

**University of Washington**  
**Faculty Council on Academic Standards**

December 4, 2020  
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Zoom

**Meeting Synopsis:**

1. Call to order
  2. Consent agenda
    - a. Minutes from November 20, 2020
  3. Chair's Updates
  4. Diversity Requirement - see letter from K. Reynolds
  5. Transfer Admissions
  6. Good of the order
  7. Adjourn
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**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 1:31p.m.

**2. Consent agenda**

**a. Minutes from November 20, 2020**

Chair Huppert asked the council for a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. The council voted to approve the consent agenda.

**3. Chair's Updates**

Chair Huppert noted the 3 FCAS Class B legislations were passed unanimously.

**4. Diversity Requirement - see letter from K. Reynolds**

K. Reynolds (VP of community affairs in the BSU) submitted a letter to Chair Huppert (Exhibit 1).

The council also reviewed President Cauce's response to the BSU petition.

A member highlighted the importance of inviting leadership to this discussion.

The ASUW representative has been working with Reynolds to create discussion forums on defining an expansion of the diversity requirement.

Another member noted it was student agitation which brought forth the original diversity requirement.

Another council member noted that students have voiced their concerns about how diversity courses are reviewed. The FCAS subcommittee working on general education is also working on this issue.

Tina Miller mentioned the college curriculum committee is the group which determines if a course fits the diversity credit definition, not the UW curriculum committee. There is no

university standard for what a diversity course is. A council member noted the usefulness of a numeration of the total required diversity credits.

The Reynold's letter suggested bringing this requirement in alignment with other graduation requirements. The diversity credits are currently the lowest among general education requirements.

For transfer students, most Washington State Community Colleges require 5 diversity credits in associates degrees. If a student completed the direct transfer, their credits are honored. Unless it is a direct evaluation or the student did not complete the direct transfer, then those credits are reviewed individually.

Most of the UW diversity courses are 5 credit courses, and FCAS will need to review how many students take only the current required credit hours (3 credits) or more. Members considered building a diversity curriculum to determine what students should be taking. An analysis of the courses and what diversity content they cover would also need to occur. The UW degree audit team can determine the number of credits students have achieved to graduate but they cannot determine which courses have been taken. They can assess students who have graduated in the last 5 years and see which classes were flagged at diversity to determine at which level the courses are taught, their number of credits, and if they overlap with other courses.

A member suggested speaking with faculty who developed the diversity minor to UW Seattle. The council discussion will continue in the next meeting. Additional conversation amongst members occurred via chat (Exhibit 2).

## **5. Transfer Admissions**

Members questioned how to reach out to departments to outline what the issues are and make suggestions to promote changes to those practices. The current topics of chance for transfer admissions include the timeline of admission and individual department admissions. A member noted there are classes not taught at Community Colleges, which makes it more difficult for transfer students who need to take those courses as prerequisites. It was suggested to confer with the Continuum College or summer quarter options to help those incoming students meet those extra classes.

Dave Sundine noted UW is a part of the WA State direct transfer agreement which requires all students (transfer or not) are reviewed on the same academic standard, not the same timelines. There is precedent for alternative admission timelines for transfer students and enrolled students.

FCAS will consider preparing specific departments, which may be simplest to adjust, on ways in which to change their system. This will move through the individual department curriculum committees and then the 1503 process.

A member highlighted the need to discuss these issues with the financial aid office.

SCAP members will develop a draft program change using the Math Department as a test case to determine how these changes can be implemented.

**6. Good of the order**

Chair Huppert thanked the council for their work during 2020.

