1966

Report of the Special Student-Faculty Committee on Examinations, Recommendations 1 (as amended), 2, 4 through 8, and 10 (as amended) dealing with timing and conducting of examinations and the establishment of a file of final examinations

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/facsen_bills

Recommended Citation

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate, "Report of the Special Student-Faculty Committee on Examinations, Recommendations 1 (as amended), 2, 4 through 8, and 10 (as amended) dealing with timing and conducting of examinations and the establishment of a file of final examinations" (1966). Faculty Senate Bills. Paper 136.
http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/facsen_bills/136

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Senate at DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Senate Bills by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu.
TO: President Francis H. Horn
FROM: Chairman of the Faculty Senate

1. The Attached BILL, titled Report of the Special Student-Faculty Committee on Examinations, Recommendations 1 (as amended), 2, 4 through 8, and 10 (as amended) dealing with timing and conducting of examinations and the establishment of a file of final examinations, is forwarded for your consideration.

2. The original and two copies for your use are included.

3. This BILL was adopted by vote of the Faculty Senate on April 14, 1966 (date).

4. After considering this bill, will you please indicate your approval or disapproval. Return the original or forward it to the Board of Trustees, completing the appropriate endorsement below.

5. In accordance with Section 8, paragraph 2 of the Senate's By-Laws, this bill will become effective on May 5 (date), three weeks after Senate approval, unless: (1) specific dates for implementation are written into the bill; (2) you return it disapproved; (3) you forward it to the Board of Trustees for their approval; or (4) the University Faculty petitions for a referendum. If the bill is forwarded to the Board of Trustees, it will not become effective until approved by the Board.

April 21, 1966
(date)

Elizabeth W. Greendall /s/
Chairman of the Faculty Senate

ENDORSEMENT 1.

TO: Chairman of the Faculty Senate
FROM: President of the University

1. Returned.


3. (If approved) In my opinion, transmittal to the Board of Trustees is not necessary.

(date)

President

Form approved 11/65
ALTERNATE ENDORSEMENT 1.

TO: Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

FROM: The University President

1. Forwarded.

2. Approved.

(date) President

ENDORSEMENT 2.

TO: Chairman of the Faculty Senate

FROM: Chairman of the Board of Trustees, via the University President.

1. Forwarded.

(date) President

ENDORSEMENT 3.

TO: Chairman of the Faculty Senate

FROM: The University President

1. Forwarded from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

(date) President

Original received and forwarded to the Secretary of the Senate and Registrar for filing in the Archives of the University.

May 9, 1966

(date) Elizabeth (E.) Crandall

Chairman of the Faculty Senate
This committee was appointed, to quote from its charge, because "recent breaches in examination security have caused concern among faculty, students, and administration." However, the committee, in its deliberations, has given little attention to the specific situation that developed at the end of last semester. It was our feeling that the cheating that took place then, though highly dramatic, was symptomatic of a far more serious, pernicious situation. We believe that cheating has and does go on at the University, and that what took place in January can be likened to the eruption of a boil -- the superficial manifestation of deeper-seated infection.

We are not suggesting that the amount of cheating at Rhode Island is significantly greater than what might be found at most other institutions. Quite the contrary; we suspect that if a survey was conducted, URI would probably fall somewhere close to the average (which according to some surveys means about 50% of the student body would admit to cheating). One can, however, take little consolation from being average in this particular statistic.

Cheating, we feel, can never be completely eliminated, but it can be significantly reduced. Such reductions, in the limit, come about only through one vehicle, the student. Only when students, individually and collectively refuse to cheat, will cheating be fully brought under meaningful control. However, though it is the student who determines whether or not cheating goes on, this does not reduce the responsibility of the faculty and administration. Faculty are accountable to assure that examinations, as well as term papers and other written assignments, are pertinent to the subject, administered and graded fairly, and, if appropriate, kept secure. It is also the instructor's duty to apprehend individuals engaged in academic dishonesty. The administration must be pledged to the idea that cheating at the University of Rhode Island is intolerable. They should make this view known to the student body and the faculty, and when a student is apprehended by an instructor, all should keep in mind that it is not the instructor who is on trial.

Colleges and universities have been going through a period of agonizing reappraisal of their role and function in the area of student behavior and student morals. Regardless of what position one might take with respect to the degree of institutional involvement in these matters, there is no question that cheating is the university's business. It is an act that corrodes the heart of the academic enterprise. It defiles the purpose and process of education. It mocks the very existence of the academic institution. Academic dishonesty is more than just "bad" or "immoral," it is the complete antitheses to the idea of a university, a faculty, and a student body.

