

Curricular Affairs Committee

Meeting Minutes for October 3, 2016

Members present: Casey Byrne; Jennie Carroll, Chair; Alex Fitts; Cindy Hardy; Eileen Harney; Jayne Harvie; Ginny Kinne; Lisa Lunn; Rainer Newberry; Kathleen Quick; Dejan Raskovic; Holly Sherouse

Members absent: Ken Abramowicz; Ana Aguilar-Islas; Mike Earnest; Clair Gelvin-Smith; Bradley Moran; Caty Oehring

1. Approval / Amendment of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as submitted.

2. Approval of Minutes

a. 09/19/2016 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

3. Old Business

a. Program deletion and suspension policy

i. AdComm Discussion

Jennie shared that the AdComm did agree to move the conversation to the Faculty Senate meeting as a discussion item. Rainer was volunteered to lead that discussion. Rather than trying to modify the policy at the meeting, it will be more of an educational discussion and seek feedback.

Rainer said his approach would be to simply share the proposed changes, as opposed to saying “here are the changes administration is telling us to make to the policy.” Jennie argued that maybe the policy doesn’t need changing; we just need to understand that the final authority on whether or not to delete a program is the Chancellor’s, especially when it comes to budgetary issues.

Cindy H. reminded everyone about the Mathematics PhD deletion which went to the Faculty Senate several years ago. The Senate recommended that the program be allowed to present a plan to revitalize the program rather than delete it. The Provost and Chancellor had to agree with that. Rainer noted that the program faculty came to the FS meeting and had the germ of a plan they spoke about to the senate, which made the case for the senate’s recommendation to give them a chance to revitalize the program. In the end, the motion to not discontinue the program was signed off by the Chancellor.

Rainer noted the merit of talking directly to the Faculty Senate and presenting the situation as it exists, versus leaving the current wording of the policy unchanged and open to interpretation (which also leaves it open to the interpretation the administration puts upon it).

Cindy noted that what occurred with the Math PhD reflects the new item 3.d. in the revised policy (that the FS reviews the recommendations and states their collective agreement or disagreement with the Provost’s recommendation). Did the Math PhD matter then go back to the Provost? If so, the process should include that step. Rainer noted there is no example to fall back upon where the Senate said no to a program deletion and the matter was dropped by administration because of it. Jennie commented that because there is no known instance of overriding senate action, and the perception is that deletions require Senate action, the explicit changes being proposed are big changes. There are issues of perception and cooperation involved, and she asked how a cooperative approach might be conveyed.

Cindy said her impression was that after Faculty Senate voted not to discontinue the program that the matter went back to the Provost and she had discussions with the Math program about their revitalization plan. This isn't documented in the process, and adding it would be valuable. Removing the word "require" from the sentence in current policy -- that program deletions *require* Faculty Senate action -- reduces senate action to a rubberstamp.

Rainer pointed out that a fundamental issue is the need for Faculty Senate to have well-reasoned arguments if they say no to discontinuing a program. The case of the Math PhD included well-reasoned arguments at the time. He's not sure how to incorporate that into the policy. When the Chancellor's Cabinet recommends a program deletion it's unclear how (or if) a department gets to respond. In that sense, letting it come to the Faculty Senate provides a department with an opportunity to create a legitimate alternative and have it be heard. Faculty Senate may be the one opportunity for them to respond. Perhaps the language should be modified to reflect this opportunity to allow an affected department to present an alternative -- it's the only real reason the senate would have to not go along with a deletion. How can we put that into the language?

Alex suggested that a time-frame be included in the process if the language becomes more explicit that departments have an opportunity to respond. Alex agreed to talk to the Provost about it that afternoon when she meets with her.

Cindy suggested some language to indicate what happens if the senate does not approve of discontinuing a program which she will send to Jennie.

In the meantime, there will be a discussion at the October 10 senate meeting.

b. Updated language for Athletics (motion attached)

Language changing "by the first Wednesday" to "within the first five class days" was agreed upon to update the third paragraph of the Attendance policy. A sentence was also added at the end of the third paragraph to indicate that it is expected that students will be notified of their likely absences before the first day of class by an appropriate authority. There was some discussion of a situation where team travel occurred suddenly.

Jennie asked if it were appropriate to use this policy for student seminars, or competitions like the bridge competition at Engineering. But, it was noted that there no easy solution when travel is unscheduled. Alex noted the difference between Athletics, where student competition is part of their contract with the university, and other kinds of absences. The policy states two UAF-related sanctioned absences: missing class for an academic requirement, or representing UAF in an official capacity (NCAA athletic competition, music performance). Nothing further need be added to that. It was agreed to move the motion forward as amended.

2. New Business

a. GERC Attributes

- i. <https://gerc.community.uaf.edu/integration-2/attributes-2/>

The attributes proposed by GERC (“a” for Alaska and Arctic issues; “e” for civic engagement – which could potentially include ethics; and “d” for intercultural competence and diversity) were discussed. These could be applied to any course, but the attributes would fall under *graduation* requirements (and could occur under course requirements in majors), not necessarily under the GERs. Concern was expressed for students in STEM fields who won’t be taking a lot of social science or humanities courses in their major, and who don’t have a lot of room for accommodating those types of requirements; there is potential for funneling them into a limited number of course options. It was agreed to pick up the discussion in spring semester, but with a subgroup discussing it in the meantime. Future adoption would not likely occur before the 2018-19 academic year. The statewide GERs alignment committee is supposed to start meeting soon, and perhaps will pick up part of this discussion in the future, as well.

- b. Student Code of Conduct (discussion/text below)
 - i. Policy is vague.
 - ii. Should there be more specific or suggested language RE major vs. minor violations?
 - iii. Should we ask the dean of students to provide additional information and details and the 'joint statement...'?

Laura McCollough, dean of students, is working on a draft policy which the Provost and Alex have seen. It defines infractions and possible academic sanctions, and the procedures associated with those. The committee would like to see a copy of the draft, and they would like to invite Laura to a future meeting.

The current Catalog has a reference to a document titled “Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students” but it can’t be located on the Division of Student Services web site.

There is usually mention of the Student Code of Conduct at orientation for new students. Other means of getting the word out to students and faculty were discussed. The need for faculty to have some form of guidance specifically geared to them was noted.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.