

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Academic Standards
January 9, 2015
1:30pm – 3:00pm
Gerberding 142

Meeting synopsis:

1. Call to order
 2. Review of the Minutes from December 5, 2014
 3. SCAP report
 4. Chair's Report
 5. Adjourn
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1) Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Kramer at 1:32pm.

2) Review of the minutes from December 5th, 2014

A few small grammatical errors were corrected, and the minutes from December 5th were approved as amended.

3) SCAP report

Old Routine Business

#1 – Near Eastern Languages and Civilization

Went to Tri-campus Policy for review and received no comment.
Passes unanimously by the council.

#2 – Near Eastern Languages and Civilization

Went to Tri-campus Policy for review and received no comment.
Passes unanimously by the council.

#3 – Early Childhood and Family Studies

Passes unanimously by the council.

New Routine Business

- #1 – Linguistics
#3 – Bioengineering

Passes unanimously by the council.

#2 – Slavic Languages and Literatures

Held for continuation policy and further SCAP review.

New Non-Routine Business

#1 – Comparative History of Ideas

Stroup explained this CHID proposal was denied by SCAP because insufficient justification was given for the need to go to competitive admissions. Kramer noted she sent an email to the chair of CHID explaining the council's rationale on the decision and had advised CHID that they could accomplish their goals with a minimum admission requirement - the chair of CHID noted they would take this advice into consideration.

Someone asked if the occurrence of programs proposing to go to competitive admissions was always related to enrollment capacity. Kramer replied that capacity issues were the most frequently cited reason in the last 5-6 years for this request.

Kramer noted even if the competitive admissions proposal was accepted for CHID, the continuation policy aspect would **not** have been accepted because of its stringent regulations. This was also explained to CHID so they would not return with a continuation policy attached to a minimum admission proposal, expecting approval.

#2 – Digital Arts and Experimental Media

The proposal is held for a 1503 that suspends admissions to major.

#3 – Mathematics

The Mathematics proposal requested "competitive admissions process for all options within both the Bachelor of Arts degree in Mathematics and Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics" (SCAP Report January 16th). Stroup explained the proposal was approved, but within SCAP there was concern about the swift change and the effects it would have on students. Correspondence was received from Mathematics and they explained they planned on introducing the admissions changes over the next two years. SCAP believed this to be a reasonable plan.

Discussion ensued on competitive majors using competitive admissions for a way to control enrollment. Kramer explained often competitive majors want to go to competitive admissions because they want to control the size of their cohorts. Additionally, they want to funnel only interested students into the major, and not students who will not be able to progress in the major. A question arose of if 1503s include enrollment capacities as a set number. It was clarified competitive admissions is not fixing a number for enrollment; however, it does provide the program with the ability to control that number to a certain degree. A point arose explaining that enrollment capacity decisions often have fiscal influences and physical space capacities also often influence enrollment target capacities. Another point arose detailing how increased competition among students to be able to enroll in upper-division classes inevitably effects some students' time-to-degree.

Discussion ensued on the Tri-Campus Policy review and how the major change notice does not get sent to students but only voting faculty. Moreover, it is the responsibility of student representatives at FCAS meetings to forward these notices to interested students.

The proposal received unanimous approval.

#4 – Social Welfare

The proposal is held for corrections to continuation policy and further SCAP review.

Written Guidelines for Competitive Majors

A point was made that written guidelines currently are not in existence for competitive majors. The UW is growing every year and there is fear that students will become admitted to the University but not into their desired major. A point was made that students apply to the university with an intention to enter a certain field that may or may not be available to them per the structure of that program. It was agreed upon that there should be written guidelines to assist a department or major that wants to go competitive, and as there are currently none in existence, FCAS should produce the guidelines. Sarah Stroup and SCAP would be preparing some possible guidelines ready for FCAS in either two or four weeks.

Keil pointed out he would like to frame the discussion in SCAP over three resources.

- 1) Intellectual – Intellectual capacity to teach more majors is missing.
- 2) Physical – Space to teach more majors is missing.
- 3) Fiscal – The money to pay for the other outlets to teach more majors is missing.

A question over definition of intellectual resources came about; Keil explained “intellectual” might include the faculty to teach more majors.

Discussion ensued on how competitive majors have some positive outlets. Majors can choose what a passing grade is in a class, and designate pre-reqs to move on to other classes. A point came up on how making a major competitive does give the major the ability to assess potential students on something other than a transcript item; this is similar to the holistic admission process for admission to the university.

Sarah Stroup noted that these points are all good on why competitive majors can be an asset to the university system, but she noted that there needs to be a balance between competitive and non-competitive majors, and FCAS does not have the power to cap how many programs go competitive. Right now the process is first-come first-served. There was a general sentiment of fear that a hierarchical system of majors would arise, instead of a free and flexible system that better serves students.

