



Missouri Southern State University

Academic Policies Committee Submission Guidelines

About the Academic Policies Committee

This section paraphrases information from the *Faculty Policy Handbook*. Please see the handbook for the definitive language.

The Academic Policies Committee's is a committee of the Faculty Senate. Its purpose is to initiate and consider proposals for the academic development of the university and for policy changes in the areas of admissions and curricula. One of the committee's most frequent tasks is the consideration of proposals from academic departments for new courses and changes to existing courses and program requirements. The committee makes recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding these measures.

The Academic Policies Committee regularly receives reports and recommendations from several administrative committees whose duties include academic matters. The Core Curriculum Oversight Committee submits recommendations for courses to be added to the Core Curriculum and provides an annual report on the performance of the Core. The Writing Program Committee reviews and makes recommendations to Academic Policies for the designation of a course as writing-intensive. The Assessment Committee periodically provides reports or communications on outcome assessments.

The Academic Policies Committee consists of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (chair), the Registrar, the School Deans, one or two elected members from each of 10 divisions of the university (see Policy Handbook for list), one member-at-large representing the Faculty Senate, and two students elected by the Student Senate. Elected members serve two-year terms, with half these members up for election each year. Representatives from the Faculty and Student Senates serve one-year terms.

The Academic Policies Committee meets the second and fourth Monday of each month while classes are in session. All materials for Academic Policies consideration must be sent to Academic Affairs by Tuesday the week before a meeting to be included on the agenda. The deadline for submitting new course proposals and petitions to the Academic Affairs office is the beginning of the eighth week of the semester before the class is offered. **In a catalog year, proposals and reports/communications affecting the catalog must be submitted no later than October 15.**

Types of Actions Considered by the Committee

Basically, four types of actions are considered by the Academic Policies Committee. Each of these actions must be approved by the department head and school dean before submission to the Academic Policies Committee.

Proposals

- ❖ Proposals are recommendations for adding new majors, new permanent courses, or for changing or dropping existing courses. **Proposals go into effect with the new catalog containing the major or course.**

- ❖ Proposals for **new majors** are submitted with a purple cover-sheet form, which is available from the Academic Affairs website. The form should be considered as a cover-sheet with items five (5) through nine (9) to be addressed in an attached document. This form and associated document are required whether the proposal is for a new degree or a new option to an existing degree. Additional documentation may be required when the proposal has been approved by the internal governance system in preparation for the Missouri Department of Higher Education approval process.
- ❖ Proposals for **new courses** are submitted with a yellow cover sheet form, which is available on the Academic Affairs website. A course syllabus, conforming to the currently approved syllabus format, is submitted with the cover sheet. Care must be taken when proposing a new course to ensure that the course number does not duplicate any previously existing course.
- ❖ Proposals for **changes to existing courses** are submitted on a blue form, which is available on the Academic Affairs website. All revised courses require an updated syllabus incorporating the changes, which must be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office in the currently approved syllabus format.
- ❖ Proposals for **dropping courses** are submitted on a green form, which is available on the Academic Affairs website.

Proposals are given a first reading and vote at the first meeting at which they are presented. The Academic Policies Committee may recommend changes to the proposal between the first and second reading. Proposals are given a second reading and final vote during the next subsequent meeting. Following approval by the Academic Policies Committee, actions are forwarded to the Faculty Senate. After approval by the Faculty Senate, proposals are forwarded to the President. Upon approval by the President, proposals are then forwarded to the Board of Governors. Should an action be rejected at any of these junctures, the action may be revised and resubmitted beginning with the first step in the process.

Petitions

Petitions are applications for 298 and 498 courses, the permanent catalog name for these courses are 298 Topics in (discipline) and 498 Advanced Topics in (discipline). The petitions are special topics proposed for a limited offering. Consequently, committee approval of a petition is a one-time only approval. If a course is to be offered again, it must be presented again as a petition or a proposal. A course may be offered under the 298/498 category an unlimited number of times; but, it must go through the complete approval process each time. Petitions give departments some flexibility between catalog years. Petitioned courses are often used to “try-out” a course concept to see if there is enough demand to warrant a permanent course.

