

## **Committee on Educational Policy**

**April 27, 2023**

**In attendance: Faculty: Robert Benedetto, Chair; David Hanneke; Mekhola Gomes; Chris Kingston; Geoffrey Sanborn. Students: Isaiah Doble '25; Zane Khiry '25; Gent Malushaga '25. Provost and Dean of the Faculty: Catherine Epstein, ex officio. Recorder: Nancy Ratner, Director of Academic Projects.**

Rob Benedetto, chair, called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. in Porter Lounge. The committee approved the minutes from the previous meeting, and the committee approved one fall course.

### **Department change request**

Rob noted that the committee had received a request from Professor Coráñez Bolton to move half of his position to the English department for a three-year trial period. Both the Spanish and English departments agreed to this change. The committee approved the move.

### **Course policies**

*Should seniors be allowed to drop an overload partway through the semester?*

Rob noted that one faculty member had asked whether seniors should be allowed to drop an overload partway through the semester. In a prior year, the CEP had voted against allowing seniors to drop a course without penalty. David Schneider sent a letter to the committee expressing strong opposition to any change to this policy. Rob said it would put a burden on instructors if students signed up for overloads and then dropped the courses. Catherine added that it would be particularly problematic in the case of music instruction. The College pays for the lessons now and the Music department has dropped its requirement that students also be enrolled in another music course at the same time, so many more students are opting for these lessons. Gent was opposed, noting that the person dropping the course would have wasted the instructor's time and, if the course was capped, taken someone else's slot. Zane too was opposed if the course was capped but thought it less egregious if enrollment had not been capped. Dave said he was concerned that seniors might choose to opt for an easy semester and not make a serious choice about their courses if there was no penalty to a drop. Catherine said the policy would have to apply to all courses, without regard to caps. The committee decided to retain the current policy.

*Should faculty be able to require minimum grades as prerequisites?*

Dave said he had raised this question while reviewing economics course proposals. He thought the faculty should not be able to screen students and select them based on a previous grade. Chris explained that the intent is to keep students from moving straight into more difficult courses before they are ready for the more challenging material. The policy is restricted to higher level economics courses and facilitates students' finding the right pathway through the major.

### **FTEs**

At 3:00 p.m., Rob welcomed Michael Elliott to the meeting. Michael thanked the committee for its work and said he has been learning a great deal about faculty governance this year and has

discovered that much policy runs through the CEP. He thanked the committee for its thoughtful set of FTE recommendations and asked the committee to explain more about how it approached FTE decisions. He asked the committee about how it navigated several priorities, including ensuring that we have sufficient faculty to meet the enrollment demands of students, ensuring that each major has a robust curriculum, and increasing the diversity of the faculty. He also asked about how the deliberations of the CEP are conveyed from one year of the committee's membership to the next.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.