COMMITTEE: Calendar

MEETING DATE: October 27, 2004

PERSON PRESIDING: John Crammer

ATTENDEES: Jeff Phipps, John Crammer, Rebecca Powers, Trey Martindale

EX-OFFICIO: Austin Bunch, Mary Farwell, Maggie O’Neill, Amy Bissette (for Angela Anderson)

VISITORS: Jennifer McMahon

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm in Raul 142 by John Crammer. Since some of the members were not at the first meeting, everyone introduced themselves again.

Mary Farwell moved, Trey Martindale seconded, approval of the minutes of the September 13, 2004 meeting as is. Motion passed.

The committee then considered the business carried over from last year in the corrected annual report. Changing the add-only day at the beginning of the semester was added to the committee’s topics to consider. Another topic was the 48-hour requirement for turning in grades. Amy Bissette said that the time limit is important for exams given at the end of the exam period. The Registrar’s office needs to get grades done and there are concerns about overloading the system at the end of exams. Faculty would like to know if the time limit includes weekends.

Some of the professional advisors are not pleased that advising in the upcoming Spring semester overlaps Easter break for the county schools. Maggie O’Neill said that the committee should consider midterms when scheduling spring break. Crammer pointed out that the advising week in the calendar is mainly for faculty advisors rather than the professional advisors.

Austin Bunch brought up the topic of commencement and shared information from the committee working on the times/dates of future ceremonies. There have been changes in commencements during the last few years. The newest proposal is to have both Fall and Spring commencements on Friday rather than on Saturday. It has been noted that attendance at the institutional commencement has been low. The Chancellor, based on a proposal by the Deans and Directors, has decided that the institutional ceremony will be done first followed by unit ceremonies. Unit ceremonies will be allowed as they are currently being done. There is a limit on the times that units can use Minges and Wright. In the future, ECU may limit family attendance (e.g., to 8 guests; other schools have a 4 guest limit). Fall commencement will be at 11 am, and Spring commencement will be at 11 am and 3 pm. Commencement will be indoors because outdoor ceremonies have problems with weather, heat, and comfort. The new schedule will go into effect for Fall 2005 and Spring 2006. Bunch said there is concern about Fall commencement being late in the semester and there may be a problem with attendance close to Christmas. The proposal about the changes in commencement is coming from the academic side of ECU. O’Neill said there are two problems with Friday graduation ceremonies: students don’t like it and many students have parents that have to work on Fridays. She said that any change should start with incoming freshmen rather than students who are already here to help reduce the confusion and stress of changing the ceremony day/time. Trey Martindale asked how many unit ceremonies there are. Bunch replied that there are 17 to 20; each college has one and so do several departments in Arts and Sciences. He said that there is no more room for unit ceremonies and that the ceremonies are an overload on facility staff. Crammer asked what locations are used. Bunch replied that Minges, Wright, Hendrix, and the Willis building are used. Many different things have been tried during the ceremonies (e.g., separate undergraduate and graduate ceremonies, reading names). Bunch said the people working on the ceremony want to find a win-win situation that shows support for the institutional ceremony and respect for the more personal unit ceremonies. Bunch said that only 30-35% of graduates participate in the ECU ceremony and very few faculty attend. Bunch said it has been decided that the institutional ceremony would no longer include reading the names of graduates. Rebecca Powers noted that many people complained that the last ECU ceremony was chaotic with people getting up and walking out after their graduate’s name was called. She wondered if there was a way to reduce the chance of this happening in the future. Bunch noted that with the growth at ECU, we may have to go to three ceremonies in the future and add a summer commencement. Martindale asked whether summer graduates can walk in the Spring. Bunch replied that yes, they can.

Bunch said that Ralph Soney is the new contact person at PCC for calendars and Todd Johnson in housing is the person to ask about students being forced to move out on exam day for first summer session (is the problem caused by not having classes on Memorial Day?). Farwell said that this year fall break had a one-day overlap with the county schools.

Powers asked whether there had been any discussion on making up classes lost to inclement weather. Catherine Rigsby was supposed to check with the Chancellor and with the Faculty Senate on make-up days. Crammer should contact her about this before the next meeting.
The next meeting will be 2:00 pm on Wednesday, December 1. The committee will further discuss the 2006-2007 calendar, changes to the 2005-2006 calendar due to changes in the date of commencement, scheduling of commencement, and the day to cancel schedules.

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.