

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

FACULTY COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The Faculty Council on Academic Standards met on Friday, **January 9, 2004** at 1:30 p.m. Chair Carolyn Plumb presided.

Synopsis

1. Approval of the minutes of the December 5, 2003 FCAS meeting.
2. Introduction of ASUW representative Ryan Mattson, ASUW Senate.
3. SCAP (Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs).
4. Departmental enrollments and capacities – Don Janssen.
5. Admission Subcommittee discussion of changes in Direct Transfer Agreement and transfer admission process – Gail Stygall and Tim Washburn.
6. Course repetition – George Bridges.

Approval of the minutes of the October 3, 2003 FCAS meeting

The minutes of the December 5, 2003 FCAS meeting were approved as written.

Introduction of ASUW representative Ryan Mattson, ASUW Senate

Ryan Mattson, from the ASUW Senate, was introduced to the council. Mattson will be sitting in for ASUW representative Sam Castic at this and other council meetings.

SCAP (Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs) – Nancy Kenney

1. College of Arts and Sciences – School of Art (ART-070103). Revised major requirements. "The School of Art proposes to change the curricula in all nine of its existing majors in order to address problems that affect student interested in the visual arts at the University of Washington. The proposed changes will: improve access to entry-level classes; allow students to progress efficiently through entry-level requirements; encourage students to find their art focus earlier; and reduce the number of credits required for the BFA and the BA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts. Changes to improve access to entry-level classes include: adding additional sections of studio classes at the entry-level; introducing new class formats which teach a large number of students in one class while including a studio component in the course; and allowing large-format class art history classes to fulfill entry-level requirements. All such classes will fulfill VLPA requirements if a student is not accepted into the art major, chooses another major, or is a major from a different department. Students will be able to complete their degrees more efficiently because they will be allowed to select two out of five studio classes and one out of twenty-one art history lectures for their degree prerequisites. Instead of competing for space in the same prerequisite classes, students will be able to select their entry-level classes based on their preferred major. Students will be encouraged to take ART 120 ("Issues and Influences") in order to find their art focus earlier. Finally, the number of credits required for the degree have been reduced in each major, allowing students to complete their program in a more timely fashion without compromising the quality of their education."
2. Business School (BUS-110303). Revised Major Requirements. "With the elimination of B POL 471 as a course we need to change our program requirements to reflect only one capstone course option."
3. Earth and Space Sciences (ESS-112103). Revised program requirements. "1. The ESS Curriculum Committee has determined that the new course ESS 314 Geophysics: Expedition to Planet Earth, should be made available as a choice in the required 300-level core courses for all ESS BA majors. 2. We will also make this option available to all of our continuing students in the 'old' Geological Sciences BA majors. 3. We are adding STAT 311 to the approved list of Optional Supporting Science Courses for the BA major."
4. Earth and Space Sciences (ESS-111403). Revised program requirements. "1. The ESS Curriculum Committee has determined that the new Course ESS 314 Geophysics: Expedition to Planet Earth, should be made available as a choice in the required 300-level course for all ESS BS majors. 2. We will also make this option available to all of our continuing students in the 'old' Geological Sciences BS majors. 3. Corrections are made in the BS Physics Option regarding both the number of supporting science credits,

and the subsequent number of ESS electives credits, so that the total for the major does not exceed 90 credits.”

The following proposal, after discussion by the council, was sent back to the department for clarification as to whether all students entering the major –whether native UW students or students transferring from community colleges or elsewhere – will be required to have a 2.0 or a 2.5 GPA in CSE for the admission requirement. It was pointed out that, historically, the recommendation of FCAS is to *not* require more than a 2.0 GPA for all students, native or transfer. It was stressed that a department can go *higher* for some students – with respect to GPA requirement – but not *lower*. It was further stressed that a department could place provisional requirements on some students, such as transfer students. A provisional GPA *higher* than 2.0 could be placed on some students. Navin will take the proposal back to the Information School to see what GPA it wants to require. Kenney said it is important that the department make it clear that admission to the Informatics program is competitive. “And again, the requirements must be the same for both native and transfer students.”

