

Faculty Council on Academic Standards
2018 – 2019 Final Report
Submitted by Sarah Stroup, Chair / 7 June 2019

Summary:

During the 2018 – 2019 academic year, the Faculty Council on Academic Standards (FCAS) met fifteen times in regular meetings, conducting its routine business of approval of new (or changed) undergraduate degrees, majors and minors for the University of Washington Seattle campus; evaluation of admissions and graduation requirements; and the selection of honors medalists and GPA cutoffs. Details of all of these actions may be found in the meeting minutes, which are located on the council's page on the UW Faculty Senate website. The FCAS Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs (SCAP), on which the Chair sits, similarly met fifteen times in this period, conducting its routine business of reviewing all new 1503 proposals (i.e., for new or changed degrees, majors, minors, and programs) arising on the Seattle campus; the FCAS Subcommittee on Admissions and Graduation (SCAG), on which the Chair sits, met ten times in this period, conducting its routine business of overseeing all changes to UWS admissions and graduation requirements, as well as reviewing petitions. A subgroup of SCAG on which the Chair sits, and which was dedicated specifically to reviewing and revising holistic admissions and SEM, met weekly for a period of two months. The UWCC (UW Curriculum Cttee), on which the Chair sits, met approximately once a month during this period. The FCAS Subcommittee on Honors, on which the Chair does not, sit met three times; once in the AU and twice in the SP.

In addition to the routine business outlined above, the following non-routine business was completed or is in progress as of the end of the 2018-2019 academic year:

❖ Template for 1503 Submissions

FCAS revised and expanded the template for 1503 submissions proposing substantially new or changed programs. This template has since been used with great effect by numerous large units across the UWS campus and has effectively streamlined what had been a particularly cumbersome process.

<https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uw-s3-cdn/wp-content/uploads/sites/71/2018/11/15153230/FCAS-1503-Preferred-Order-Final.pdf>

❖ Syllabus Guidelines

After extensive research and consultation with the Registrar and the UWCC, FCAS produced a document outlining syllabus guidelines / best practices in an effort to help guide units submitting course proposals to UWCC and individual instructors looking for structural guidelines. Included in this form is the recommendation that every course have a syllabus, either in print or online (this is especially urgent now, with the passing of the religious accommodations bill, which requires note of institutional policy on every syllabus) and that,

further, every syllabus *should* provide (1) course description (content, objectives, characteristics of class meeting), (2) course assessment / expectations (assignments, due dates, grading rubric), and (3) course policies (misconduct, accommodations, grading, use of notes, technology protocol, student resources, etc.).

https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uw-s3-cdn/wp-content/uploads/sites/71/2018/11/30085744/FCAS-Syllabus-Guidelines_113018_Final.pdf

❖ Policy on Areas of Knowledge

At the request of the UWCC and after considerable research and discussion with the UWCO and the Registrar, FCAS wrote a policy statement on AoK designation, specifying that to receive AoK designation approval from the UWCC, at least 50% of a course's content must consist of material directly related to a specific AoK.

<https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uw-s3-cdn/wp-content/uploads/sites/71/2014/05/18105857/AoK-Policy.pdf>

❖ Class B: CR / NC Designation

It was discovered in the Spring of 2018 that Scholastic Regulations did not indicate a grade point “cut off” for courses graded on a CR / NC basis, leaving such cutoffs to individual instructors and providing no consistency for students. After extensive discussion with Administration and the Registrar's office, and extensive research and discussion at FCAS, FCAS wrote and presented Class B Legislation emending section 1.A.7.a to read “Grading should be consistent with the University's policy for numerically graded courses, in which students receive credit for grades of 0.7 or greater.” The determination of a cutoff of 0.7 was made in order to bring the CR / NC designation in line with numerical grading across campus, in which grades of 0.7 and higher receive credit, and grades of 0.6 and lower do not.

The legislation passed the Faculty Senate without issue.

❖ Class B: Academic Probation

In AU 2018, FCAS was approached by the Registrar and Felipe Martinez (Executive Director of the Center for International Relations and Cultural Leadership Exchange) asking for help writing legislation to change Scholastic Regulations Chapter 107, sections 2 and 5. This request was made based on the argument that the standing academic probation policies were significantly stricter than those of peer institutions; that the standing academic probation policies disproportionately harmed Pell-eligible and first-generation students; that updates to Chapter 107 would streamline both policy and processes; that most of the policies found in Chapter 107 were written in 1964 and did not therefore reflect the realities of our current students; and that a 2.0 was already the minimum standard designated for satisfactory academic progress. FCAS wrote and presented Class B legislation on this matter in early January.

The legislation passed the Faculty Senate without issue.

❖ Ongoing Strategic Enrollment Management Collaboration

FCAS continued working closely with the Undergraduate Enrollment Management (UEM) task force to completely review and revise the enrollment practices—both of freshmen and of students transferring in—at UWS. As noted in the introductory paragraph, this work involved both frequent meetings of SCAG and the formation of a subgroup to work intensively with Admissions to determine both scope and timeline of proposed changes.

❖ Writing Advisory Group

At the request of Admissions and the SCAG subgroup, FCAS leadership established a Writing Advisory Group that will be tasked with advising Admissions on the appropriate evaluation of writing prompts on university applications.

❖ Honors

The Honors subcommittee, working with the Registrar, produced Certificates of Recognition for the finalists for the President's medals.

❖ Strike Contingencies

FCAS leadership, meeting with representatives in Administration across the campus, participated in a post mortem on the strike of SP 18 in order to help develop best practices to help faculty and students in the event of future such actions.

❖ Stage Zero

FCAS worked with the Registrar, the Vice Provost, and stakeholders across campus to create the Stage Zero / Notice of Proposal process, which was first tested, with great success, in March 2019. The NOP process is now up and running smoothly.