

Faculty Council on Academic Standards annual report for 2013 – 2014 academic year

During the academic year 2013 – 2014, the Faculty Council on Academic Standards (FCAS) conducted its routine business of approval of 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 honors GPA cutoffs. Details of these actions can be found in the meeting minutes, which are located on the Council website. Additionally, the following non-routine business was conducted.

1. After the successful creation via Class B legislation in Spring Quarter 2013 of a new category of admission for undergraduate students (called “limited admission”), the Council reviewed the student regulations to determine where additional changes might be necessary to bring these regulations into accord with this new designation of students. One change of note was the modification of the category name to “program-specific” which describes the purpose of the category more accurately than “limited.” During the review of the Student Regulations, other areas were found to be outdated and/or inaccurate; these changes were included in what came to be a relatively comprehensive review of the Student Regulations. After these changes were approved by the Council, they were reviewed by the Senate Executive Committee, referred to the Faculty Senate, and proposed and passed in the Faculty Senate. The Faculty at large did not object to these changes.
2. The second fully-online undergraduate major was proposed by the College of Arts and Sciences in Fall Quarter 2013. Dubbed “Integrated Social Science” (ISS), this major is an interdisciplinary and integrated approach to the study of social science. After several preliminary reviews by both the Council and the Subcommittee on Academic Programs, the proposal was passed by FCAS and continued through the remaining steps of the standard approval process. The performance of ISS will be evaluated by FCAS in the third year, using the criteria set forth in the proposal.
3. The Council provided support for two task forces: one on enrollment management and the other on online education. David Pengra served on the online education task force and his report can be found in the last Council meeting minutes. Patricia Kramer represents the Council on the ongoing enrollment management task force. Her interim report will be new business for the 2014 – 2015 academic year.
4. The Council changed how domestic non-resident (out of Washington State, but in the US) undergraduate student applications are evaluated. Previously, domestic nonresident applicants were evaluated using the same holistic criteria, which include consideration of disadvantageous economic background, as resident applicants. Now, domestic non-resident students will not be admitted principally due to economic disadvantage. This change is necessary, because the University of Washington does not provide institutional support for domestic nonresident students and they are not eligible for Washington State Need Grants. If a domestic nonresident student who has substantial financial need chooses to attend UW, they have few options to finance their education other than loans, while in their home state the student would be, potentially, eligible for their state’s educational need grants and institutional support. UW financial aid counselors have found that some of

these students do not understand the complexities of educational funding with financially disastrous results.

5. With the substantial assistance of the Office of the Registrar, the Council overhauled the website which describes the process for changing or creating new degrees, majors, or minors (colloquially referred to as "the 1503 process"). This website had become outdated and some information was difficult to follow or access. No policies were changed in this renovation. Initial response to this revamp has been positive.

6. The Council, acting at the urging of the Office of the Registrar and the Office of the Provost, reviewed the hierarchy associated with course creations and changes. Due to a number of ongoing issues associated with such things as "ownership" of course content and lack of transparency in the process, FCAS provided to the Faculty Senate leadership a proposal to clarify faculty governance of this process. This proposal is being reviewed Summer 2014.

7. In Spring Quarter 2013, the Faculty passed a change to the Student Regulations requiring all undergraduate students to complete a 3-credit diversity requirements in order to graduate. Although this legislation was detailed, substantial implementation issues had to be addressed over the 2013 – 2014 academic year. These issues are resolved and the implementation guidelines are attached as an appendix to this report. The requirements will be in force for freshmen and transfer students who begin in fall 2014. Due to a number of logistical issues, some flexibility will be allowed for this first cohort of students.

In the 2014 – 2015 academic year, the Council anticipates that, in addition to its routine business, the following new non-routine business will be conducted.

1. Review/creation of guidelines for the creation and modification of majors. Currently, the Council has specific guidelines for the creation of minors and degrees, but no such guidelines exist for majors.

2. Substantial review of holistic admissions. While holistic review is a cornerstone of the University of Washington's admissions process, the changing mix of the undergraduate population has produced strains within the University. These include: proliferation of competitive majors; an ongoing question of English language competency among international students; and questions about the efficacy of direct freshman admission to majors.

3. Review of the designation and requirements of "distance learning" courses. In consultation and partnership with the Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning, a review of how fully-online and hybrid courses are categorized is planned. Other questions associated with courses will also be addressed.

Council Membership

Council Members for 2013-14 Academic Year:

Faculty: Patricia Kramer (Anthropology), Phil Brock (Economics), Susanna Cunningham (Biobehavioral Nursing & Health Systems), Robert Harrison (School of Forest Resources), Peter Hoff (Statistics), Don Janssen (Civil Engineering), Richard Keil (Oceanography), John D. Deehr (Naval Science), David Pengra (Physics), Haideh Salehi-Esfahani (Economics), Jennifer Taggart (Mathematics).

Presidential Designee: Phillip Ballinger, Associate Vice Provost for Enrollment

Ex-Officio Representatives: Robin Chin Roemer (ALUW), Mel Wensel (UAAC), Jeffrey McNerney (ASUW), Grant Kollet (PSO).

