

Report of the Educational Affairs Committee to the University Council  
October 30, 2006

The Educational Affairs Committee met on October 30. William Vencill reported on the recommendations of the Task Force on Fall Break, which met on September 27 and October 11, and included a balanced membership of faculty, students, and administrators. The Task Force concluded that the optimum solution of the Fall Break question was to begin Fall Semester, 2008, on a Monday, with a single day of Fall Break on the Friday preceding the Georgia-Florida football game, and a full week of recess during Thanksgiving week. Registrar Rebecca Macon has run scenarios based on this proposed schedule, and reports that its implementation would be feasible, but would require approval of a calendar exception by the Board of Regents to allow UGA classes to end on December 9. The committee took a straw vote, and unanimously supported the proposal, contingent upon approval by the Board of Regents. Every effort will be made to submit this question to the University Council for a vote at the earliest possible date.

The EAC discussed the annual Academic Honesty Report for the 2005-2006 academic year. The Facilitated Discussions hearings process is working well. It has received considerable favorable interest from a significant number of peer institutions at national meetings. A total of 309 cases were heard, 97 % involving undergraduate and 3 % involving graduate students. Of these, 18 cases involved a second violation of the Academic Honesty Code. The most common offenses involved plagiarism (39 %) and unauthorized assistance (58 %). Most cases were resolved at the stage of a Facilitated Discussion involving the student, the reporting person or persons (71 % faculty, 27 % graduate student, and 2 % staff member) and a neutral facilitator, with 63 % of the Facilitated Discussions resulting in student acknowledgement of a violation, and 27 % resulting in a dismissal of the case. Only 3 % of cases were withdrawn prior to a Facilitated Discussion, and only 6 % of cases progressed to a formal Continued Discussion before a panel, where 84 % of cases were found to involve a violation. A total of 8 cases were appealed to the Provost's Office, and one appeal was granted.

Provost Mace pointed out to the committee that the Provost's Office treats cases involving multiple violations by the same student as a single case if the second violation occurs before a hearing has been held on the first case. However, if a hearing has already been held on the first case prior to the date of the second violation, the second case will be treated as a separate violation, even if both cases occur during the same semester. Provost Mace expressed a concern that a significant number of cases involving a second violation resulted in withdrawal of the charges by the faculty, apparently to avoid responsibility for expulsion of the student from the University. Of 18 second violations, 7 cases were dismissed. The Educational Affairs Committee has created a subcommittee to study this problem and make recommendations at a later meeting.

The Petitions subcommittee met to hear student academic petitions on October 23.

Respectfully submitted,

James L. Anderson  
Chair, Educational Affairs Committee