

Curricular Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes for 8 October 2012

Voting members present: Rainer Newberry (chair); Ken Abramowicz; Sarah Hardy; Cindy Hardy; Todd Radenbaugh; Diane McEachern (audio); Retchenda George-Bettisworth (audio).

Non-voting members present: Alex Fitts; Doug Goering; Carol Gering; Linda Hapsmith (audio); Donald Crocker; Libby Eddy; Lillian Misel. Jayne Harvie present (taking notes).

1. Approve minutes of last meeting

Rainer's minutes for the Sept. 24 CAC meeting were approved as submitted.

2. GERC-related issues

a. J Rosenberg call in at ~ 9:15 for brief report

b. new GERC business as required (?)

Jonathan shared that the poll should be ready to go out to all faculty on or about October 15. GERC members ran a pilot poll and received good feedback. The poll will gather information on basics, including the minimum number of credits for the core, the "fit" of the current core with the approved student learning outcomes; functionality of the current core; among other issues. Each question will be followed with a field to collect comments.

Both Alex and Jonathan provided reports about the two information sessions that were held with faculty. It was evident from these that faculty did not really know much about the new student learning outcomes passed by Faculty Senate.

3. Report on Wintermester conflict resolution (maybe)

a. 2013-2014: Wintermester faculty were polled and agreed to 9 or 10 days (can choose) including an extra Saturday.

Crisis solved.

b. 2014-2015 has 8 days between HARD CLOSURE & the first day of classes. .

c. 2015-2016 has 8 days between HARD CLOSURE & the first day of classes ***THE SUBCOMMITTEE has been CHARGED TO FIND SOLUTIONS THAT DON'T INVOLVE CLASSES DURING THE HARD WINTER CLOSURE. We (the subcommittee) will be meeting in person with Wintermester faculty to discuss the 2014-2016 problems and find some resolution....before next year.***

Discussion will be ongoing in the subcommittee to address future year problems with Wintermester and the academic calendar.

Cindy H. noted that the Interior Aleutians Campus offers compressed courses for students who come from out of town expressly to take a particular offered course. Apparently ENGL F111X has been offered this way, and Cindy will ask Sandra Wildfeuer for some tips on how that has worked out. Cindy reported it is an approach that seems to be working well for those students.

Rainer thought compression guidelines would be most helpful. Both faculty and students involved in the Wintermester courses seem quite motivated to make it work well.

4. CONTINUING EFFORTS AT ADDRESSING THE ATHLETIC ABSENCE PROBLEM

The problem in a nutshell: UAF requires as a condition to athletic scholarships that students skip class. UAF consequently has a moral obligation to (a) not punish said students and (b) provide them with an education. Providing each team with tutors is a logical, but financially problematic, solution. Pretending that there really isn't a problem has been the historical substitute. . The current wording is ambiguous [WHAT CONSTITUTES 1ST WEEK?]

Subcommittee has approved the following change in wording:

a. Proposed modification of absence notification (Catalog, pg. 49)

Current: You must notify your instructor(s) of all scheduled UAF-required absences for the semester (e.g., travel to athletic events) during the first week of classes.

Suggested modification: You must notify your instructor(s) of all scheduled UAF-required absences for the semester (e.g., travel to athletic events) by the first Wednesday of the semester.

There was much discussion about the suggested modification. The first Friday of the semester was preferred over the first Wednesday, so that students had more time to drop / add courses.

The lack of available tutoring for student athletes was also of much concern, especially because the university was requiring their absence from class.

b. Yet to be solved....the whole issues of ‘excused’ vs. ‘unexcused’ absences. Given that a faculty member *IS NOT REQUIRED TO PROVIDE ANYTHING* to students with excused absences....what’s the point?? How do we reconcile the problems athletic absences?? See next page: ‘one suggested version of attendance policy...’

Discussion of Item #4 will continue at the next meeting.

5. Suggested change to Syllabus policy....(from Curricular Review Committee):

“If the course includes project(s), include general project description(s) and evaluation methods (e.g., rubric)”
EXCERPT FROM SYLLABUS REQUIREMENTS [included in the agenda]... unclear—is this required? Does it need to go through the Faculty Senate?

Discussion concerned item #10 of the syllabus requirements which addresses how students will be evaluated in a course. Wording could be added here to specify that if a project constitutes 20% or more of the course grade, then an evaluation rubric will be required in the syllabus.

Excerpt from Agenda regarding student athletics absences (Item #4):

ONE POSSIBLE VERSION OF THE ATTENDANCE POLICY.....”You are expected to attend classes regularly; unexcused absences may result in a failing grade. SOME INSTRUCTORS DROP STUDENTS WHO DO NOT ATTEND THE FIRST CLASS MEETING. IF YOU MUST MISS THE FIRST CLASS MEETING, YOU SHOULD [attempt to] OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR YOUR ABSENCE FROM YOUR INSTRUCTOR BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS MEETING. STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CONFERRING WITH THEIR INSTUCTORS IN ADVANCE CONCERNING PLANNED ABSENCES AND THE POSSIBILITY OF ARRANGING ALTERNATE WAYS OF LEARNING MISSED COURSE MATERIAL AND making up missed work.

If you are **required** to participate in either military exercises or UAF-sponsored activities that will cause you to miss class, you must notify your instructor(s) as soon as possible of your absence. You must notify your instructor(s) of all scheduled UAF-required absences for the semester (e.g., travel to athletic events) by the first Wednesday of the semester, **AND MUST PROVIDE WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION OF THE REQUIREMENT FROM THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT, MILITARY COMMANDER, OR OTHER OFFICIAL SOURCE.YOUR NAME, ROLE, AND DATES OF ABSENCES MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE DOCUMENTATION.**

You and your instructor will make a good-faith effort to make REASONABLE AND suitable arrangements to assure that you can make up classes and work you miss and are not penalized for your excused absence. **THE INSTRUCTOR HAS AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE WHETHER ARRANGEMENTS ARE REASONABLE AND SUITABLE. IF YOU PROVIDE NOTIFICATION AND SUCH** arrangements cannot be made, you will be allowed to withdraw from the course **without penalty**. [meaning...what???] However, your instructor is under no obligation to allow you to make up missed work for unexcused absences or if notification and arrangements are not made in advance of the absence.