

MEMORANDUM

To: Committee on Academic Programs

From: Steering Committee

Date: October 18, 2023

Re: Alternative Undergraduate Course Types policy and Special arrangements courses (section 70)

Background: On October 2, 2023, Steering received a request from the local AFT president and vice-president on behalf of the AFT collective bargaining unit to issue a charge to address “the varied and inequitable implementation of “Special Arrangement (Section 70)” courses.” This course type is outlined in the Alternative Undergraduate Course Types policy, which was last revised in 2019. However, concerns have been raised about a lack of clarity in the policy and inconsistencies with applying the policy across campus. In addition, since the policy was last revised in 2019, it is due for a standard review this academic year. TCNJ strives to review policies every five years.

Charge: Steering asks CAP to review the Alternative Undergraduate Course Types policy in general, and in particular, with a specific eye towards the section on Special Arrangement (Section 70) courses. As with all five-year reviews, CAP may review the policy and decide that no substantive updates are necessary. If CAP finds that no significant changes to the policy are required and makes changes solely to bring the policies in line with current practice, no additional testimony is required.

If testimony is needed, the testimony tier and timeline are outlined below. In particular, at Step 2, in considering the need for changes to the Alternative Undergraduate Course Types Policy, CAP should consult with the local AFT president, deans, academic leaders, and other relevant stakeholders to create the preliminary recommendation.

Testimony Tier: Tier I, provided no significant changes to the policies are required:

- The issue requires minimal testimony from the campus community.
- The assigned council or committee should consult with relevant stakeholders before preparing the final recommendation, but there is no need for surveys or open fora.

If CAP determines that substantive changes are needed and testimony is deemed necessary, then **Tier II:**

- The issue requires moderate testimony from the campus community.
- The assigned council or committee should consult with relevant stakeholder individuals and groups in developing a preliminary recommendation.

The completed preliminary recommendation should then be made available to the relevant stakeholder groups, and testimony should be solicited in the form of written feedback (through a survey and or e-mail).

Timeline: CAP should make a Final Recommendation to Steering by **March 15, 2024**. If testimony is sought, in the submission of the final recommendation CAP should note the stakeholder groups, number of persons responding, and summary of testimony collected.

TCNJ Governance Processes

Step 1–Steering issues a charge

Step 2-Governance prepares a Preliminary Recommendation

Once the appropriate standing committee or council has received the charge, it should start by collecting data needed to make a preliminary recommendation. It should receive input from affected individuals and all relevant stakeholder groups prior to making a preliminary recommendation. For issues that have broad implications or that affect a large number of individuals, initial testimony should be solicited from the campus community at large. For some issues, sufficient initial testimony may come from input through committee membership or solicitation from targeted constituent groups. When, in the best judgment of the committee, adequate clarity of the principles contributing to the problem are known, a preliminary recommendation should be drafted and disseminated to the campus community.

Step 3–The Relevant Stakeholders provide Testimony

Once a preliminary recommendation has been completed, the standing committee or council should seek testimony from the campus community. The testimony should be gathered in accordance with the Testimony Tier (see below) assigned to the issue by Steering.

For issues that require public testimony from the campus community, the chair of the standing committee or council should approach the president of the appropriate representative bodies to schedule the next available time slot at a meeting of that body.

Testimony should be gathered in a way that allows stakeholders to weigh in fully on the issue. Members of the standing committee or council that wrote the preliminary recommendation should be present to hear and record the testimony.

Step 4–Governance prepares a Final Recommendation

Once the standing committee or council has received appropriate testimony, it should revise the preliminary recommendation into a final recommendation. Once the final recommendation is complete, the standing committee or council should use sound judgment to determine whether or not more public testimony is required. If, in its feedback to the original preliminary

recommendation, a stakeholder representative body requests to review an issue again, the committee or council is bound to bring it back to that body. If a full calendar year has passed since the formal announcement of the preliminary recommendation, the committee must re-submit a preliminary recommendation to the campus community. When the committee or council has completed the final recommendation, it should forward it to the Steering Committee. The final recommendation should be accompanied by a cover memo that summarizes the initial charge, how testimony was gathered and the nature of that testimony, and how the committee responded to that testimony, including a description of how the preliminary recommendation evolved as a result of testimony.

Step 5–Steering considers the Final Recommendation

Step 6–The Provost and/or President and Board consider the Final Recommendation

Step 7–Steering notifies the Campus Community Testimony

For a complete description of all steps and of the testimony tiers, see [Governance Structures and Processes, 2019 Revision](#), pages 23–27.