

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON**  
**FACULTY COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

The Faculty Council on Academic Standards met on Friday, **February 20, 2004** at 1:30 p.m. Chair Carolyn Plumb presided.

**Synopsis**

1. Approval of the minutes of the February 6, 2004 FCAS meeting.
2. SCAP (Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs).
3. Repeating Courses.
4. Department Enrollment Capacities.

**Approval of the minutes of the February 6, 2004 FCAS meeting**

The minutes of the February 6, 2004 FCAS meeting were approved as amended.

**SCAP (Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs – Nancy Kenney**

The following proposals were deemed “routine” by the Subcommittee on Admissions and Programs (SCAP) at its meeting on February 13, 2004:

1. College of Arts and Sciences – Russian Language, Literature and Culture (RUSS-121703). Revised Requirements for the Option. “We would like the following new courses to count toward the Russian Language, Literature and Culture option: RUSS 423 (Russian Film); RUSS 424 (Topics in Ethnicity and Cultural Identity); RUSS 425 (Russian Drama); SLAV 426 (Ways of Feeling: Expression of Emotion across Languages & Cultures).”
3. Information School – Informatics (INFOR-012104). Revised Program Requirements for the Major in Informatics within the Bachelor of Science. “The Informatics Admissions Committee proposed the new application deadline of April 15 for Informatics admissions effective 2005. The current deadline is May 1, but the Committee would like to have additional time to read and process the applications. The Informatics program tries to notify students of the admissions decisions immediately after spring grades are posted in June. As it is currently, we are rushed to verify grades, read personal statements, and to arrange Committee meeting in the busy six week period at the end of the quarter. With the expansion of the program beginning in 2004, the proposed two-week earlier deadline will become even more important to help us deal with the increased number of applications.”

**SCAP Question for FCAS: Do students with a Double Degree require 225 credits?**

Plumb said that Scott Winter, Academic Counselor-Lead with the Undergraduate Advising Center, and a member of SCAP, raised the question: Should students pursuing a double degree be required to take 225 credits to graduate? Plumb said this is a question related to issues under consideration by the Committee on Satisfactory Progress. Washburn said, “The Faculty Code does stipulate 225 credits for a double degree. So we would have to change the Faculty Code.”

Plumb said, “A double *major* only requires 180 credits; though a double *degree* requires 225 credits.” Newell noted that “some students take another year to do a double degree without knowing really *why* they’re taking a double degree. Why not a minor [in one of the two areas of interest]?” Wiegand observed: “Students who take double majors and graduate in 180 credits are rare. A number of things are being looked at: e.g., how do we handle ‘study abroad’ [in this context]? Students think they’ll be more marketable; that’s one reason why they take a double major. And it *is* the case that students going for national honors often take two majors. There, it *does* have a role.”

Plumb said, “So it *is* a bigger question than it might at first seem.” Wiegand pointed out that “the *intent* is [for the Satisfactory Progress Task Force] to have recommendations by April 14<sup>th</sup>; those recommendations will then come to FCAS.”

**Repeating Courses**

The Faculty Council on Academic Standards UNANIMOUSLY approved the following recommendation on the policy governing repeating courses at the University of Washington:

“THE FACULTY COUNCIL ON ACADEMIC STANDARDS ASKS TIM WASHBURN, ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENROLLMENT SERVICES, AND FCAS EX OFFICIO MEMBER, TO PROCEED WITH

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A POLICY THAT ALLOWS DEPARTMENTS TO CHOOSE HOW THEY WISH TO DEAL WITH COURSE REPEATS. A REPEAT SHALL CONSIST OF REGISTERING FOR A COURSE IN WHICH THE STUDENT HAS RECEIVED A NUMERICAL, 'I', CREDIT/NO-CREDIT, OR SATISFACTORY/NON-SATISFACTORY GRADE. DEPARTMENTAL OPTIONS ARE TO BE 'OPT-IN' FORM, AND COULD BE: 1) NO RESTRICTION; 2) PERIOD 2 REGISTRATION; 3) PERIOD 3 REGISTRATION; OR 4) ACCESS CODE (IN WHICH DEPARTMENTS DECIDE THE CRITERIA FOR GIVING A PARTICULAR ACCESS CODE)."

Washburn said, "We need to determine the implementation date for this policy [which he said he can report to the council in March], and the recommendation could be presented to the Faculty Senate as an information item, once we know the implementation date, which will probably be Winter 2005." Plumb said she would make the presentation to the Faculty Senate. Janssen suggested placing some kind of notice in the *Daily*. Washburn also suggested notifying all faculty by mail prior to the implementation date.

The following is the council discussion that led to the unanimous approval of the recommendation.

