

Faculty Council on Academic Standards

2007-2008 Annual Report

Submitted by George Dillon, Chair

The Faculty Council on Academic Standards (FCAS) is responsible for matters of university policy relating to the academic affairs of the university, such as admissions policy, scholastic standards, university graduation requirements, and inter-institutional academic standards (University Handbook, Volume 2, Part 4, Chapter 42, Section 42- 34).

This responsibility falls into the following three primary areas:

1. Review new and revised undergraduate (and some professional) degree programs,
2. Provide guidance to the Office of Admissions in the development of operating policies and procedures for both admissions and graduation, and
3. Establish criteria for Baccalaureate Honors and select Medalists (highest-level awards), as well as related issues.

FCAS addresses these three primary areas through subcommittees, and works on related issues either through working groups or the committee as a whole (as appropriate). FCAS met every other week (except for finals and break weeks) during the academic year, with the subcommittees and working groups meeting separately. The following is a summary of the activities of FCAS for the 2007-08 academic year.

The work flow this year was somewhat unusual in that two special committees were established: one, the Academic Rigor Committee was jointly constituted with membership from FCAS and the Faculty Council on Instructional Quality (John Schaufelberger and Gail Stygall from FCAS, Don Janssen and Nana Lowell from FCIQ). That committee developed a questionnaire to send to departments concerning their use and oversight of independent studies courses. Its final report has yet to be rendered.

The second *ad hoc* committee was established by the Provost to review the current University policies and programs with respect to proficiency in English Language. This committee included five members of FCAS (Todd Mildon, Phil Ballinger, Debbie Wiegand, George Dillon, and Susanna Cunningham). It will render its report on July 14, 2008. It is understood that any recommendations concerning admissions or graduation policy will be presented to FCAS for discussion and approval. (The present English Language Proficiency requirement is a graduation requirement.) Pending that discussion (presumably a Fall 2008 item), John Schaufelberger, Susanna Cunningham, and I met on June 19th with Todd Mildon, Chris Gilmore, and Phil Ballinger and approved guidelines the Registrar might apply to applications for waiver of an English Language Program placement. These guidelines are principally three:

- student must have a 3.0 or better in English composition courses in community college,
- student must have a 3.0 overall GPA in community college courses,
- student must have shown reasonable and consistent performance in community college courses (i. e., not a lot of dropped courses and incompletes)

We anticipate these guidelines will be replaced by a more regularly-arrived-at and faculty-approved set of University policies sometime next year.

Review of New and Revised Degree Programs. The Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs (SCAP¹; Jay Johnson, Chair) reviews all proposals for new majors (and options within majors) and minors and all changes in requirements for existing majors and minors. FCAS, acting on SCAP's recommendations, approved 53 applications for changes in major requirements and new minor and major options, including minors in Marine Biology and in Korean. It approved elimination of one minor (Public Health) where the department's energies are devoted to developing their major. It approved a new major option in Biology (Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation) which is a consolidation of two existing options.

1 This appears to be the correct, if potentially misleading title for SCAP, since we also have an Admissions and Graduation subcommittee. In the case of SCAP, the admissions referred to are to majors and programs rather than the University.

Requests by a couple of departments for specific GPA admissions requirements and limitations on reapplication for the major were turned down, with the issues raised by these requests being referred to a new *ad hoc* committee to commence formulating guidelines for admission, continuation, and graduation in majors, which committee to begin meeting in the Fall.

Jennifer Payne was again note taker and coordinator for the subcommittee (except for a brief family leave) and her work was outstanding—reliable, energetic, and accurate. Thanks also to Matt Winslow for filling in during Jennifer's leave.

Awards: With Laura Newell and John Schaufelberger as co-Chairs, the Awards subcommittee met and recommended students for academic prizes, including the President's and Transfer Student Medals.

Admissions and Graduation Subcommittee: With Susanna Cunningham as Chair (other members: Rick Keil, Don Janssen, Phil Ballinger, Matt Winslow, and Gunnar Almgren), this subcommittee focused on reviewing the English Proficiency requirement for International Students and recommended adding the SAT and ACT test scores as indicators of English language proficiency (along with the TOEFL score, which is at present the only indicator accepted for this group of students). This subcommittee, along with a comparable one in the Faculty Council on TriCampus Programs, originated a piece of Class B legislation articulating a policy for enrolling in courses on UW campuses other than the student's home campus. This policy passed through all levels of approval and should appear in the *Faculty Code* on line soon.

Meeting with Phil Ballinger and Todd Mildon, this subcommittee approved an interim policy deferring the English Language Proficiency requirement for several transfer students from community colleges pending the review of the English Language Proficiency program by the Provost's Task Force. This *ad hoc* approval was extended and modified in the meeting of June 19th mentioned earlier.

Modified Procedures: FCAS requested that the “routine” recommendations in the SCAP reports be presented as a “consent agenda” and not presented individually for (non)discussion at the meeting. We made some headway toward implementing this change. (Old habits die hard.) Also, we began to include as a regular agenda item a report from Robert Corbett concerning the disposition of the recommendations we forward to them and other matters of state policy that are germane to FCAS's work.

For the future: FCAS should receive the Joint Committee on Academic Rigor's report in the Fall. It should keep closely in touch and receive the recommendations from the Provost's Task Force on English Language Proficiency. (If that committee continues to meet in the Fall, John Schaufelberger and Susanna Cunningham will presumably continue as members.) FCAS resolved to create the (sub)committee on guidelines for departmental grade-based graduations requirements (see Minutes of Meeting of 05-16-08 for charge) and that should be created.

Not done: FCAS did not invite or receive a report from Pat Dobel concerning the progress of the special admit students. Other councils may be scrutinizing some aspects of this program, but FCAS has a direct concern with the success of students admitted under special criteria. This was an oversight on my part and should be corrected.

Committee and Subcommittee Membership

Active Faculty Council on Academic Standards Members for 2006-07 Academic Year: Philip Ballinger, Robert Corbett, Susanne Cunningham, Vicki Hogg Day, George Dillon (Chair), Richard Fitzpatrick, Cynthia Fugate, Brad Holt, Dave Isenminger, Rick Keil, Doug McManaway, Todd Mildon, Anita Rocha, John Sahr, Sarah Stroup, Debbie Wiegand, Matt Winslow

Admissions and Graduation Subcommittee Members: Gunnar Almgren, Susanna Cunningham (Chair), Rick Keil

Awards Subcommittee Members: John Schaufelberger, Laura Newell

Subcommittee on Academic Programs Members: David Isenminger, Robert Corbett, George Dillon, Richard Fitzpatrick, Jay Johnson, (Chair), Todd Mildon, Jennifer Payne (Recorder), David Sayers, Debbie Wiegand, Matt Winslow

Recorder: Melissa Kane

Submitted by: George Dillon, Chair, Faculty Council on Academic Standards, 2007-08