TO:          The Executive Committee
FROM:        James Murray, Chair, Faculty Affairs Committee
SUBJECT:     17-18 FAC 3: Revisions to the Faculty Office Hour Policy and proposal for a new policy on Office Hours and Faculty Availability Outside of the Classroom
PURPOSE:     Action by the Academic Senate
ACTION REQUESTED: That the Academic Senate approve these revisions; effective upon signature of the President

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Faculty Affairs Committee received a referral from Semester Conversion Directors (SCD); 15-16 ASCD 8: FAC Policy or Procedures documents that require revisions for semester conversion that merit careful consideration. The referral was received in January 2016 but FAC re-considered and postponed the proposed semester changes of the office hour policy to AY17-18 after receiving feedback from our Lecturer Subcommittee that a simple revision might result in an unfair workload for some part-time lecturers. Subsequently, FAC discussed the general issue of “student contact time (or hours)” and decided that in-person office hours may not serve students or faculty well in all cases. We here propose a revised and flexible policy, consistent with the existing Collective Bargaining Agreement, that includes student contact time by email, teleconference and/or phone which could replace some face-to-face office hours, while also emphasizing that faculty may sometimes be available to students in person.

On January 3, 2017 FAC approved the changes to the Faculty Office Hour Policy. All additions noted by bold red text; deletions by bold black strikethrough.
MARKED POLICY

Paragraph 20.1.b of the CBA provides that faculty members’ professional responsibilities include: “advising students, participation in campus and system-wide committees, maintaining office hours, working collaboratively and productively with colleagues, and participation in traditional academic functions.” Pursuant to this paragraph, the minimum number of hours and days for office hours are given below:

The policy below is intended to replace the previous policy on Faculty Office Hours. Pursuant to this paragraph, guidelines for how departments ensure that faculty are available to students are given below:

FACULTY OFFICE HOURS AND FACULTY AVAILABILITY OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The faculty of the University must be available during regularly scheduled office hours which are to students at times other than scheduled classes. The times of the office hours are to be posted outside each faculty office, at the faculty member’s department, on the department website, and on the faculty’s member’s course syllabi. The faculty member will inform the department of his/her office hours the first day of classes each quarter. This availability (traditionally known as “office hours”) can be provided in several ways, including but not limited to face-to-face office hours, asynchronous e-mail, synchronous online meetings, and/or phone/voice calls.

Full-time faculty members will maintain a minimum of three office hours per week and will also make provision for meeting with students by appointment at a mutually convenient time beyond the stated office hours. The full-time faculty member’s office hours shall be held over at least two days and at least in half-hour blocks.

In consultation with their department chair(s), part-time faculty will maintain the equivalent of one office hour per week for every four (4) WTU’s of their teaching load with a minimum of one hour and a maximum of three hours per week. A schedule that includes times when students can expect the faculty member to be available and/or will respond to submitted inquiries. The full-time faculty member (including faculty teaching online and those in clinical practice off campus) will provide a schedule detailing at least 3 hours per week. Part-time faculty (or faculty partly-assigned to non-instructional duties) may reduce availability when appropriate and in consultation with their chair(s). Reductions may be pro-rated to 2 hours when teaching 10 or fewer WTU, or to 1 hour when teaching 5 or fewer WTU. Faculty with no teaching assignment in a semester will make arrangements with their chair(s) to be available to students as needed and appropriate. Faculty assigned to non-instructional duties (such as department chair or student advising) that by nature necessitate student contact should not expect to reduce their total hours of availability.

Faculty teaching online must also hold office hours and may make alternative arrangements with the Department Chair to be available online or by telephone. Online faculty’s office hours must include at least one hour of availability by telephone per week.
The times, locations, and contact information for availability are to be posted outside each faculty office, at the faculty member’s department, on the department website, and on the faculty member’s course syllabi. The faculty member will inform the department of their schedule before the first day of classes each semester.

With the awareness that students may have problems that are handled best synchronously and/or face-to-face, faculty members will also make provision for meeting with students by appointment at a mutually convenient time if a student cannot meet during the stated schedule of availability.

If, for any reason, a faculty member cannot meet the posted office hours, be available during the scheduled times, the faculty member will inform the department chair(s) or the administrative office. If possible, the department will note the absence on the faculty office door and inform students of the absence in a timely manner.

Normal office hours are to be maintained during the Final Examination period, but may be rearranged to facilitate meeting students before exams. If a final examination conflicts with a posted office hour time of availability, an alternative hour is to be posted for that week alone.

CLEAN POLICY

Paragraph 20.1.b of the CBA provides that faculty members’ professional responsibilities include: “advising students, participation in campus and system-wide committees, maintaining office hours, working collaboratively and productively with colleagues, and participation in traditional academic functions.”

The policy below is intended to replace the previous policy on Faculty Office Hours. Pursuant to this paragraph, guidelines for how departments ensure that faculty are available to students are given below:

OFFICE HOURS AND FACULTY AVAILABILITY OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The faculty of the University must be available to students at times other than scheduled classes. This availability (traditionally known as “office hours”) can be provided in several ways, including but not limited to face-to-face office hours, asynchronous e-mail, synchronous online meetings, and/or phone/voice calls.

In consultation with their department chair(s), faculty will maintain a schedule that includes times when students can expect the faculty member to be available and/or will respond to submitted inquiries. The full-time faculty member (including faculty teaching online and those in clinical practice off campus) will provide a schedule detailing at least 3 hours per week. Part-time faculty (or faculty partly-assigned to non-instructional duties) may reduce availability when appropriate and in consultation with their chair(s). Reductions may be pro-rated to 2 hours when teaching 10 or fewer WTU, or to 1 hour when teaching 5 or fewer WTU. Faculty with no teaching assignment in a semester will make arrangements with their chair(s) to be available to students as needed and appropriate. Faculty assigned to non-instructional duties
(such as department chair or student advising) that by nature necessitate student contact should not expect
to reduce their total hours of availability.

The times, locations, and contact information for availability are to be posted outside each faculty office,
at the faculty member’s department, on the department website, and on the faculty member’s course
syllabi. The faculty member will inform the department of their schedule before the first day of classes
each semester.

With the awareness that students may have problems that are handled best synchronously and/or face-to-
face, faculty members will also make provision for meeting with students by appointment at a mutually
convenient time if a student cannot meet during the stated schedule of availability.

If, for any reason, a faculty member cannot be available during the scheduled times, the faculty member
will inform the department chair(s) or the administrative office. If possible, the department will inform
students of the absence in a timely manner.

The normal schedule of availability is to be maintained during the Final Examination period, but may be
rearranged to facilitate meeting students before exams. If a final examination conflicts with a posted time
of availability, an alternative hour is to be posted for that week alone.