1. Information School – Informatics (INFOR-110403). “The Informatics program has endeavored to develop a technically sound program that can be completed in two years once students are admitted in the major. In order for students to progress satisfactorily in the major sequence that begins autumn quarter, it has become increasingly apparent that students need to have completed the computer programming courses CSE 142-143 before starting the major. CSE 143 is a prerequisite to CSE 373, another required core course, and at least eight Informatics courses require CSE 143 or 373 as prerequisites. Due to the nature of the major sequence, students taking CSE 143 and 373 during autumn and winter quarters of the first year are severely hindered in their ability to take informatics electives courses and miss opportunities to enrich their academic experience. (See Appendix I)

In program reviews conducted with the assistance of CIDR, students have also suggested that program prerequisites be increased to more accurately reflect the minimum competencies required in the program. The recent admission application cycle indicates that students recognize this need as well. Approximately 31% of applicants had completed CSE 143 by spring quarter, and among Informatics students who enrolled for autumn quarter, 69% (24 of 35) had completed CSE 143 by the time they started the major. (See Appendix II)

Due to the inability of transfer students to access CSE 143 at many community colleges, the program will endeavor to accept equivalent transfer courses. We hope to include a more comprehensive guideline for admissions for transfer students in the revised Course Catalog for 2004-06.”

Departmental enrollments and capacities – Don Janssen

Janssen distributed a chart showing an “Analysis of Departmental Applications, Admissions, Enrollments, and Capacities.”

Janssen said, “Last year, in council discussions, the question arose: What are the enrollments and enrollment capacities of departments throughout the University?” To answer this question, he extracted data from a survey conducted by the Provost’s Task Force on the Academic Progress of Undergraduates.

In the two-page chart, the front page represents *competitive admission departments*, and the second page, *non-competitive admission departments*. The “Optimum Capacity” column represents the “given current resources” of the department. The “Percent of Capacity” represents the average combining the number of enrolled students and the optimum capacity. On page two, the total optimum capacity of non-competitive departments is 7,553 students. “We could take that number of students if we go by the departmental numbers, but we’re only really taking about 6,500 students a year [in the non-competitive admission departments],” Janssen noted. He pointed out that all numbers on the chart he put together are tentative and subject to revision. (Buck pointed out that Psychology – listed among the non-competitive admission departments on page two, *is* a competitive admission department, and should be listed on the front page. Janssen said it was impossible to know for certain, from the data available to him, whether certain departments were competitive or non-competitive admission departments.)

Plumb said, “These are estimates; but they give us *some* idea of where there are, and are not, available spaces for enrollment.” She said the council will look at this subject again, and asked anyone in the council who has further information relevant to this issue – in their own department – to pass that information on to Don Janssen. Washburn asked Janssen to come to Enrollment Services and speak with his data specialists. “We’ll work together,” he said, to come up with the most reliable data possible. Bridges said, “I have a staff person who can help as well.” Corbett suggested, “We could take this to the HEC Board; they would be interested in this.” Janssen said, “We would like to get more years included in this data; as it is, we have only two years represented. We could work on that.”

Admission Subcommittee discussion of changes in Direct Transfer Agreement and transfer admission process – Gail Stygall and Tim Washburn

Stygall, by way of a brief introduction, said the Transfer Policy will be moving away from Direct Transfer. “There will be changes in *how* the administrative process will take place,” she observed.

Washburn distributed a handout showing “Suggested Committees and Members to Review Revised Transfer Admissions Practices.” They include: 1) Admissions Practitioners and Counselors; 2) Provost’s Office and Administrators; and 3) Faculty, Diversity Council and Constituent Members. Washburn said the Admissions Practitioners and Counselors Committee will meet in January 2004. Plumb, Stygall, Janssen and Newell serve on the Faculty, Diversity Council and Constituent Members Committee. Corbett and Navin also volunteered to serve on the committee.

After being considered in these committees (one or all of them), recommendations for revised transfer admission practices will be presented to FCAS, the Board of Deans, the Senate Executive Committee, the president, and the Board of Regents and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee.

