and is ready to readdress the proposal.
4. Revision of Charge: As per the direction of the Chair of the College Senate, the S4S committee reviewed its charge during the spring 07 semester. No major changes to the goals or function of the committee were deemed necessary. Discussion then took place regarding the definition of the term "standards." It was decided that referring to the college's mission, vision, and core values as the guiding force of "standards" would provide the committee with a foundational source of principles from which to seek guidance. It was agreed to maintain the structure of the 3 item delineation of areas to be covered by the charge: Admission and Readmission, Retention, Graduation. To clarify the scope of issues that could be addressed under each of these areas, the committee revised the explanatory details that followed each item. The result is a more generalized statement of each of the 3 areas, with the clarification that the committee is open to a wide range of issues from both the academic and student life areas. The revision will be brought before the Senate for consideration on 5/4/07.
5. Issues Undressed, to be reviewed fall 07:
 - Consideration of General Education waivers for students seeking a second degree
 - Review of college's Advisement Policy as related to retention and graduation
 - Examine policies and enforcement of academic requirements and regulations regarding participation in college-approved organizations and activities, such as Greeks and Athletics.