

Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee
Minutes—October 10, 2019

Present (voting): Wendy Cook, Eric Foch, Dan Lipori, Megan Matheson, Andy Piascek, Josh Welsh, Ke Zhong

Present (non-voting): David Douglas, Gail Mackin, Julia Stringfellow

Absent (voting): Jackie Krause

Absent (non-voting): Rose Spodobalski-Brower

Guests: Kevin Archer, Don Wattam, Dawn Varnum (via speakerphone to answer questions)

Meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m. Minutes of September 26, 2019 were approved as written.

Chair Updates

Faculty Senate met last week on October 2. Changes to the attendance policy and the syllabi policy to allow accommodations for religious holidays were approved at that meeting, but the senate did make one minor wording change.

Kevin Archer and Don Wattam will be attending today's meeting to discuss the graduate school policies.

Josh received some volunteers for subgroups. The subgroups will be getting started soon.

Old Business

a. Charge 04: IP and Incomplete Grades in relation to Financial Aid

Discussion started at last week's meeting but was put on hold due to confusion surrounding how the proposed policy changes were written and presented. Over the last few years, policies have been coming to AAC from non-faculty departments, which are drafting policies to address recurring concerns or issues affecting their departments. Another option would be to have representatives from non-faculty departments consult with AAC when concerns do arise, and then the committee and the department can work together to draft a policy.

Numerous questions still exist regarding the proposed policy changes. Within the last few years, AAC made changes to the grade change form to require only the department chair's signature, except in certain circumstances, when the dean's signature would then be required. These changes were approved by Faculty Senate and were put into effect, are not reflected in the proposed policy language, which indicates that the registrar's signature is required. Additionally, the draft language indicates that faculty can enter comments or specify a conversion date in the text box when submitting an "I" grade, but faculty do not appear to have the ability to do this in MyCWU. The box is not visible for faculty, but the proposed policy draft language assumes that it exists and faculty are able to see and/or access it.

Dawn provided clarification in regards to the current process for changing "I" and "IP" grades. A grade-change form is still required when changing an "I" or an "IP" grade. Changing an "I" to a grade requires department chair approval. If the completion timeline goes beyond a year, then the college dean has to be involved. The registrar's office only verifies and changes the grade. Grade changes do not appear on student transcripts. It is not common for "I" grades to have a completion timeline that goes past a year, or needs to be extended to go past a year. Presently, faculty approval is all that's required to extend to timeline. This was in policy at some point in the past, but it is not really a formal process for now. Changing the "I" to a grade typically does not require the registrar's approval. The registrar's office will accept the grade change with the dean's approval if the timeline extends past the conversion date.

Committee members expressed additional concerns about how the proposed policy language reading "three weeks of the end of the quarter" would be received by Faculty Senate.

Discussion was tabled for the time being.

New Business

a. Charge 03: Sexual Misconduct Statement

Josh talked with Jill Hoxmeier, chair of last year's Faculty Senate Sexual Misconduct & Gender Discrimination Task Force. She suggested specific language for use in the syllabi statement. Committee members expressed concerns surrounding many additional extra requirements for course syllabi. The extra requirements may be making course syllabi too long, and students will be less likely to actually read the information when it's presented in this way. Could there be another way to give out the same information to protect students? Faculty development days used to be held at the beginning of the quarter. These are no longer held, but either bringing them back, or having something similar would be an opportunity for departments to hold trainings on how to talk with students about mandatory reporting, etc.

Dan moved to approve the sexual misconduct syllabi statement as written; Megan seconded. The policy change was approved as amended to add the policy number for HR policies about sexual harassment statements.

b. Charge 06: Graduate Studies policies

Kevin Archer and Don Wattam attended to discuss a series of new Graduate Studies policies. Currently, graduate students follow the academic policies for undergraduates. Last year Kevin worried with former registrar Lindsey Brown to create policies specific to Graduate Studies. These policies have been vetted by Graduate Council and Provost Council, and have received approval to go to Faculty Senate, but still need to be reviewed by AAC. The policies address practices that Graduate Studies has already been doing for years (e.g. admission), but essentially is a way of putting those practices into policy. The Graduate Studies office is the "registrar" for graduate students, but everything Graduate Studies does still has to pass through university policy.

Some slight changes will be need to be made to CWUP 5-90-040 and 5-90-070 but in general the rest of the existing 5-90 policies are applicable university-wide. However, changes will need to be made to clarify that these policies also apply to graduate students. CWUP 5-130 is a proposed new section of policy specifically for graduate students. All policies need to be reviewed for clarity and for inconsistencies in wording. If AAC makes substantial changes, Graduate Studies will need to review them again. Dan, Julia, and Josh will work on this and will review with AAC at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m. Financial aid policy, Graduate Studies policies, and foreign language policy will be discussed at the next meeting.

Next Meeting:
Oct. 24, 2019
Barge 304