Petitions are submitted with a pink cover-sheet form, which can be obtained from the Academic Affairs website. A course syllabus, conforming to the currently approved syllabus format, is submitted with the cover sheet. The Academic Policies Committee is the sole review point for petitions; they are not forwarded for review by any other body. **Petitions are due in the Academic Affairs Office, for submission to the committee, by the beginning of the eighth week of the semester before the course is to be offered.** This schedule allows for the course to be approved prior to pre-registration for the upcoming semester. Upon Academic Policies Committee approval, 298 and 498 courses are listed in the Schedule of Classes for the appropriate semester, but are not listed in the Catalog. Customarily, 298 and 498 courses can not be used to meet Core Curriculum Requirements.

Petitions are also used for 398 courses, which are special limited course offerings for students in the Honors Program. The procedure for 398 course approval is the same as that described above for 298/498 courses, with the exception that 398 courses must be approved by the Honors Committee before being submitted to the Academic Policies Committee.

Special Categories of Course Submissions

Writing Intensive Courses

New and existing courses to be designated as writing-intensive (WI) must be approved by the Writing Program Committee before being submitted to the Academic Policies Committee as a petition. Instructions for proposing a writing-intensive course and the format for the WI addendum to the syllabus are available on the Academic Affairs website. New courses which are also proposed as WI courses are submitted to Academic Policies as both new course proposals and writing proposal petitions. There are three possible situations regarding Writing Intensive petitions submitted to the Academic Policies Committee.

1. A course that permanently integrates writing into the course for all offerings of the course, upon approval by the Writing Program Committee and the Academic Policies Committee, will be approved as WI until such time as other formal action is taken. These courses carry a WI designation in the catalog as well as the class schedule listing.
2. A course that optionally integrates writing for a section or sections of a multi-section course, upon approval by the Writing Program Committee and the Academic Policies Committee, will be approved as WI until such time as other formal action is taken.
3. A course that integrates writing on a one-time basis using a WI addendum, upon approval by the Writing Program Committee and the Academic Policies Committee, will be approved as WI for that offering only.

Core Curriculum Courses

A course to be designated as meeting Core Curriculum requirements must be submitted to the Core Curriculum Oversight Committee (CCOC) before it goes to Academic Policies. Any changes to courses which are part of the Core Curriculum requirements must also first be submitted to the CCOC. If a department wants to drop or add a core competency from the course objectives, the department must send a memo to the CCOC requesting the change and deletion of the course from the General Education Matrix. Courses to be approved for an area of the Core Curriculum must address the core competencies for that area.

The Core Curriculum Oversight Committee has the following guidelines for considering courses for each area of the core.

1. **Area 1 Basic Requirements:** This area addresses basic general education skills such as communicating, managing information, higher-order thinking, and valuing. A course for this area must include the respective skills. Math courses must include all competences from the knowledge area of Mathematics from the General Education Matrix.
2. **Area 2 Humanities and Fine Arts:** These courses should be introductory overview or survey courses that address intuitional competencies for Humanities and Fine Arts.

3. **Area 3 Natural Science and Behavioral Science:** These courses should include the corresponding Social & Behavioral Sciences and Life Science competencies respectively.
4. **Area 4 American Cultural Studies:** These courses should include skills (valuing) and knowledge competencies for Social and Behavioral Sciences.
5. **Area 5 MSSU Special Emphasis:** These courses must include all corresponding competencies for International Cultural Studies, Health and Wellness, and Economics. These courses may be at the 300 level, since transfer students may not have MSSU special competencies. However, even 300 level courses should not have prerequisites or be designed for majors only.

Upon approval, these items are then forwarded to the Academic Policies Committee under the appropriate category (petitions or proposals) along with a report from the Core Curriculum Oversight Committee.

Multidisciplinary/Interdisciplinary Courses/Course Programs

From time to time, items may come before the committee regarding courses, majors, minors or other course programs which are multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary in nature. If the item in question involves coursework from disciplines from within one School, the item is submitted through the Dean of that School. If the item in question involves disciplines from more than one School, the item is submitted through the Deans of all Schools involved. Beyond this, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary items will be handled in accordance with the category in which they are submitted (i.e. report, communication, petition, proposal, or resolution).

Reports and Communications

Reports and communications are considered under the same agenda item in Academic Policies meetings; however, there is a difference between the two categories. Both reports and communications are typically submitted in memorandum form.

