A regular meeting of the Senate Committee on Educational Policy convened at 1:15 p.m. in Room 232 of the English Building with Chair Abbas Aminmansour presiding.

I. Approval of the Minutes

The Minutes of September 25, 2006 were approved as written.

II. Remarks of the Chair

Chair Aminmansour noted that Professor Robert Parker was a guest at today’s meeting to share his concerns related to the Student Code, Part 4, on Academic Integrity, which allows students “found guilty of an infraction” and receiving “a lowered or failing grade within the course” to drop the course before the drop deadline. Parker said that cheating is rampant, that he did not understand the logic of the Code’s current ruling on this issue and requested that someone reconsider this ruling. Aminmansour reported that he had touched base with Mark Roszkowski, Chair of the Conference on Conduct Governance, earlier today. Roszkowski’s response was that the CCG had tinkered with the rules about 5-years ago, but that our committee was welcome to start the process. Aminmansour asked Dean Duchene to discuss this issue with her fellow Deans and bring back their recommendation to the Committee for further discussion.

III. Old Business

Subcommittees

Subcommittee A

EP.07.04, Proposal from the College of ACES to revise the Plant Protection Concentration in the Department of Crop Sciences  Bode reported that this proposal has proved to be an interesting development as there appears to be difference at the campus and college levels; at present websites for the College of ACES and Provost’s Office do not concur. Hence, the department plans to reconcile these differences and will revise the proposal appropriately.

IV. New Business

Subcommittee A

EP.07.09, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Establish an Undergraduate Civic Leadership Minor in Political Science  Bode gave an overview of this proposal; at present there are two technical problems: the range of credit hours (over the limit as the maximum is 21-hours) and the fact that there is already a minor in Political Science; therefore, there is clearly a need to justify a minor outside the normal criteria. Geil remarked that he did not know how anyone could ever complete this minor under the current requirements and also finish their own degree requirements. Zych pointed out that the proposal is not in the Standard Minor Approval Format. He also thought all four Leadership proposals should be reviewed together, and noted that we have yet to receive the fourth proposal.

Marshall announced that Kristi Kuntz had given birth to a baby boy last night. He continued the discussion by asking what formulates a program and remarked that they appear to be a growing
specialty in the Department of Political Science. Marshall questioned the boundaries of a program and whether or not a program should go forward as a trial balloon. The Chair reported that there are a number of programs have been approved administratively, but not by the Senate of which he is currently trying to locate a list. Rich reported that the College of LAS often uses centers and programs as trial balloons to see if there is enough interest to go forward. Duchene noted that this appears to be a joint effort between Political Science and the Center; if the Center’s funding structure dissolves, to what extent can the department support the leadership program. During a general discussion, several questions arose; the committee agreed to invite Ann Mester, Associate Dean in LAS, to attend a meeting in order to answer these questions. The Chair asked that the subcommittee chairs copy each other regarding any communications on the Leadership proposals; meanwhile, the committee will wait receipt of the forth proposal.

Chair Aminmansour opened up the floor for discussion on the definition of a program. Marshall noted that most programs are in LAS; a program is posed as a blank slate and may become a “slippery slope.”

Subcommittee B

EP.07.10, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Establish a Joint Degree Program involving the Civic Leadership Concentration, Masters of Arts in Political Science and the Juris Doctorate, College of LAS and College of LAW The Committee decided to wait until it receives the missing proposal from the Provost’s office before discussing this proposal further.

Subcommittee C

EP.07.11, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Establish a Graduate Concentration in Civic Leadership within the M.A. in Political Science The Committee decided to wait until it receives the missing proposal from the Provost’s office before discussing this proposal further.

Letter dated September 18, 2006 from The Mothers Association/The Dads Association regarding the A+ Grading System (Distributed at the door.) Aminmansour noted that this inquiry was forwarded to him by Vernon Burton, Chair of the Senate Executive Committee. Bode reported that the EPC had discussed this issue for hours about three years ago referring to a handout that had been prepared for those discussion by David Ruzic of Engineering. Duchene referred to the A+ grading system as merely a comment, a smiley face on a paper and thought it should not be present to throw an orderly system out of whack. After a short discussion, the members agreed there was no need for action.

V. Pending Items (Waiting to hear from sponsors.)

EP.06.32, Proposed guidelines for Multi-Institutional Degrees (USC OT-218), letter from Elliot R. Kaufman, Chair of University Senates Conference

EP.07.06, Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for the Formation of the School of Earth, Society, and Environment (Public Hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, October 31, 2006 at 3:45 p.m., 1080 Foreign Language Building—Lucy Ellis Lounge.)

Timing of mid-semester grade reports for freshmen (to be discussed in Spring 2007)

VI. Other Business and Adjournment

Marshall reported that mid-semester grade reports were issued last week with a compliance rate of sixty percent. He also mentioned that a question had come up recently as to whether or not teacher certification not affecting graduation requirements should go before the Senate. Zych reported that this matter has a long history as the Council on Teacher Education approves this option in all graduate programs and hopes that it will continue. He thought the one-line statement on the transcript to be very helpful to students. Geil thought it wise to leave this matter to the Council on Teacher Education.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Diana Morris, Secretary
Senate Committee on Educational Policy