

July 19, 2010

TO: David Pershing
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

FR: John Francis 
Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Revision of University Regulation 6-100 (Instruction and Evaluation) and Related Policies

Attached for your review is a thoroughly revised version of University Policy 6-100 (Instruction & Evaluation), along with two related policies: University Policy 6-101 (Undergraduate Study & Degrees), an existing policy to which some parts of the current Policy 6-100 have been moved, and R6-100A, a new Rule to which some parts of the current 6-100 have been relegated. Susan Olson, Robert Flores and James Metherrall have all reviewed the attached documents and feel that the document package is ready to move forward.

If you approve of the changes and the process through which they have gone, then we are asking you to forward the documents on to the Academic Senate for their consideration.

The initial impetus for what turned out to be a quite broad revision of 6-100 was virtually simultaneous requests in Spring 2009 from two separate areas for updates to disparate parts of this policy. As we began to look over the policy, we soon realized that it was long overdue for a more extensive revision, one that dealt not only with content but also with language and organization. Accordingly, we began working with several administrative areas and with the Academic Senate, which created an ad hoc committee for this purpose in September 2009, chaired by Michael Timberlake (Sociology). Subsequently, we included Susan Olson and Robert Flores, from Academic Affairs, in our drafting process. Finally, we presented the documents to the Council of Academic Deans (CAD) and solicited their feedback.

The result of this eighteen-month process is a major overhaul of perhaps one of our most central and important Academic Policies, one that governs the teaching of every course, affecting every student and every course instructor every day.

There are three types of changes reflected in the revision: (1) substantive changes, which have material effects on University practices; (2) content changes, which add/remove verbiage from the policy but have no material effects – expansions or restrictions – on University practices;

and (3) organizational changes, which make the policy easier to understand, use and reference, i.e., more “user friendly”. Each of these is outlined below. Additionally, there are two significant changes that we did NOT make, and this is addressed at the end.

Part of the process of revising 6-100 (and the slight revision to 6-101 as well) involved changing the section labeling to make it consistent with new Regulations Library guidelines, e.g., Section 1 is now Section A, and the word “Section” has been deleted. References below are to the new labeling scheme.

Additionally, we have included in the revision several “Drafting notes,” which are labeled as “Drafting NOTE”, are highlighted in yellow and are set aside by “{ }”. These are intended to help in the review of the draft but to be removed once the revised policy is approved. There are as well some footnotes, labeled as [Note x], and one USER NOTE (see Section J), which are part of the revised policy.

(1) With regard to **substantive changes**, we:

- Completely rewrote the section (Section N) on Course Assessment and Feedback (Course Evaluations) to reflect two technological changes that have already occurred and process changes proposed by the Course Evaluation Oversight Committee.
- Modified Scholastic Standards for Undergraduates (Section K) by increasing the minimum suspension period for students placed on academic suspension from two semesters to three semesters, and, concomitantly, modified the Academic Renewal (Section M) policy, decreasing from ten years to seven years the age of courses that are subject to discounting if the student received a grade of D+ or lower. These changes were made on the recommendation of University College and the Vice President for Student Affairs.
- Consolidated and clarified the policy on class Attendance Requirements (Section O), adding as well language covering unexpected University facility closures, as we experienced in Spring 2009.
- Assigned responsibility to the administrator of the course-offering unit and the cognizant dean (or equivalent) for approving changes to final examination times (Section F) for instructors who give a final examination and who want to give it at a time other than the time scheduled by the Scheduling Office.
- Added to Grades (Section G-1) a reference to important principles of fairness in grading – including non-discrimination, avoidance of nepotism, and the like – to make explicit that such policies extend to all individuals, including non-faculty, involved in grading and/or evaluating students.
- Added policy to Grades (Section G-6) regarding the repeating of courses; such policy reflects operative administrative practices that have been in place for several years.
- Clarified aspects of noncredit courses – what they are and how they are managed and reported – in order to comply with new OCHE reporting requirements.

(2) With regard to **content changes**, we:

- Added a “Purpose and Scope” statement

- Added a definition of “Course-offering unit” to label, more broadly than “department”, an academic unit authorized to offer credit-bearing courses and bearing primary responsibility for the content, instruction and evaluation of such courses.
- Added, throughout, specific references to other University or Board of Regents policies
- Moved information about “Special Examinations” and “Comprehensive Examinations” (the last three paragraphs of Section F) to Policy 6-101. Policies on such examinations are relevant to the completion of undergraduate degree requirements rather than to the instruction and evaluation of individual courses; the former policy is the subject of 6-101 rather than 6-100.
- Removed language from the Grades section (Section G) regarding particular exceptions to the general grading scheme for the College of Law and the College of Medicine. We have instead added a note [Note] which we believe effectively deals with this and other analogous, foreseeable situations.
- Relegated to a new Rule (R6-100A) rules about the election of CR/NC grading (Section G-7).
- Removed altogether from policy the requirement that, with regard to Course Credit Reduction (Section G-8) “[t]he deans of the colleges will report annually to the vice president for academic affairs and the Academic Evaluation and Standards Committee as to the frequency of cases in which adjustment was used and a reason leading to adjustment in each case.”

(3) With regard to **organizational changes**, we:

- Moved sentences, paragraphs and entire sections around throughout the document to consolidate related items and make it more “user friendly”. Such moves are indicated by “Drafting NOTE”.
- Split up Sections and added numbered sub-sections (see particularly Section G) to, again, make the document more “user friendly”.
- Standardized terminology (e.g., “courses” instead of a mix of “courses” and “classes”) and updated references to administrative offices (e.g., “University College” instead of “Center for Academic Advising”; capitalizing “University,” “Registrar”, etc.)
- Rewrote lots of vague and awkward sentences.

Lastly, there are two parts of this policy that we have not updated as fastidiously as might otherwise have been expected. First, other than renumbering and removing some redundant definitional language, we have left essentially intact the section on content accommodations (Section Q), which is the product of a 2005 settlement of a federal civil rights lawsuit. Second, we have not adequately yet dealt with Section J, a short section which discusses the Academic Evaluation and Standards (AES) Committee. The AES Committee described in 6-100 is scheduled to undergo a five-year regular review by the Senate Personnel and Elections Committee during 2010-2011. We will revise this section after that review. In the meanwhile, we have inserted a statement, in the form of a USER NOTE that says: *As of 2010 this section J is under review for major revision.*