Plumb said, "We can *start* to address the issue of repeating courses by implementing the current policy. Students can, with the approval of their departments, repeat once. This policy would disallow a second or third repeat. A department can, of course, override this, if it so chooses." Washburn said, "Actually, the Faculty Code says 'once,' so no, departments cannot override the existing policy."

Plumb pointed out that, at the last council meeting, there was some ambiguity in the council's response to this issue. "We can fix the regular, existing system [in place] so that no student could repeat a course more than once without departmental approval. We could allow departments to automatically allow one repeat. Or we could allow one repeat, but not until the third period, or until an entry [or access] code has been given out." She pointed out that, in Biology, students have to write a petition to repeat a course, based on grade point: If a student's grade point is above 2.0, he/she is not allowed to repeat the course. In fact, only a small number of petitions are approved. Math has a higher percentage of approval, however.

Plumb asked, "How shall we proceed? And what timeline should we recommend?" Corbett said, "There may be anomalies at UW Tacoma and UW Bothell. If the change affects the whole [University-wide] system, they'd like to be consulted." Washburn said, "The *existing* policy affects Bothell and Tacoma as well as Seattle." Plumb asked, "How much impact would there be if we did *not* allow more than one repeat?"

Newell asked, "How would I *know* it's a repeat? And the courses are often full; there's an access issue. We get an entry code for all students who need them [in Anthropology]." Washburn remarked: "Entry codes are distributed to departments." Kenney noted, "What I'm trying to control is the number of students getting into a course; but I *don't* know if a student is a repeat or not." It was noted that the way to find out if a student is repeating a course or not is to consult the student's advisor. Buck suggested that the policy on repeating courses "be set up flexibly so that departments can decide which courses they want to monitor. It should take care of itself, then." Labossiere said, "We won't be allowing second time repeats at all [in Mechanical Engineering]." Janssen said, "All these suggestions would help you, Laura [Newell]." Washburn said, "Yes; we could isolate first- and second-time repeaters."

Bridges said, "Most of the repeats are in the physical sciences; in the social sciences, there is less to worry about. Enforce the current policy, and see what happens. See what the impact is." Buck observed: "The problem is that different departments want to do different things, course by course." Janssen said, "Departments could give blanket approval, or be somewhat – or greatly – strict." Bridges cautioned: "As long as Tim's [Washburn's] office isn't overwhelmed by the variables." Bridges told the council that he spoke to students, and had no resistance from them about enforcement of the policy. He said, "It would be wise to have a general agreement. Students could then also go to individual advisors."

Washburn asked: "Should we do it for each section? Or at the course level? Course level would be sufficient. We'd say that this policy applies to 100-400 level courses. It's an undergraduate issue." Plumb stressed that Undergraduate Advising "would have concern if a withdrawal counted as the first completion of a course." Janssen said, "We could let Tim work on the implementation and *we* could work on the variables. I would suggest that 'I' is

a grade. Don't put an 'X' in it; leave it out. Have all numbers, and 'I'." Plumb, however, said, "'X' is supposedly the faculty's choice." Newell added that "it is an advantage for students to get an 'X', especially for a research student. I give them an 'X' and *not* an incomplete. When the grade later appears, the 'X' disappears." Washburn said, "We record 1% of the undergraduate grades as 'X's each quarter, about 900 last fall." Janssen said, "Don't put the 'X's in, for now."

Newell said, "Sometimes, students don't do better in the repeated course." Wiegand said, "For students who get above 2.0 in the repeated course, it's significant." Plumb said, "It's a conservative recommendation. It would probably start in Winter Quarter 2005. And it would make expectations clearer for students." Bridges said, "In the future, we will deal with the withdrawal problem *here* in FCAS." Plumb said, "We'll continue to look at withdrawals in FCAS meetings."

### **Department Enrollment Capacities**

Janssen said, "We have to *now* look at individual departments. What we have in the current survey is a small amount of data. We need larger data set to see more specific trends and capacities. We're honing in on what departments' *real* capacities are." Buck said, "In Psychology, there's no simple answer to the question of capacity. It's a complex set of assumptions in Psychology."

Plumb said, "It's different, discipline by discipline. The *value* here is *internal*. It will get departments to individually consider this issue." Buck added: "With complex departments, who have complex goals, just asking them what their enrollment capacity *is*...won't give anything that has meaning." Plumb said, "Don [Janssen] and I will discuss this, and see how to proceed."

Plumb informed the council that guests from the Graduate School will attend the next council meeting and speak about the services the Graduate School provides for undergraduate programs, and discuss that and related issues following the presentation.

### **Next meeting**

The next FCAS meeting is set for Friday, March 5, 2004, at 1:30 p.m., in 142 Gerberding Hall.

Brian Taylor  
Recorder

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

**ABSENT:** *Professors* Fan, Keith, Reusch, Simon and Stygall;  
*Ex officio members* Castic, Erickson-Brown and Navin.