1. **Report from Academic Policies Committee on attendance policy.**

Although Title V does not explicitly say that attendance may not be used in determining grades, it was thought that there may have been a "legal opinion" issued to this effect. Alice Murillo is trying to look it up and will report back at the next Academic Policies meeting.

Fred Teti found a reference from Riverside Community College which gave its interpretation of the Title V language. They quote Title 5, Section 55002 (a) (2) (A) and then provide the following interpretation.

"In other words **a grade may not be based solely on attendance**. Attendance that is tied or connected to “participation” in class discussions, projects, etc. does **contribute to demonstrated proficiency** and would probably be deemed appropriate under Title 5."

The link is [http://rccdfaculty.net/handbook/075.htm](http://rccdfaculty.net/handbook/075.htm).

This issue is back on the Academic Policies agenda for the next meeting on Monday, November 21, 1:30-3:00 in L108.

2. **The FW grade. Roland Montemayor on how the faculty should handle withdrawals and the W grade.**

Roland is still of the position that we do not need the FW grade and that the W grade should be sufficient. Roland is drafting a statement aimed at informing faculty that they can drop students and give them a W if they are no longer attending class and the reasons why they may want to do this, namely to help prevent fraud. It is noted that the purpose of this statement is only help to make faculty aware of the situation without telling them that they must do this. Roland will send the statement to Ellen and Fred for review.

Also discussed were methods of how to distribute this message once it was finalized. Ideas included emailing the EFF, publishing in City Currents, and asking department chairs to share it with their faculty.

3. **Grade inflation. Report from Alexandra Nickliss**

Alexandra Nickliss reported that the problem of grade inflation started in the 80s. There is a graph from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* dated Aug. 12, 2011, that shows that A is now the most common grade given at American colleges. It was claimed that the percentage of students receiving As is higher at private schools than public schools (Catherine Rampell, “A History of College Grade Inflation.” *New York Times*, July 14, 2011.

[http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/07/14/the-history-of-college-grade-inflation/](http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/07/14/the-history-of-college-grade-inflation/). There was a reference to a 1998 article from the *SF Chronicle* that claimed that high school teachers were being instructed to give more As, Bs, and Cs.
The only idea put forth about how to combat grade inflation was to increase awareness of the issue.

4. **“Plus” and “minus” grades**
Many faculty are passionately in favor of bringing back +/- grades. We could not think of any down sides to reinstating them other than the issue with students not receiving transfer credit for courses in which they receive a C-. However this is no longer a problem because we would not be allowed to assign C- grades. It is noted that De Anza and Foothill have reinstated the use of +/- grades without the C- grade. We would like to consult with the counselors to see if there are any other transfer or license issues. We would also like to ask Darlene Alioto if there are any DCC issues or policies related to this.

On an unrelated note, during the discussion a few people used the term "gypped" as in "the students may be gypped" by certain policies. We were informed that the term "gypped" is an offensive racial slur against gypsies and should not be used. Having never heard this before and not knowing anything about the origins of the word, I decided to look it up and I found this reference.

Gyp is the Greek word for vulture. In the 19th century, some universities in England provided servants who attended one or more undergraduates. Students called the servants “gyps” because they found many ways of obtaining ale and tips from them and preyed upon the students like vultures. Gyps made beds, ran errands, helped their young masters over the college walls late at night, and provided other services. Sometimes they ran away with everything they could lay their hands on. So technically the word "gypsy," which was coined in England in the 16th century when they mistook a people of Middle Eastern/Indian descent for Egyptians due to the color of their skin, is unrelated to being "gypped."

Still, since some people may be offended by the term, I would tend to avoid using it, but for the record it is not actually a racial slur.

Leilah McCarthy, Secretary

-------------------------------------

ADDENDUM

I. From Roland Montemayor, 11/7/2011, 3:38 p.m.

It is important to note on our census reports if a student is not attending classes so that he/she does not receive resources that he/she is no long entitled to.

Plural version:
It is important to note on our census reports when students are not attending classes so that those students do not receive resources that they are no longer entitled to.

II. Plus and Minus Grades. Darlene> Alexandra Nickliss 11/7/2011 10:42 PM >>>
The Academic Senate Grading Policies Subcommittee has requested that I contact you to ask you what your and the DCC's position is on plus and minus grades. They also wanted to know if the DCC has a policy on plus and minus grades. I look forward to your email response at your earliest convenience. Thanks, Alexandra

From Darlene Alioto 11/08/11 9:32 a.m.

The DCC does not have a policy on plus/minus grades — that is an issue that falls solely under the auspices of the Academic Senate in their "10 plus 1" responsibilities.

Personally, I have favored plus/minus grades as a more accurate description student work. However, when we had plus/minus we ran into difficulty with transfer institutions: some transfer universities will not accept a C minus as a passing grade. However, the community colleges do accept a C minus (and even a D) as a passing grade. Community college policy allows a student to repeat a class if he/she received a "D" or an "F". We do not allow a student to repeat if the grade received was higher than a "D" or "F". Thus, a catch 22 for a student who gets a C minus----- but can't repeat it - and can't transfer with it!

Then there was the debate about "if we give an A plus do we have to give an F minus (which seems ridiculous to me!!!)."

Can we just give A plus, A minus, B plus, B minus, C plus ---- and then no minus from there on?? Many feel if we do that, then what's the point? — But that is a possible compromise.

Grading policies Committee should also check with the State Chancellor's office — at one time they said that the community colleges could not use plus/minus grades — and I don't remember if they changed that policy later on.

Jack Sparks collected opinions from Counselors
A. The Continuing Student Counselors are against +/- grades. Most think that the +/- grades make calculating GPA for the large number of transfer students too difficult.
B. The New Students Counselors are split on the issue, many accepting +/-
C. Cal Works is in favor of +/- grades.