

## **Academic Affairs Committee Minutes**

December 07, 2016

Approved January 18, 2017

- 1. Roll Call (3:04 pm) Members Present:** Ali Arshad, Tyler Mills proxy for Peter Buchanan, Gloria Gadsden, Geri Glover, Lara Heflin, April Kent, David Sammeth proxy for Brooks Maki, Jesus Rivas, Elaine Rodriguez proxy for Kristie Ross, P.J. Sedillo, Ann Wolf  
**Also in Attendance:** Carol Linder, Michael Raine, Eric Romero  
**Absent:** Judy Barnstone, Todd Christensen, Robert Karaba, Kerry Loewen, Carlos Martinez, Joe Schmalfeldt
- 2. Approval of the Agenda,**  
The agenda was approved.
- 3. Approval of the Minutes**  
Minutes of November 16, 2016 were approved.
- 4. Subcommittee Report**
  - a. **Undergraduate appeals** – No outstanding appeals.
  - b. **Graduate appeals** – Two appeals were approved. The expiration of credits issue will be looked into.
  - c. **Ballen** – Another call for proposal will be sent out.
  - d. **Other** – None
    - i. Graduate Council. Graduate Handbook discussed as part of item ten.
- 5. Program Review Schedule and Procedures**
  - a. **Overview of current schedule and procedures**
    - i. Review of the upcoming schedule
      1. Nursing program review will have to be postponed due to retirement of current program director.
      2. History. The History and Political Science faculty will submit their self-study to the committee for review by August 30, 2017. The Academic Affairs Committee members and program faculty agreed to this date.
  - b. **Program reviews subcommittee membership**
    - ii. Subcommittee membership for program reviews will be assigned at the next AAC membership.
- 6. Catalog Revision Procedure – Discussion Item**
  - a. Mr. Michael Raine is working on this procedure and will have more to report in January. Catalog software cost are being investigated.
- 7. Issuing Grades to Students Quarterly – Discussion Item**
  - a. Mr. Raine commented that while quarterly, or more frequent entering of grades, is not currently open in banner, it can be done. Banner could be set up for this, and faculty can make it part of their policy.

- b. The early alert subcommittee will be looking at this issue and bring something to an early spring meeting.
- c. Robust faculty interaction with students is key and should be encouraged.
- d. Questions of how early alert works and the implications of students failing courses. Failure of classes can have financial aid and scholarship implications. This fall, the timing of midterm grades was later than usual and this caused problems.
- e. There were questions as to if this issue is a priority at this time.
- f. Please send further comments to Mr. Carlos Martinez, chair of the Early Alert subcommittee.

**8. Senate Charge: To create a syllabus template/guide for all NMHU classes –**

- a. Please send comments on the syllabus template/guide to Dr. Robert Karaba, chair of the subcommittee.
- b. This issue will be discussed further at the January meeting.

**9. AAC Program and Course change forms: New Course Proposal Coversheet revisions – tabled**

- a. Dr. Geri Glover will send updated forms to the committee for a vote at the January 2017 meeting.

**10. Graduate Council: Handbook changes – Action Item**

- a. The graduate student leave of absence policy is one of the biggest changes in the handbook revision. The graduate appeal description in the handbook has been changed to reflect the current process. The description of which faculty can serve on comprehensive exam needs to reflect the current practice.
- b. The number of credits covered by graduate assistantships needs to be updated in the hand book. Discussion of not having undergraduate classes paid for by assistantships and how this could be a retention issue. There are financial aid restrictions on paying for undergrad courses for graduate students and what this mean for assistantships needs to be investigated. There are questions and concerns about what this means for undergraduate classes required for education licensure programs. State requirements for these classes will also need to be reviewed.
- c. Please send further comments on the handbook changes to Dr. Gloria Gadsden who will discuss these points with Dr. David Pan.
- d. No action taken at this time.

**11. University Studies programmatic changes**

- a. Dr. Eric Romero presented the proposed changes to the University Studies program, a self-determined major. Approximately 100 students have graduated with this degree in the last few years.
- b. The degree is not a major, but a collection of three thematic areas of 60 credit hours total; the proposal would change this to 50 credit hours in these thematic areas to show the depth of study in different areas. The proposed changes include changes in the program at the 200 level, and a new 300 level class targeted toward transfer students. Flexibility would be useful for the students at the sites and centers.