Reports

Reports are an avenue for departments and schools to convey curricular information to the university as a whole. For example, changes in curriculum requirements for an established program, establishment of a minor, and recommendations for policy changes are typically submitted under this category. Reports associated with new courses or course changes, e.g., a report for changing degree requirements that includes a new course as a requirement, are considered with and approved following approval of the course proposals. Because reports deal with curricular information that is of interest to the university as a whole, upon approval by the Academic Policies Committee, reports are forwarded on to the Faculty Senate.

Communications

Communications are submitted for the Academic Policies Committee's information or in response to a request from the Committee. For example, the Assessment Advisory Committee may report the results of the latest program review cycle. Because a Communication is for information purposes rather than for seeking Committee approval, the only action possible by the Committee is to accept the Communication as presented. Therefore, generally speaking, the Academic Policies Committee is the sole review point for communications; they are not forwarded for review by any other body. However, at the discretion of the committee, communications with sufficient campus-wide interest may be passed on to the Faculty Senate.

Resolutions

Resolutions are statements developed by the committee as a formal expression of the committee's opinion, will, or intent. A resolution may also be a declaration which another unit or committee of the university submits to the Academic Policies Committee for adoption. For example, the committee may wish to formally recognize a faculty member for outstanding contributions to the development of a new degree program, or the committee may resolve to change policies in the catalog such as the catalog time limit.

Generally speaking, the Academic Policies Committee is the sole review point for resolutions. However, at the discretion of the committee, resolutions having sufficient campus-wide impact may be passed on to the Faculty Senate for approval.

Guidelines and Deadlines for Submissions

The Academic Policies Committee meets the second and fourth Monday of each month while classes are in session. A regularly scheduled meeting may be canceled if there is no business to be brought before the committee. Likewise, some special meetings may be called. **All submissions to be brought before the committee must be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office no later than one week prior to the meeting at which the submission is to be discussed.** The following guidelines should be followed:

- ❖ Departmental offices should **contact the Academic Affairs Office to have a tracking number assigned** to their reports, communications, petitions, and proposals prior to having these documents copied. Departments should note this tracking number on the cover sheet.
- ❖ **Reports and Communications should be submitted in memo form** with the tracking number in the upper right hand corner. The **original and 30 copies (of Reports) or just the original (of Communications)** should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office in hardcopy. They should also be sent electronically as an attachment to the Academic Affairs Secretary.
- ❖ **Petitions should be submitted with a pink cover sheet form**, with the tracking number in the upper right hand corner. The **original** should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office in hardcopy. The form and syllabus should be sent electronically as a single attachment to the Academic Affairs Secretary.
- ❖ **Proposals for New Majors should be submitted with a purple cover sheet form**, with the tracking number in the upper right hand corner. The **original and 55 copies** should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office. The form and accompanying responses should be sent electronically as a single attachment to the Academic Affairs Secretary.
- ❖ **Proposals for New Courses should be submitted with a yellow cover sheet form**, with the tracking number in the upper right hand corner. The **original and 55 copies** should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office. The form and syllabus should be sent electronically as a single attachment to the Academic Affairs Secretary.
- ❖ **Proposals for Changes to Existing Courses should be submitted with a blue cover sheet form**, with the tracking number in the upper right hand corner. The **original and 55 copies** should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office. The form and syllabus should be sent electronically as a single attachment to the Academic Affairs Secretary.

- ❖ **Proposals for Dropping Existing Courses should be submitted with a green cover sheet form**, with the tracking number in the upper right hand corner. The **original and 55 copies** should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office. The form should be sent electronically as an attachment to the Academic Affairs Secretary.
- ❖ **In a catalog year, Proposals and Reports/Communications affecting the catalog must be submitted no later than October 15.** This is to allow sufficient time for approval in order to meet the print deadline for the catalog.

Academic Policies Committee Minutes and Records

The originals of all reports/communications, petitions, resolutions, and proposals are kept in the Academic Affairs Office, along with copies of all agendas and minutes taken at each meeting. These records cover all meetings from September 1967 to the present. The records from 1967 through 1989 are stored in the Spiva Library Archives. The records from 1990 are housed in the Academic Affairs Office.

A status report showing the progress of all actions through required approval stages is kept throughout the year and a final copy is placed in the permanent record at the end of each academic year. The status report serves as an ongoing tracking mechanism for actions on academic concerns. It is accessible on the Academic Affairs website and is updated following meetings of Academic Policies, Faculty Senate, and the Board of Governors.

Questions regarding the Academic Policies Committee should be addressed to the Academic Affairs Office, Hearn Hall 208, extension 9394.