**7. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

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*Minutes by Alexandra Portillo, council analyst, xanport@uw.edu*

**Present:**

**Faculty Code Section 21-61 A:** Ann Huppert, Mike Lockwood, Marjorie Olmstead, Joel Ross, Scott Spaulding, Jennifer Turns, Steven Groening

**Faculty Code Section 21-61 B:** Clara Coyote, Jennifer Payne, Susanne Redalje, Luz Iniguez, Sarah Garner

**President's Designee:** Phil Reid

**Regularly invited guests:** Helen Garrett, Tina Miller, Jason Johnson, Dave Sundine, Dan Feetham, LeAnne Jones Wiles, Janice DeCosmo, Michaelann Jundt

**Absent:**

**Faculty Code Section 21-61 A:** Zhi Lin, Tom Lee

**Faculty Code Section 21-61 B:** Joe Wilson

**Exhibits**

Exhibit 1 – BSU-Reynolds letter to FCAS-12.1.20

Exhibit 2 – FCAS 12.4 chat transcript

November 27, 2020

Ann Huppert  
Faculty Council on Academic Standards  
University of Washington Faculty Senate

Dear Professor Huppert,

My name is Kiana Reynolds and I am writing to you regarding the request to increase the credit requirement for diversity on behalf of the UW Seattle Black Student Union. To provide context as to what brought this request to the table, this past summer, we mourned the losses of many Black lives to police brutality, including Breona Taylor, Elijah McClain, George Floyd and countless others. While this is not a new issue, it was brought to national attention the issues of systemic racism globally. With this momentum, the Black Student Union at the Seattle campus decided to bring this conversation down to the campus level, and composed a list of seven demands, with the hopes to address the systemic issues that exist at the University, and if implemented, would create an environment that was more welcoming for Black students on campus. The seven demands are listed as following:

1. Break all ties with SPD
2. Disarm and divest from UWPD
3. Allocate funds to Black RSOs and the American Ethnic Studies department
4. Hire more Black Faculty
5. **Increase the Diversity credit requirement** and make African Studies a major
6. Remove statues of racist figures
7. Fund and expand mental health resources for all UW students

It is worth mentioning that as of October 14th, the Graduate & Professional Student Senate has resolved to call “on UW to promote the well-being of Black students, faculty, and staff,” including increasing “the diversity credit requirement for all undergraduate students and establish a major in African Studies.” This resolution demonstrates broad support for the diversity requirement across undergraduate students, graduate and professional students that represent all three campuses.

In its current standing, as mentioned in the Scholastic Regulations, chapter 114 section 2.B.1.d, it is required that a student takes, at minimum, 3 credits of courses “with a focus on the sociocultural, political, and economic diversity of human experience at local, regional, or global scales,” in order to “help develop an understanding of the complexities of living in increasingly diverse and interconnected societies.” It is also worth pointing out that across the three campuses, the diversity requirement can satisfy other Areas of Knowledge requirements. To break it down by campus, UW Seattle offers the broadest amount of courses, while UW Tacoma and Bothell offer a fewer selection for their students, which makes sense relative to the size of each campus (in addition to the fact that students can take classes across all three campuses).

As a contributing author to the request to increase the diversity credit requirement, I am particularly concerned about the lack of rigor for the Diversity requirement relative to the other required Areas of Knowledge. In comparison to all of the requirements on campus, diversity holds the lowest amount of credits, 3. By only requiring a student to take 3 credits, which is

lower than the amount of credits the average class offers (5), a message is being sent that diversity is not as important as other requirements, such as writing, which has a 12 credit requirement or any of the Areas of Knowledge, all which require 25 credits. This message is one that students who take required classes understand, as they are encouraged to take only one entry-level course. Likewise, academic units are not encouraged to hire tenure-track faculty qualified to address issues of diversity in the humanities, social sciences or natural sciences.

To once again restate the Scholastic Regulations, the goal of this requirement is to help students develop an understanding of how complex and increasingly diverse and interconnected our societies are. One quarter at the university level is not enough to unlearn elitist or racist practice, or to even have an understanding of the full impact of systemic racism globally. While it is important to simply learn about a variety of different cultures outside of your own, it is crucial that students are educated on how their privilege allows them to thrive in society, and how students can use that privilege to uplift groups who have been historically marginalized, and systematically oppressed. While many of the graduation requirements are significant in expanding one's knowledge and exploring new ideas, none of those topics will be nearly as relevant as diversity once students graduate and move on to the real, working world, regardless of one's major. Whether you are an engineer coding AI, a doctor treating patients or a teacher educating students, you will never encounter a monolithic group of people, and it is important to navigate that type of environment.

