

Academic Affairs Committee Minutes

November 15, 2017 Minutes

Approved December 06, 2017

1. **Roll Call (3:03 pm) Members Present:** Ali Arshad, Judy Barnstone, Geri Glover, Edward Harrington, Lara Heflin, April Kent, Bill Hayward, Carlos Martinez, Tyler Mills, Jesus Rivas, Chris Stead, Edgar Vargas Blanco, Emily Williams, Ann Wolf
Also in Attendance: Carol Linder, Luis Ortiz
Absent: Blanca Cespedes, Jeanie Flood, Gloria Gadsden, Roxanne Gonzales, Robert Karaba, Miriam Langer, Kristie Ross, Thomasina Ortiz-Gallegos
2. **Approval of the Agenda**
The agenda was approved with adjustments.
3. **Approval of the Minutes**
Minutes of November 01, 2017 were approved.
4. **Subcommittee Report**
 - a. **Undergraduate appeals** – There are no pending appeals.
 - b. **Graduate appeals** – There are no pending appeals.
 - c. **Appeals Procedure** – The subcommittee has not met yet.
 - d. **Ballen** – Dr. Lara Heflin reported that there is funding for a spring scholar. The committee has sent out a call for proposals.
 - e. **Other**
 - i. No other reports.
5. **Program Review Schedule and Procedures**
 - a. **Overview of current schedule and procedures**
 - i. **Update on fall 2017 program reviews**
 1. Business Administration – No report.
 2. Sociology/Anthropology & Criminal Justice – The program is revising the review.
 3. Fine Arts – The subcommittee is setting a meeting for after Thanksgiving break.
 4. Health/Human Performance and Sport (ESS) – The subcommittee is reviewing.
 5. History/Political Science/Public Affairs – No change.
 6. Nursing – The program is reviewing subcommittee comments.
 7. Physics – The program has not responded. The subcommittee has a draft report.
 8. SSD (Software Systems Design) – No change from last meeting.
 9. University Studies – There was discussion of where this program fits in the university structure. It is currently under Academic Affairs/Provost, but it could be housed under one dean. The location of this program could be discussion item at next meeting. The executive

team will talk to Provost about this matter. There will be no program review until January.

- b. **Program reviews subcommittee membership assignments**
 - i. **Subcommittee membership assignments for fall 2017**
 - 1. No updates at this time.

6. Communication from the Chair

- a. **HLC Updates**
- b. No report.

7. Communication from the Registrar

- a. No representative.

8. Communication from the Faculty Senate

- a. Dr. Kristie Ross sent her report to Ms. April Kent to present to the committee.
- b. The senate has been discussing safety on campus including the specific issues with the Hilton Science Building and science labs and the Wilson Complex and the need for AEDs. The safety officer is working on these issues.
- c. The senate has also been discussing the HLC's concern about students receiving equal education regardless of class modality. The educational technology committee is working on this issue which is very complex. There are many factors to take into consideration. Highlands is not the only university to be facing the struggle of measuring outcomes across modalities.
- d. The HLC is also concerned with authentication for online classes. The HLC would like more than the one level of authentication that Highland currently uses. There are many different solutions for this issue, but some are expensive or cumbersome. Highlands is investigating options.

9. Communication from Graduate Council

- a. Dr. Jesus Rivas reported that Highlands should see an increase in graduate enrollment due to changes in interstate agreements that will allow more students to take advantage of our lower tuition.
- b. The committee is working on the handbook revisions.

10. Communication from the Administration

- a. Dr. Roxane Gonzales reported on HLC items that affect Academic Affairs.
- b. The HLC has no concerns with federal compliance. We cleared up all questions they had.
- c. Highlands still has work to do on outcomes assessment. Mr. Buddy Rivera, Institutional Research Interim Director, and Dr. Lauren Fath, Chair of Outcomes Assessment Committee, have ideas about improving outcomes assessment. HLC is concerned about outcomes assessment across different delivery models.
- d. Highlands needs to have a philosophy or model to use when placing classes at different levels. We need to show the distinction between undergrad and graduate classes. There may be a taskforce set up to work on this issue. Bloom's Taxonomy

- could be used as a framework, but there are several other models that could be looked at.
- e. There was a long discussion with HLC about online classes and programs. Dr. Gonzales will give a white paper to the Faculty Senate on this issue.
 - f. HLC expressed concerns about Highlands being consistent with faculty credentials and said that the university should continue to check on credentials consistently.
 - g. Prior learning assessment was also a concern. HLC was told that we are looking at this matter.
 - h. Highlands will be looking at a faculty absence policy. Dr. Gonzales will be putting together a group to work on this matter which will involve the Academic Affairs Committee and the Faculty Senate.
 - i. Highlands needs a policy on faculty using personal vehicles for official use. This is a liability issue.
 - j. Dr. Gonzales is thinking about how to set up training for department chairs. She said there should be some training in place for chairs each year.
 - k. The Academic Affairs budget went forward in the budgeting process. All budgets should be posted soon.

11. Print Catalog Recommendation – Action Item

- a. Motion made to
 approve the recommendation
 (Rivas/Mills)
 Motion passed (12 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstentions)

12. Early Alert – Academic Support Report

- a. Mr. Benito Pacheco will give his report at the next meeting.

13. Senate Charge -- To develop a policy on class minimums and cancellations and to also develop a process for notifying students of class cancellations. – subcommittee update

- a. Dr. Judy Barnstone reviewed the most recent draft.
- b. Comments, questions, and concerns from committee members about the draft include why 300 and 400 minimums were different, how these numbers were arrived at, what the best practices are from discipline to discipline (even subdisciplines), what is the impact on roadmaps for majors if some classes are cancelled, concerns about last minute cancellations, questions about the purpose of class minimums, discussion of budget issues, questions about the breakeven point for classes, questions about when to add a section and when to cancel a section, questions about how course sequencing will be taken into account, concerns about how this policy would affect faculty load and equity, and discussion on how software can help with scheduling. It was also noted that there are many department level issue with setting class sizes.
- c. Dr. Barnstone said that this document is the result of a lot of discussion and research. It is an ongoing discussion and not a policy. The document is a summary of input for a recommendation. Coming up with hard numbers is not possible as this is such a complex issue. The common takeaway is that departments know which classes can be small and which can be large and decisions must be made in collaboration with departments and administration. There has to be an agreed upon date for when classes

- will be cancelled. For our student population, it makes sense to have classes cancelled as late as possible. There are several previous documents about class minimums around the university, but the focus should be on the current recommendation.
- d. Dr. Barnstone will make revisions based on discussion and resend the document.
 - e. Concerns about prerequisites and how these affects roadmaps were discussed.

14. Form Language Clarification – Action Item

- a. Dr. Geri Glover reported on the revised forms. All of the forms are very similar and help guide procedure. The forms now ask programs to talk to the registrar’s office before coming to the committee to improve the process. The registrar doesn’t approve, but provides feedback.
- b. Discussion of DegreeAudit and other software for transfer students. Highlands needs to improve our transfer student advising. The executive team will talk to Ms. Ortiz-Gallegos about this matter.
- c. Motion made to
 - approve the revised forms as submitted except for the undergrad program revision form
 - (Kent/Stead)Motion passed (9 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstentions)

15. Senate Charge – To recommend a policy for final exams and snow day cancellations during finals week. – subcommittee update

- a. Dr. Chris Stead reviewed the committee’s most recent revisions to the draft policy. The subcommittee will be meeting again.
- b. This item will be an action item at the next meeting.

16. Late Additions to the Agenda (minor items only)

17. Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 4:55