Annual Report (15 Aug 2024 – 14 Aug 2025)

Academic Policies Committee (APC)

Committee Members: Brenda Jordan (CHHS); Heidi Fritz (Fulton); Alexander Halperin (Henson); Colleen Clark (At-large for Perdue); Vincent Genareo (Seidel); Anita Brown (At-large); Abbey Murphy (Student Graduate Council); Valerie Randall-Lee (Dean of Students Office); Melissa Granger (Office of Academic Affairs); Clifton Griffin (Dean of Graduate Studies and Research); Martin Hunter (Registrar)

Co-chairs: Heidi Fritz (adjudication of academic misconduct allegations and grievances); Anita Brown (maintenance of policy and charges from the Faculty Senate)

Designated Senator: Anita Brown

Meetings:

- during the Fall and Spring semesters, the APC met essentially every Tuesday, beginning at 3:30 pm, that the Faculty Senate (FS) did not meet
- given the frequency of meetings of the FS, the APC also had occasional meetings at different times
- especially to complete adjudication in compliance with policy deadlines, the APC had occasional meetings outside of standard semesters
- the co-chairs had some additional meetings with the Vice President of Inclusion, Access, and Belonging

The APC adjudicated various misconduct and grievance concerns.
The committee considered
- 4 student appeals of Academic Misconduct charges
- 2 cases involving multiple Academic Misconduct charges
- 1 student Academic Grievance case

Policy/Charge Goals of the APC:

Based upon the number of time intense charges and the need to comply with new state laws and Board of Regents (BOR) policies, the APC had decided to attempt to revise policies in the following order:

- Religious Accommodations Policy (completion goal of April 2024)
- Academic Misconduct Policy (completion goal of May 2025)
- Emergency Absence Policy (completion goal of May 2026)

Policy/Charge Actions of the APC:

1. Faculty Senate (FS) Charge on Religious Accommodations Policy
   a. During the Spring 2024 semester, the APC had submitted a suggested revised Religious Accommodations Policy, with a report justifying each change, and that policy was discussed at the FS in October 2024. As the 'policy chair' and designated senator, Anita Brown had prepared a motion requesting the FS to approve the revised policy with a few amendments to the suggested policy that had been submitted.
   b. The Vice President of Inclusion, Access and Belonging, VP Hall, suggested that a significantly different process should be considered.
   c. The FS revised an amended motion that began with the APC and VP Hall revising the policy.
   d. The APC and then the co-chairs of the APC met with VP Hall. VP Hall drafted a new suggested policy. The APC co-chairs had questions and concerns about this policy. They did not present nor discuss all of their concerns with VP Hall. A variety of significant issues became pressing for the University, and the APC agreed to resume its work on the revision of the Academic Misconduct Policy.
2. Faculty Senate (FS) Charge on Academic Integrity Policy
   a. The APC discussed and began revising the policy, especially in consideration of
      i. Compliance with BOR III-1.0
         1. Definition of academic integrity
         2. Fostering a culture of academic integrity
         3. Stakeholders who may report
         4. Confidentiality
         5. Accessibility of the policy
         6. Including examples of behavior
         7. Consequences that reflect the seriousness of the violation
         8. Evaluation of the policy and the culture
      ii. Clarity of the current policy
         1. Confidentiality
         2. Reporting deadlines
      iii. Concerns presented to the APC regarding submission of all evidence, including secure assessment materials

1. APC met with Jennifer Ellis, Academic Portfolio & Curriculum Administrator, to learn about the 'new' online submission system and revise the policy accordingly.
2. APC discussed data storage possibilities with Information Technology and Jennifer Ellis

   b. The APC discussed education of all students regarding academic misconduct, especially plagiarism
      i. APC members consulted with members IDD and the SU Writing Center
         1. APC decided to investigate making available standard MyClasses modules that faculty *could* consider making available to students when writing assignments are made
      ii. After consultation APC members considered that an online course that was part of the first year seminar course or required outside of courses would be logistically complex and likely not as effective as online modules that were available as students were aware of specific assignments
   c. APC did not complete its report to FS nor suggested changes to this policy. However, it did make progress.
   d. Recognizing that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is both a significant tool and significant challenge to academic integrity, the APC requested to have a co-chair, Heidi Fritz, participate in the AI Working Groups developed by the Office of Academic Affairs. Changes to the Academic Integrity Policy related to AI were not planned for discussion prior to Fall 2025.
3. Faculty Senate (FS) Charge on the Emergency Absence Policy
   a. Given the effort involved in other policy changes, the APC did not work much on this policy.
4. Faculty Senate (FS) Charge on Professor(s) of Practice and Clinical Faculty in the Faculty Handbook
   a. Unofficially the APC Co-chair had reported to the FS that this charge may not be in the purview of the APC.
   b. Two APC members reviewed the Faculty Handbook to verify that the text where the terms involving Professor(s) of Practice and Clinical Faculty appeared were not in the purview of the APC.