It is important that the University of Washington takes the steps to emphasize the importance of diversity in our society, and work towards ensuring that future generations are prepared to navigate its complexity. In increasing the credit requirement for diversity across all three campuses, the UW will open the eyes of many students to a broader view of the world, and promote empathy and understanding of where people are coming from. As an institutional body, this Faculty Senate legislation will likewise send a message to academic units that they need to hire tenure-stream faculty who incorporate Diversity courses into their teaching and scholarship. This is crucial for both those departments that have met the historical demands of the Black Student Union on the Seattle campus, such as Ethnic Studies, and for all STEM departments about what the university values in its teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

I hope that you all take this into consideration. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kiana Reynolds  
UW Black Student Union  
VP of Community Affairs  
She/Her/Hers

## 12/4 FCAS chat log – diversity discussion

13:57:04 From Joel Ross : I would supportive claim that "1 course is insufficient depth"

13:58:01 From Jennifer A. Turns : I am also curious about how many classes we offer...

14:05:00 From Joel Ross : Are we empowered to ask/demand each unit give us a list of their diversity courses?

14:05:29 From Tina Miller : Joel: we can run that information by college and probably department.

14:06:06 From Michael Lockwood : Can we have a list of the courses flagged as "diversity" courses? Seems like this should exist. Otherwise, how does the University certify that students meet graduation requirements.

14:06:20 From Tina Miller : We can probably get the "learning objectives" for the courses marked as Diversity for the ones added or changed since the Curriculum Management system went into place.

14:07:35 From Tina Miller : Michael -- yes. That's easily available.

14:09:30 From Marjorie A. Olmstead : 400-level diversity classes that require a 200-level diversity course as a prerequisite likely aren't how students meet the requirement — can we check on prerequisite?

14:09:34 From Jennifer A. Turns : Per Joel's question — here are examples from Anthropology in winter: Anth 215 - Medical anthropology and global health, Anth 345- Women International Economic Development,  
Anth 376 - Anthropology of disability, and Anth 417 - Surfacing the stories of hanford: Local and global health disparities

14:10:21 From Luz Iniguez, she/her : agree

14:12:04 From Stephen Groening : <https://divminor.washington.edu/courses>

14:12:18 From Tina Miller : Most are at the 300 and 400 level.

14:12:41 From Tina Miller : And often the students are picking up the Diversity requirement as part of their major requirements.

14:15:54 From Michael Lockwood : So, if "desired end state" is symbolically supporting student demand for more diversity course work, changing requirement from 3 to 5 credits may suffice.

Alternatively, if we focus on "rigor" of diversity instruction, we may be looking like reshaping the requirement to be a "diversity sequence" with (at least) an introductory and advanced course.

14:17:01 From Joel Ross : Alternative: "rigor" measured as "breadth or depth"--so 2 courses (not necessary sequence) would also achieve that end.

14:18:39 From Michael Lockwood : From my experience as an operational planner, neither of the afore mentioned options meets the true intent of "desired end state".  
Rather, it would need to be expressed as "...a UW graduate, as a good citizen should understand and be capable of employing x, y, z diversity principles..."

14:19:38 From Michael Lockwood : Then we would work backwards to determine courses required to achieve the end state

14:20:35 From Jennifer A. Turns : And what do \*students think they have learned\* in relation to diversity

14:21:31 From Joel Ross : The schol-regs actually have a statement of what students should be learning. IMO it's a bit soft and 2013-ish, but there is precedent to including those objectives in what we put forward

14:21:54 From Marjorie A. Olmstead : The 2013 legislation says "The requirement is meant to help students develop an understanding of the complexities of living in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world."

14:30:45 From Jason Johnson : Thanks for pulling that out, Marjorie. How do we know whether a person has developed an understanding of such complexities?

(Rhetorical question, but one that would be the beginning of an assessment of student learning as a result of the DIV requirement.)

15:03:42 From Jennifer A. Turns : This has been an amazing discussion!

15:05:00 From Helen B. Garrett (She/Her) : Thank you, everyone. Really encouraging meeting!