



To: Educational Policies Council

From: Office of the Provost

Date: 23 January 2018

Re: Request to enact EPC review as part of administrative policy 3342-2-07

REQUEST:

The Office of the Provost requests that the EPC approve forming and charging a task force to undertake a review of the EPC, including its mission and purpose, composition and membership and logistics in how meetings are scheduled and conducted.

This request aligns with the following policy:

3342-2-07 Administrative Policy and Procedures Regarding the Educational Policies Council

- C. Periodic review of the educational policies council. The responsibility, authority and structure of the educational policies council shall be reviewed each two years or at any time review may be considered appropriate by majority vote of the whole membership of the educational policies council.

The recommendation is that a EPC Review Task Force be formed and comprise EPC members, past and present, with sufficient representation from the three voting membership areas:

1. Ex-officio
2. Faculty Senate-appointed
3. College curriculum committee-elected

Faculty should comprise the majority of the members of the task force, with a balanced representation from the undergraduate and graduate councils.

BACKGROUND:

The Educational Policies Council (EPC) was established on 1 July 1967. Prior, there existed the University Council on Curriculum. Similar to its previous incarnation, the EPC was an independent group chaired by the provost. In 1970, under terms of the revised Faculty Senate charge and bylaws, the EPC went under Senate jurisdiction, co-chaired by the provost and Faculty Senate chair.

The goal with the creation of the EPC was to delegate much of the responsibility for curricular changes to departmental and college curriculum bodies, thereby freeing the EPC to focus on long-range academic planning and overall curricular planning and policy guidelines for the university that reflect Kent State's mission and goals as defined by the president and trustees.

In 2009, the EPC was restructured into two separate councils: one council for undergraduate education, and one council for graduate education.

The goal with the restructure was to allow graduate faculty and graduate students to participate more fully in the governance of graduate education, as well as to allow the individual councils to work more effectively in addressing long-range planning, policy and development within the undergraduate and graduate missions respectively – with each council’s membership more closely aligned to those missions.

There has not been an assessment and evaluation of the 2009 restructure, nor has there been a holistic review of the council’s mission, structure and composition for many years.

ISSUES:

The Office Curriculum Services has long served as the secretary for the EPC. These are the issues that the office staff have noticed since the 2009 changes to the council:

1. Membership/proxy voting. With two councils and relatively same member composition, membership has nearly grown twice in size. More “representation” of voting members are taking place, sometimes with one member attending to vote in place of two or three members.
2. Size. As membership has grown, the former meeting room of the EPC in the Student Center became inadequate. EPC then moved to the Governance Chambers, which is too large many times and can be too formal a setting for this type of committee. In past, there tends to be deeper discussion when the room is smaller and/or informal.
3. Attendance. As membership has grown, absences have increased. Based on a review of EPC meeting minutes, there also seems to be a lack of engagement with members asking questions or prompting discussion. Below is a comparison of attendance of voting members at EPC meetings in 2008-09 (the last year EPC was one body) and in 2016-17.

	2008-2009		2016-2017	
	% Present	% Absent	% Present	% Absent
August	79	21	32	68
September	91	9	59	41
October	85	15	37	63
November	76	24	60	40
January	94	6	68	32
February	79	21	63	37
March	85	15	55	45
April	81	19	63	37
May	68	32	58	42

Please note that the lowest attended meeting in 2008-09 (May) was the highest attended meeting in 2016-17 (January).

4. Scheduling. Planning the two councils has been a challenge, especially when they meet separately, in addition to meeting jointly for items that concerned both bodies. Over the years, several schedules were tried for a period and discontinued due to member complaints. For the past two years, the two councils meet jointly only, which has created many of the issues note above.