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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, Sept. 3, 2013

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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Academic Affairs Committee

Meeting Minutes
September 3, 2013

Opening:

Claire Strom called to order the regular meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee at 12:31 pm on September 3, 2013 in CSS 167.

Present:

Claire Strom, Vidhu Aggarwal, Pedro Bernal, Gregory Cavanaugh, Gloria Cook, Philip Deaver, Martina Vidovic, Susan Walsh, Jonathan Walz

Visitors: Jennifer Cavanaugh, Meribeth Huebner, Sharon Lusk, Robin Mateo, Holly Pohlig, Anna Lohaus, Bob Smither, Robert Vander Poppen

- A. Minutes approved from last two meetings (including August 27, the first AAC meeting of fall 2013)**
- B. Blending Learning - Robert Vander Poppen**

Robert Vander Poppen updated AAC on the Blended Learning Group Proposal and incorporated changes to the proposal since its submission to AAC in spring 2013. He stressed that blended learning is an enhancement of student learning, including face-to-face experiences. Robert made significant updates to the original document, including, but not limited to, that 1) no class have blended content above 50% and that the range of acceptable blended content in approved blended learning courses be 25-50%, 2) all blended learning courses, designated as such, should come before AAC for approval; 3) a 25% blended content cap should be placed on RCCs. Robert further suggested – and the Blended Learning Group Proposal outlines – that individual professors receive blended learning certification to teach such courses, and that Student Records maintain a list of courses with a blended learning designation that outlines their content (accessible to students). The language of blended learning at Rollins will be determined by the faculty and institution at a later date.

Susan Walsh suggested that RCC courses with a blended learning designation be defined as comprised of 5-25% of blended content (instead of “up to 25%” of content). Robert agreed.

Jonathan Walz suggested that faculty be recertified in blended learning on a regular basis, perhaps every 3 years. Claire Strom also argued for recertification. Meribeth Huebner suggested that a proportion of the first courses taught with blended learning

designations be courses that were previously taught, in order to compare the effectiveness of new courses and old courses with such a designation. Susan Walsh suggested that the pilot program in blended learning, to occur during a three year period, could be arranged to provide appropriate data sets for such evaluations of effectiveness.

Jenny Cavanaugh noted that the approval of courses with a blended learning designation might follow the example of community engagement courses in that a separate committee or subcommittee (with appropriate familiarity with blended learning) might evaluate such courses in the designation process. Robert Vander Poppen agreed that such a committee, at the very least, should include an instructional technology advisor.

Jennifer Cavanaugh asked how the faculty would be able to determine the actual (rather than the represented) proportion of blended content in courses (including courses with or without the blended learning designation). Jonathan Walz suggested that departments be responsible for this and that student course evaluations might offer insights. Others suggested that student evaluations may be problematic in this regard.

Susan Walsh said the faculty consider the specifics of “compensation” for the proposed blended learning certification.

Robert Vander Poppen argued that blended learning certification (and other related specifics) be added to the Faculty Handbook. Bob Smither noted that since the financial incentives for blended learning passed through the Dean’s Office that a link for blended learning, including any and all forms for such a designation to a course, should be posted on the Dean’s webpage. Claire Strom agreed with these two suggestions.

Meribeth Huebner suggested that in order to comply with SACS the percentages of blended content in courses be amended to 25-49% (for non-RCC courses). Members of AAC and visitors agreed with this suggestion.

The Blended Learning Pilot was unanimously approved by AAC. Claire Strom suggested that, if desired by the faculty, a colloquium be held on blended learning and the approved Pilot plan. Martina Vidovic agreed. Claire Strom and the AAC thanked Robert Vander Poppen and his team for their excellent work on the blended learning initiative.

C. Pre-Engineering Major (new agenda item) – Claire Strom

Toni Holbrook suggested to ACC via Claire Strom that AAC clarify that Pre-Engineering exists as a major at Rollins. Jennifer Cavanaugh mentioned a rising interest in the major and Susan Walsh inquired about the major’s requirements (a copy of which was provided to AAC). Bob Smither encouraged AAC to approve the re-up of the major. By a unanimous vote, AAC confirmed the existence of a Pre-Engineering major (and suggested that any questions about its course content be considered separately and through a conversation with Thom Moore).

D. No meeting next week (Sept. 10)

Adjournment:

Claire Strom adjourned the AAC meeting at 1:07pm. The next general meeting of AAC will be at 12:30 pm on September 17, 2013 in CSS 167.

Minutes submitted by

Jonathan Walz

Approved by