What then, can be done at URI to help create an environment that will make cheating less likely? The committee feels that certain changes can be made. Some of the changes we are recommending are mechanical; some require an alteration in the attitudes some of us hold; collectively, all involve,
we hope, an attempt to reinforce the concepts that examinations (and other assignments) are a crucial part of learning, that they are not frivolous games between an instructor and student, and, perhaps most important of all, that they are entered into with the mutual respect of all involved.

We do not suggest that our recommendations are a panacea; we also hope that they are not a placebo. We do feel that they are things that can be done now and that might be effective. The whole matter of cheating will, however, need to come under continual review and appraisal.

Recommendations:

1. The Registrar should attempt to schedule final examinations so that most students have only one examination a day and that no student should be required to take more than two examinations a day.

2. The final examination period should begin three days after the last day of classes; these three days could include a weekend.

3. No examinations or quizzes, with the exception of laboratory practicals, should be allowed within one week of the beginning of the final examination period.

4. All work for courses, including term papers, but excepting the final examination, should be completed by the final class meeting.

5. All instructors should, very early in the semester, indicate to his class the criteria upon which the student's grade will be determined and, as completely as feasible, use these criteria.

6. Instructors have the primary responsibility for security of examinations and they should exercise this responsibility diligently. This responsibility extends through the preparation, duplication, and administration of an examination.

   The academic deans and department chairmen should develop ways to allow examinations to be typed and duplicated by some centralized agency, at least within a building. The department chairmen have the responsibility of instructing secretaries in all aspects of examination security.

7. Instructors have the responsibility of making sure that all assignments prepared by students meet the requirement of having been prepared with academic integrity. Instructors should do all that is feasible to minimize plagiarism on term papers and other written work.

8. Instructors have the explicit duty to take action in known cases of cheating.
9. Because cheating is an academic matter, the manner of handling cheating cases as spelled out in Chapter 6, paragraph 1.22.52 through 1.22.54 of the University Manual, should be changed to allow for a greater participation of the academic deans. The committee recommends the following procedures:

a) The instructor has the unilateral right to fail a student on the particular assignment for which the instructor has determined that a student has cheated. The fact of this failure should be reported to the student's academic dean. The student may appeal this matter to his academic dean, and the dean's decision on the appeal is final.

b) In addition to failure on the assignment, the instructor may recommend additional action to the student's academic dean. Upon this recommendation, the dean may authorize the instructor to fail the student in the course. The student may appeal the dean's decision to give this authorization to the Academic Vice President, whose decision on the appeal is final.

c) Either the instructor or the dean may recommend to a College Scholastic Integrity Committee suspension (separation from the University for a specific length of time) or dismissal (permanent separation) of a student for cheating. If the recommendation comes from an instructor, it must have the concurrence of the dean.

d) Each college shall have a College Scholastic Integrity Committee to consider recommendations for suspension or dismissal. This committee shall consist of five students enrolled in the college (3 seniors and 2 juniors) and the Dean of Students, ex officio without vote, as chairman and secretary. The two juniors shall serve for two years, and each year one senior and two juniors shall be appointed by the dean of the college from a list of names recommended by department chairmen in the college. The committee shall hear evidence presented by the dean of the college; the instructor and the student may request or be requested to appear before the committee. The committee will decide to suspend, dismiss, or do neither. The chairman will notify the dean of the college of the committee's decision and he will implement the action. The student will have the right of appeal of a suspension or dismissal to the President, whose decision on the appeal is final. If a student is suspended or dismissed for academic dishonesty, this fact should be made part of his permanent record.

e) Paragraph 1,22.55 should remain as it now appears, except that the academic dean should have the responsibility of informing the parent or guardian.
10. The library should assume the responsibility of housing and maintaining a file of examinations. Instructors are urged to place in this file copies of all examinations they have given. If there are reasons why actual examinations should not be filed, then it is suggested that sample questions be used in the file. The committee is not recommending a compulsory examination repository, but we hope that most instructors will want to enter into this enterprise.

11. The committee feels that the best examination policing apparatus is a fully operative, student run, honor system. The committee does not, however, wish to recommend at this time that the University enter into such an arrangement. We feel that an honor system cannot be created by legislative imposition as we believe that there must be a wide-spread and deep-felt desire by the students for such a system for it to have viability. It is our opinion, however, that the University can begin to move in modest ways toward the development of an honor system with the hope that eventually this might lead to a fuller program. Therefore, we recommend that individual departments, with the encouragement of their deans, begin to explore ways of conducting their examinations in, at least, their major courses under an honor system. The departments should enlist the help of their major students in the development, implementation, and maintenance of the system. When departmental systems become operative they could supplant the responsibility of the instructor as outlined in recommendation 9a, above. When there are a sufficient number of functioning departmental systems, a college-wide system might then be developed.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia H. Heffernan
Fred Sculce
John J. Kupa
Jerome M. Pollack, Chairman