Diversity Requirement Course Approval Guidelines
Prepared by the Diversity Requirement Implementation Task Force
Revised July 2014

In May 2013 the faculty of the University of Washington approved a diversity graduation requirement for all bachelor's degrees. President Young signed the legislation June 13. The proposal for the requirement originated with the Student Diversity Coalition, was supported by ASUW and the University Diversity Council, and was discussed and worked on by the Faculty Council on Multicultural Affairs, the Faculty Council on Women in Academia, the Faculty Council on Academic Standards, the Senate Executive Committee, and the Faculty Senate.

In July 2013 Provost Ana Mari Cauce appointed an implementation task force composed of those deans and undergraduate curriculum directors overseeing course review and approval processes in the schools, colleges, and campuses. In a letter to deans, she stated, "each college and school (in consultation with departments, where relevant) will identify courses that meet the criteria of the requirement. We look to college and school curriculum committees to ensure that the spirit of the requirement is followed."

The revisions to the original guidelines include a restatement of bullet number six in the criteria below to clarify its meaning and the addition of guidelines for designating study abroad, one-time offerings, courses with varying syllabi depending on instructor, and transfer courses.

The Registrar's Office has assigned the designation DIV for diversity courses. Courses, when approved by the school, college or campus curriculum committee, should be sent to the Registrar' Office at: uwcr@uw.edu.

Criteria

To ensure consistency across the University, the Task Force recommends that courses fulfilling the Diversity Requirement and designated DIV:

1. Be at least three credits;
2. Have diversity, as defined in the legislation, as central and explicit in the course;
3. Have the relevant aspect(s) of diversity explicit in the course title and course description that appear in the University course catalog;
4. Have the relevant aspect(s) of diversity explicit in the learning goals and activities detailed in course syllabus;
5. Retain the central emphasis on diversity regardless of the instructor;
6. Encourage critical thinking about race, ethnicity, sex and gender, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, religion, creed, age, and/or socioeconomic status, especially in relation to power, inequality, marginality, and social movements, and communication across cultural differences.

Those developing and approving courses should refer to the language requirement for additional topics and learning objectives that might be covered:

No fewer than 3 credits of courses, approved by the appropriate school or college, which focus on the sociocultural, political, and economic diversity of human experience at local, regional, or global scales. This requirement is meant to help the student develop an understanding of the complexities of living in increasingly diverse and interconnected societies. Courses focus on cross-cultural analysis and communication; and historical and contemporary inequities such as those associated with race, ethnicity, class, sex and gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ability, religion, creed, age, or socioeconomic status. Course activities should encourage thinking critically on topics such as power, inequality, marginality, and social movements, and effective communication across cultural differences.
Faculty Code, Chapter 114, Section 2, Subsection B.1.d.

One-Time Course Offerings

Courses meet the recommended criteria above. The recommended process for approval of one-time offerings of courses that do not have permanent DIV designation (e.g., special topics, survey courses) is:

1. Course goes through appropriate department-level approval.
2. Course goes through appropriate college approval, unless otherwise delegated to UW Curriculum Committee.
3. Course goes to UW Curriculum Committee:
 - a. Approved courses will be noted by Registrar in Time Schedule and curriculum table for effective quarter
 - b. Deadline is several weeks prior to registration, but this can apply to a student's record at any time before graduation
 - c. Review will be based on course syllabus
 - d. For courses not formally noted (in title or description) as special topics, UW (or College) Curriculum Committee may request formal title or description change (for future offerings).

Study Abroad Courses

While study abroad can provide students with unique valuable insights into a culture other than their own, it is not sufficient for the DIV designation solely to study in another country. For the designation, a study abroad course would also have to meet the content guidelines laid out above, including an explicit focus on diversity topics.

1. Direct exchange coursework will not count toward DIV requirement, unless evaluated as equivalent to an existing course with permanent DIV designation.
2. UW Faculty-led programs will go through one-time course process above, in coordination with the Office of International Programs and Exchanges.
3. Topics of study abroad courses should meet the content guidelines established in the legislation and recommended by the Task Force Guidelines. It is not sufficient to study in-country without explicit focus on diversity topics.

Independent Study

As is the case for Areas of Knowledge, independent study will generally not fulfill the DIV requirement. Exceptions will be considered through college/university graduation petition process.

Transfer Courses

In evaluating courses for the diversity requirement for transfer students, the Task Force recommends using the transfer evaluation process currently used for other general education requirements, with these guidelines:

1. Use existing course equivalency process for community colleges courses with UW equivalents (i.e., the Transfer Equivalency Guide).
2. For students transferring without an existing course equivalency from a Washington state community college, advisors will evaluate courses as they currently do with other general education requirements (e.g., Areas of Knowledge), using the criteria in these guidelines for reviewing diversity-related content.

Course Development Resources

The Center for Teaching and Learning is providing ongoing workshops and consultation this year and next to assist faculty members to develop courses for the diversity requirement. Contact theCTL@uw.edu.