- c. Questions and discussion about the logic of the reduction of credit hours in the program. Under the current requirement, students are having difficulties in putting together a plan that totals 60 credits. By reducing the number of required credits, University Studies will be more in line with the majors and minors at Highlands. No minor is required for this degree.
- d. Question about why the Introduction to University Studies course is moving from the 100 to the 200 level. This course is better placed at the 200 level as not many freshman come in wanting to pursue the University Studies program. The program mostly attracts students later in their college careers and is for students who want to create their own program of study.
- e. It was noted that it is important that students in this program do a lot of writing. The program has looked at how students in the program can best express what they have studied to employers. It has to be made clear to students that they will have to explain this degree to employers. The thematic areas are important as they show what the students have studied.
- f. It should be made clear as to how students work with faculty in their thematic areas and how discipline faculty can best work with the University Studies coordinator. The coordinator gets a quarterly release.
- g. There is currently state wide investigation of having themed general degrees as options for students. These degrees are similar to University Studies, but more focused on general subject areas.
- h. There are currently 58 students in the system recorded as seeking a University Studies degree.
- i. Dr. David Sammeth passed out a handout of the University of Utah's similar program and reviewed key points. Dr. Romero said that he has looked at different universities' university studies programs.
- j. The University Studies degree crosses the disciplines in the Schools and the College of Arts and Sciences. We have transfer students coming in to this program with 140 credits who need degree completion. Advising to this degree is a very complex matter.
- k. Another issue that needs to be resolved is the housing of the program. The program needs a director, and this director should report directly to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, not to a dean of a school or college. As of now there isn't a good structure for interdisciplinary programs that takes budget, banner, and reporting into account.
- l. Mr. Raine would like to see the thematic areas in the proposal and recorded formally on transcripts. This would benefit students. Clearer, more defined plans work better with DegreeAudit.
- m. Different students will have different needs with this program. A transfer student with 140 credits will approach this program differently than a freshman who begins at Highlands in this self-determined degree.
- n. Motion made to
  - approve programmatic changes as submitted after replacing individuals named in the document with position titles  
(Rivas/Gadsden)
 Motion passed (6 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstentions)

- o. Proxies for committee members expressed reservations about voting on this issue.

**12. Psychology – minor adjustment to prior approval**

- a. Dr. Lara Heflin asked the committee to approve the removal of the Health Psychology course approved with the Psychology Undergrad changes at the November 2, 2016 meeting of the committee. The Psychology faculty would like to work with the Exercise and Sport Sciences faculty collaboratively on this course. Dr. Heflin is trained as a Health Psychologist and wishes to work with the ESS program when they have faculty for this course.
- b. Mr. Raine will check on the status of the psychology changes with the Academic Affairs Office.
- c. Dr. Carol Linder stressed the need to eliminate duplication of effort and to have disciplines work collaboratively when possible.
- d. Motion made to  
remove the Health Psychology course from the Psychology Undergrad changes approved at the November 2, 2016 meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee.  
(Glover/Gadsden)  
Motion passed (9 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions)

**13. Senate Charge: To work with the Administration and Student Support Services to formulate an official Early Alert policy – discussion item – tabled**

**14. Communication from the Chair**

- a. **HLC Updates**
  - a. The call for volunteers for the assurance document remains open. The more people who volunteer the better.
- b. **Graduate 6xx requirements – Discussion item**
  - a. Mr. Raine briefly discussed the current policy on these requirements.
- c. **New Senate Charge**
  - a. The committee has been charged to develop a policy for when the university is closed due to snow during final exams. The committee will begin work on this policy in January.

**15. Communication from the Registrar**

- a. There has been a slight improvement in spring enrollment since the last report, but not from last year. Enrollment is down 12% from last spring. The main problem with enrollment is that around 600 students have business office holds on their accounts. Payment plan solutions are being investigated, but this is a complicated issue.

**16. Communication from the Faculty Senate – tabled.**

**17. Communication from the Administration**

- a. Dr. Linder made no report due to time constraints.

**18. Senate Charges - tabled**

- d. **To review and make suggestions for improving our current Student Learning Outcomes process and how that process is aligned with Program Review and the Strategic Plan (joint with Outcome Assessment)**
- e. **To create an online repository of officially approved syllabi**
- f. **To recommend a policy for final exams and snow day cancellations during finals week.**

**19. Late Additions to the Agenda (minor items only)**

**20. Adjournment** Meeting adjourned at 4:32