A point came up how programs can go competitive when they have need for it, but after it is granted, there is no more oversight to see if the structure is still benefitting the program or the university after a period of time.

Kramer noted that she would be happy to bring this to the attention of the SEC and the SCPB, and SCAP will return with some more data and input on writing these guidelines.

4) Chair’s Report

Oversight of Courses [Exhibit 1]

This report was created by FCAS at the end of last year. Kramer brought the report to the council for review and questions and was asked to make the document available to the council, which has been done through the group’s shared webpage, Catalyst.

She explained that FCAS is the council that deals with arising issues when there is a question that cannot be negotiated at the level of the school or college concerning courses, equivalencies, and overlap.

A question arose about how the other UW campuses feel about this change in FCAS authority. Kramer explained this question is in the hands of the Senate Leadership – moreover, she did not hear any objections in the UWCC meeting, in which representatives from the Tacoma and Bothell campuses were present.

Overlap and Equivalency Issues

#1 – Chemistry 142, 152, 162

Kramer updated the council that the equivalencies between the Bothell and Tacoma Campuses will be broken. The Chemistry department has notified the other campuses of these changes. Kramer noted that there is some question on how the University will handle these changes coming into effect for the current students of chemistry. The registrar's office has suggested renumbering the courses for the purpose of starting clean. Kramer noted the breadth of documents that will need to be revised to reflect these changes (advising documents, flyers, syllabi, and the like) is substantive and presents a problem of heavy paperwork. She suggested that FCAS could consider changing these courses all at once.

Kramer noted there are difficult issues for students currently continuing in the sequence. However, she noted that Chemistry is working to combat these issues. Kramer noted that this question pertaining to Chemistry's equivalencies will come back to the council.

#2 – LSJ and the Law School course overlap

The Program of Law, Societies, and Justice proposed a new course entitled "Mental Health and the Law." UWCC approved this course and sent out notifications. The Law School objected to this new LSJ course because they already offer a course of the same name at the 500-level. Moreover, the Law School admits undergraduate students into this course, which creates further conflict. Kramer noted that she made it clear to LSJ that it is their responsibility to negotiate with the Law School over this conflict and LSJ has agreed to change the course title so that it is not exactly the same as the Law School course. Kramer noted to LSJ she would bring this issue to the attention of FCAS. She asked the council if there were any objections to her course of action in allowing LSJ to keep the course and have them change the course title, to which there were none.

#3 – College of the Environment & Arts and Sciences course overlap

Arts and Sciences has objected to new courses approved for the College of the Environment that parallel existing courses but are not equivalent. The concern is that students might take a course from the College of the Environment and then switch majors from CoE, only to find they will need to retake that course once they enter another field. A point was made that the professors of these courses understand that these courses are very different, because of their perspectives, whereas the other invested parties might see them as being more similar.

More on this will come to the council in the future.

Profanity in Course Titles

Kramer asked the council how they feel about the use of profanity in course titles and opened the question to discussion. A point came about on how there are different types of profanity - there are lewd words and offensive words. Kramer clarified that her concern is from a transcript standpoint, and opened discussion. Someone expressed they do not like profanity in courses titles from a transcript standpoint. Another opinion was that this should be a decision of the faculty member, as well as of the student who chooses to take the course. Badger, the student in the room and on the council, noted that she feels it would draw attention to the class and not draw negative attention from a future employer.

Stroup noted that students do not know who will be offended by seeing this on their transcript and that she personally would not want to see it. Someone else pointed out that they would not have a negative reaction to seeing it. Yet Stroup re-clarified - it is not known who will see the profanity and how they will feel about it – and all it does is add an unnecessary potential flag for future readers. Someone else noted that, depending on the department, it might be warranted, and the use would not be frivolous.

Kramer clarified that the chair of the department in question decided that they would not use the profanity in the course title– and that she is only bringing this question before the council to promote discussion. Several people noted that the decision should lie with the department.

5) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.

Minutes by Joey Burgess, council support analyst, jmbg@uw.edu

Present: **Faculty:** Patricia Kramer, Peter Hoff, Don Janssen, Richard Keil, David Pengra, Dan Ratner, D. Shores, Sarah Stroup, Thaisa Way
Ex Officio representatives: Haley Badger, LeAnne Jones Wiles
Guests: Janice DeCosmo, Virjean Edwards, Robert Corbett

Absent: **Faculty:** Phil Brock, John Deehr, Robert Harrison
President’s designee: Phil Ballinger
Ex Officio representatives: Robin Chin Roemer

Exhibits

Exhibit 1 - Oversight of courses