

MEMORANDUM

TO: Steering Committee
FROM: Committee on Academic Programs (CAP)
RE: Final recommendation on Mid-Semester Evaluation Policy
DATE: February 20, 2019

Background and Charge:

CAP was charged with reviewing the mid-semester evaluation policy based on a 5-year review timeline. The policy has not been reviewed since being implemented in 2011.

Methods:

The current policy specifies only that progress reports are required for all students in all courses by indicating satisfactory, unsatisfactory, or on the border progress. Initial input was solicited from Records and Registration, Center for Student Success, Student Government, and all Academic Leaders. Based on this input, the current policy is deficient in four key areas:

1. it does not indicate responsibility for assessing or communicating progress,
2. it does not provide guidance on how progress should be assessed,
3. it does not offer clear definitions of progress levels, and
4. it does not specify timing with respect to the academic calendar for course withdrawal and advising events

CAP developed a draft revision addressing these issues while simultaneously providing guidance and flexibility on how assessments are made in the event of limited graded assignments. CAP solicited written (Tier II) testimony from key constituents through a Qualtrics Survey. The survey was open in early December 2018 to all faculty, all students, and selected staff in Records and Registration, Center for Student Success, Disability Support Services, and Educational Opportunity Fund. There were 179 valid responses (71 faculty, 8 staff, and 100 students) supporting the following:

- 96% of respondents felt the levels were understandable
- 92% of faculty anticipate using the definitions as written
- 81% of students felt the new definitions will help them better understand their progress

These data support that the draft policy satisfactorily addresses deficiencies 2 and 3, above. The revised policy also includes responsibilities for ensuring progress checks are timed to the academic calendar and communicated, thereby addressing the remaining deficiencies.

In addition, CAP collected information on how progress checks are currently used.

- 59% of faculty use progress checks for advising
- 4% of faculty do not issue progress checks, citing philosophical reasons
- 33% of students indicate receiving progress checks less than half of the time

These data indicate that a significant number of instructors fail to issue progress checks and that they are not being used during academic advising. The revised policy defines responsibility to academic leaders for ensuring instructors are aware of this policy. CAP believes it would be instructive to leaders if the rate of progress check completion is tracked similarly to how course evaluations are tracked.

Final Recommendation:

During its meeting on February 13, 2019, the Committee on Academic Programs voted unanimously to recommend the attached revised version of the Mid-Semester Evaluation Policy.