

**Faculty Council on Academic Standards**  
2006-2007 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 2006-07 academic year.

Review of New and Revised Degree Programs. The Subcommittee on Academic Programs (SCAP; Steve Keith, then 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 28 changes in programs and 17 new programs, including one special certificate in Dental Health through MEDEX Northwest. Some of the new program proposals were interdisciplinary minors, and in the course of reviewing them, FCAS realized there was no general guideline about what *interdisciplinary* meant. We developed a list of four criteria that an interdisciplinary minor should meet and published it on the Council website. These are:

1. An interdisciplinary minor should involve faculty from at least two distinct academic units, and faculty from these units should form a joint coordinating/supervising committee to provide academic oversight.
2. A significant amount of coursework from units outside a student's major department or program should be required for such minors.
3. One department or program should be appointed to provide administrative oversight.
4. There should be a mechanism for intellectual integration, such as a capstone course or seminar.

These criteria proved helpful to the Philosophy department in its Interdisciplinary Minor in Values and Society, which it restructured to conform to the guidelines and which was then approved.

Jennifer Payne was note taker and coordinator for the subcommittee and her work was outstanding—reliable, energetic, and accurate.

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

Admissions and Graduation Subcommittee: With Don Janssen as Chair (other members: Sue Woods, Susanna Cunningham, Laura Newell, Phil Ballinger, Matt Winslow, Erin Shields), this subcommittee reviewed petitions for admission and decided problematic cases. (There were no graduation petitions.) In addition, the subcommittee addressed two issues having to do with admission: academic difficulties of “special admits”—i. e., students admitted with an Admission Index of less than 28. The findings of this subcommittee were presented as a special report which recommended the establishment of a task force including members of FCAS, the Faculty Council on Instructional Quality, and the Office of Academic Assessment to attempt to identify courses that are academically less than rigorous and may account for a pattern of relative success in the first year and then a plunge into academic jeopardy in the second. If such courses can be identified, it is assumed that the departments offering them would take steps to improve their content. FCAS adopted this report and will display it on the Council website.

The second issue the subcommittee addressed was a proposal from the Bothell campus to modify the current cross-campus transfer policy, which policy FCAS was seeing for the first time. This itself appears to be a problem, in that the current policy contains a provision that students incurring disciplinary complaints will have them heard on their home campus, even if the complaint bears on behavior at the other campus. FCAS strongly believes that disciplinary complaints should be heard on the campus where the students incurred them. We did not complete our consideration of this issue, but on the main proposal, FCAS concluded that the proposed cross-campus transfer policy was trying to do too many things and appeared to alter the admissions standards of this campus. FCAS did not approve this proposal.

Other Council Work: FCAS took note that Landscape Architecture has been enforcing minimum grade requirements for graduation that have not been approved by FCAS, thus causing problems with DARS, which only enforces approved requirements approved by FCAS. I sent a letter to all chairs cautioning them to request all such deviations from the norm on a 1503 form proposal for approval before enforcing them.

Despite having had four different note takers during the year and some startup and other confusions in the Faculty Senate office, we now have a substantial Council web page with minutes and policy guidelines to refer people to. The only casualty is that there are minutes of two successive meetings that are more or less identical.

For the future: FCAS looks forward to working with the task force on Academic Quality and Rigor to identify the courses that will best serve our academically less-well-prepared students. On a similar note, in our last meeting Priscilla Allen, assessment coordinator of the English Language Programs, asked why it was that, as Seniors, some international

students who have fulfilled all other graduation requirements fail the Academic English Proficiency exam. She will be working with the Registrar and Director of Admissions this summer to determine the nature, extent, and possible remedies for this problem. Finally, questions remain about the Cross-Campus Transfer Policy that we should take up in the Fall.

### **Committee and Subcommittee Membership**

Active Faculty Council on Academic Standards Members for 2006-07 Academic Year:

Philip Ballinger, Robert Corbett, Susanne Cunningham, George Dillon (Chair), Don Janssen, Rick Keil, Steve Keith, Richard Nobles, Erin Shields, Todd Mildon, Mariko Navin, Laura Newell, Carla Rickerson, Michelle Trudeau, Debbie Wiegand, Matt Winslow

Admissions and Graduation Subcommittee Members:

Don Janssen (Chair), Laura Newell, Susanna Cunningham

Awards Subcommittee Members:

Don Janssen (substitute for Laura Newell in Autumn), Steve Keith, Mariko Navin, Laura Newell (Chair), Sarah Shannon

Subcommittee on Academic Programs Members:

Robert Corbett, George Dillon, Steve Keith (Chair), Todd Mildon, Mariko Navin, Jennifer Payne, John Sahr, Michelle Trudeau, Debbie Wiegand, Matt Winslow, Jay Johnson

Recorders: Whitney Thompson, Monica Banks, Robert Corbett, Melissa Kane

Submitted by George Dillon, Chair, Faculty Council on Academic Standards, 2006-07