

MEMO

To: Scott Stevens
From: Lowell Riethmuller
Subject: 2010 Student Conduct and Attendance Committee report
Date: April 11, 2010

Committee members: Lowell Riethmuller (Chair), Scott Stevens, Joe Matterer

This report is for April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.

I conducted six end-of-session retention meetings from April 2009 to April 2010.

- Session IV (4-15-09)
- Session V (6-17-09)
- Session VI (8-13-09)
- Session I (10-21-09)
- Session II (12-16-09)
- Session III (2-24-10)

Between April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010 I issued 95 individual probation letters, most of them resulting from private dismissal hearings. I gave printed copies in envelopes to the teachers to distribute. I sent the letters in e-mail as well, copying the appropriate teachers and the members of the Conduct and Attendance Committee. I also made copies for the student files.

In 2009-10 I issued dismissal letters when students reached sixteen or more absences, as well as tracking probation violations for the given session. I sent copies to the appropriate faculty and administrative staff through e-mail. I scheduled and conducted hearings on 18 different days for 42 students who received dismissal letters.

In addition, due to time constraints at the end of Session II, the Committee held a mass hearing on December 14, 2009 for 15 students who had accumulated over 16 absences during the session.

In Session IV we initiated the academic probation policy. Deb Detzel and I checked the final grades on the weekend before opening day. We discovered fifty-two students who had exceeded 16 absences or who had a GPA below 1.67. They were placed on either academic or attendance probation. Probation letters were attached to the class schedules.

On March 26 a mass probation meeting was held on March 26, 2010 in Willard 109 for these students. Twenty-seven students attended. I wrote letters to the ones who didn't attend, briefing them on the information presented at the meeting.

I check the weekly attendance reports on the database each session to keep track of students who are on probation or who receive more than sixteen absences. When students violate their

probations or accumulate sixteen or more absences, I schedule and conduct Committee hearings when necessary in the Director's office.

In addition to the dismissal notices for sixteen or more absences, each week I place the database-generated "Behind-the-8-ball" and "Behind-the-12-ball" letters in the teachers' mailboxes for distribution. I also make copies for the student files. I keep records of each week's list of the three categories in Excel documents. When I complete the weekly list, I give a copy to Deb. We look over the names, weeding out mistakes or instances of extenuating circumstances.

At the end of each session I enter the retention and probation data on the database under the "Schedule – Continuing New" query. I spend most of the weekend with Deb going over the final grade and attendance reports, looking for retentions and probations that weren't brought up at the retention meeting.

I understand that the weekly tutoring attendance information will be added to the database by Session V.

Dismissals

Twelve students were dismissed from the program between April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2010.

Alayedi, Ibrahim – January 13, 2010

Amadhi, Hamad – January 28, 2010

Guo Ji -- October 27, 2009

Han Jiabing – February 23, 2010 *

Jin Jing -- December 15, 2009

Moammer Shawki -- May 12, 2009

Wang Jun – December 23, 2009

Wang Su -- December 15, 2009

Wu Chung Kai -- December 9, 2009

Xu Saiyu – February 21, 2010 *

Ye Fang -- December 15, 2009

Zhao Jing -- October 22, 2009

*Han Jiabing and Xu Saiyi were given a chance to return to the ELI by enrolling at St. Joseph's English Language Center and keeping a B average with excellent attendance.

Academic Dishonesty

I posted the academic dishonesty report forms on the online faculty handbook. I keep a file of all the reports submitted to me by the faculty.

This year we conducted three academic dishonesty hearings.

Wang Jun – November 25, 2009

Wang Zifan – December 10, 2009

Tian Xiaojun – February 12, 2010

Recommendations

1. We need to examine and revise the terms of academic and attendance probation.

There is some confusion. According to the new policy approved on January 15, 2010, academic probation requires the student to keep a “C” average (2.0) and have no more than four absences per class in an eight-week session (three per class in a seven-week session). Before the academic probation policy was initiated, we were informing students on probation that they needed to maintain a “B” (sometimes “B-“) average and have no more than eight total absences during an eight-week session.

We explained to the students attending the March 26 probation meeting that there are two types of probation. According to my notes from the meeting:

- *Attendance* probation – students must attend 90% of their classes (8 total absences in 8-week session, 7 absences in 7-week session.) and maintain a “B” average.
- *Academic* probation – students must attend 90% of their classes and keep a “C-“ average, with a “1” effort grade.

So it appears to a student that academic probation has a lower grade requirement than attendance probation. We need to address this.

Will we be keeping *academic* and *attendance* probation policies separate? I don’t see at present a separate policy for *attendance* probation in the documents given to me for inclusion in the online faculty handbook. We should add a policy for *attendance* probation to our list of policies.

Students need to be informed in their probation letters which type of probation they are on and what the specific terms are.

2. More attention needs to be paid to academic dishonesty reports.

I keep all the academic dishonesty reports filed in large envelopes. Only three students were given academic dishonesty hearings this year. I realize the difficulty of finding time for individual hearings. I'm just concerned that these students might not realize the seriousness of their actions. As we're finding out, there are cultural issues here. What might be acceptable in the student's academic culture at home, is definitely unacceptable in the universities in this country.

Also, should we be adding a column in the history database marking a report of academic dishonesty? At present the only records of academic dishonesty are in my enveloped files and in the faculty members' private files.

3. The database-generated dismissal letter that is issued when students reach the sixteen-absence level needs to be revised.

After informing the student that only a favorable decision by the Committee can overturn the dismissal, the letter concludes with a paragraph saying "*please make an appointment to see me* [i.e., the Director] *or the Associate Director to discuss this important matter.*" Now that we have over six hundred students a session, it is going to be difficult for the Director to deal initially with the potentially larger number of these cases. I recommend this 16-absence dismissal letter instruct the student to write to *me* instead of coming to the office asking to see the Director.

4. Add a confirmation clause to the probation letters attached to the student's schedule at the beginning of the session.

When we initiated the academic probation policy, the number of probations increased to over fifty for Session IV. Deb attached the probation letter to the student's schedule. (At the time it didn't seem feasible to write 50 individual probation letters like I had been doing in previous sessions when the probation number was under twenty.)

In these letters attached to the schedules we should instruct the students to confirm by e-mail to me that they received the letter, understand the terms, and will follow them. (Beginning with Session V, I plan to issue bulk e-mail probation letters during week one with the same information, including the confirmation clause.)

We will need to conduct mass probation meetings the first or second week of each session to brief the students who are on probation and didn't have hearings.