“We must finish this work by spring,” Washburn noted. “We want to present the recommendations to the HEC Board of Regents at their April 2004 meeting.” Plumb asked, “What will be reviewed? What will the process be?” Washburn said, “We are reviewing a new undergraduate admission statement.” He read the draft of the statement to the council. “It is a ‘goals and value’ statement,” he stressed. He said the Enrollment Management Committee is concerned about the students who are denied access to their major as transfer students. “What do we tell them?” asked Washburn. “There is a tension between access and enrollment management; that conflict needs to be addressed by the Enrollment Management Committee.”

Washburn emphasized: “We will follow the freshman process; but admission for transfers *will* be different. There will be five or six classifications of admission – more holistic than previous classifications – and two sub-categories: one concerned with academic factors, and another concerned with personal factors. Then the readers will make an overall recommendation.” Washburn said there were 4,800 transfer applications in Fall Quarter 2003, which meant 9,600 readings, since every file receives two readings.

Course repetition – George Bridges

Bridges distributed a chart showing “Fixed Credit Course Repeats – Courses Having 50 or More Repeat Registrations, AY 2002-03.”

Bridges said the Committee on Satisfactory Progress is completing a report to be submitted to the legislature. Bridges has met with individual departments discussing all facets of this complex issue.

Bridges said the issue of course repetition is potentially a significant issue, especially in the areas of science and math. In one math class it was found that 17% of the students enrolled in the class were repeating the course. “Students can repeat a course *once*, with departmental approval,” said Bridges. “But, only two-thirds of the 17% who are repeating the math class are doing so for the first time. The others repeating the course are doing so for anywhere from the second to the sixth time.”

Bridges noted that “this is not part of the Satisfactory Progress Report, but it’s part of the access issue. Course repetition is related to the difficulty of getting into the classes in the first place.” Washburn said, “We will send out a memo regarding this issue: ‘Repeating Courses: Policy and Practices.’ Hardship issues will be excluded from this policy.” He noted that there are two kinds of course withdrawal: the one that is

allowed annually, and all others. Washburn said, “We can’t look at transfer courses, but we can check all UW courses to see if a student has repeated a course previously.”

Bridges said, “This is an issue the council should consider [looking into at greater depth]. Students are frustrated by access to classes, and course repetition has a clear relationship to access.” Ryan Mattson, from the ASUW Senate, said, “Maybe students aren’t getting the materials [that spell out and clarify this issue]. Maybe students need to see course evaluations and evaluations of professors [more easily than they are currently able to].”

Buck asked, “What’s the present UW policy for taking students back?” Washburn replied, “If you’re out for more than one quarter, you have to re-apply [for admission to the University].” Buck said, “If students drop a course, and that counts as their having taken the course, that’s a severe penalty. Yet we want to prevent abuse.” Washburn said, “If we were to adopt this procedure – we already *have* the policy – students might stay on for an incompleting.”

Plumb asked Bridges, “What would you like FCAS to do?” Bridges said, “A recommendation from the council would be greatly appreciated.” Plumb said, “We’ll be glad to do so.”

Mattson said, “I didn’t *know* about the hardship drop. I knew about the one annual withdrawal. I’m not sure that students are aware of the hardship drop.” Kenney said, “We don’t want to punish students who withdraw from the University for genuine hardship reasons, and want to come back.” Newell said, “Who’s really causing the problem here? There should be a distinction made between a course repeat and a registration repeat. That distinction needs to be made.”

Next meeting

The next FCAS meeting is set for Friday, January 23, 2004, at 1:30 p.m., in 142 Gerberding Hall.

Brian Taylor
Recorder

PRESENT: *Professors* Plumb (Chair), Buck, Fan, Janssen, Kenney, Labossiere, Newell, Stygall and Woods;
 Ex officio members Bridges, Castic, Mattson, Navin, Richards, Washburn and Wiegand;
 Regular guest Robert Corbett, Coordinator of New Programs.

ABSENT: *Professors* Keith, Reusch and Simon;
 Ex officio members Erickson-Brown and Pitre.