

9-21-2010

Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, September 21, 2010

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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Recommended Citation

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee, "Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, September 21, 2010" (2010). *Academic Affairs Committee Minutes*. Paper 44.
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AAC Minutes – September 21, 2010

In attendance: Barry Levis (Chair), Alex Boguslawski, Rick Bommelje (Secretary), Gloria Cook, Chris Fuse, Sebastian Novak, Christian Ricaurte, Dawn Roe, Darren Stoub, Martina Vidovic, Deb Wellman

The meeting was called to order at 12:31 PM.

Minutes. The minutes of the September 14, 2010 meeting were approved with corrections.

Announcement: Deb announced a new administrative policy that students will now be charged tuition for anything that earns college credit. This will include such things as internships and international travel which, in the past, students have not been charged. Additionally, the maximum number of hours in any given semester will be capped. For anything over this number, students would be charged. It would be a discounted rate at the Maymester charge. Deb will research what the top number of hour is and bring it to the next meeting.

Old Business

1. Evaluation of Maymester

Chris created two new course forms - one specifically for Maymester and a second that incorporates the possibility of other styles of offering a course beyond the regular semester format. Chris stated that it was difficult to create a separate Maymester course proposal form that evaluates Maymester. The reason is that the form will not evaluate what has happened in Maymester the past two years. The form will serve as a means to evaluate future Maymester courses only. Chris also questioned if developing the Maymester specific form will prompt having new course approval forms for every other type of non-traditional format. The point for having a new course proposal form is to put everything under one umbrella. As he developed the second form, he believes that many of the questions that the committee seeks answers to on Maymester courses could be answered. Chris recommended that the current new course proposal form be revised to get the information that is needed. The more forms that we have, the more complicated it will get. Deb stated that Laurie is compiling a report that will be ready to share with the committee on Oct 3. Darren asked if it is the purview of the committee and the new course subcommittee to evaluate faculty's pedagogy and does that encroach on academic freedom. Barry stated that last year's committee had extensive conversation on blended learning courses. The question that was debated was whether courses that were delivered in the blended format should be re-evaluated because of the different format. There was no resolution on the subject. Darren questioned whether or not the issue was raised last year because the blended learning proposal came from IT and also queried whether or not the Maymester issue is being discussed because the Administration proposed it. Barry stated that the Holt School administration was pushing blended learning. He also indicated that Rollins will not accept a transfer course if it was

offered on-line. Rick noted that there is a big difference between an on-line course and a blended course. He also stated that one of the interests in blended learning is to explore a delivery system that can augment the face-to-face method. Dawn pointed out that one of the reasons why blended learning was a conversation topic was because the proposal came from IT and not the faculty, similar to Maymester, which came from the Administration. Barry stated there was a controversy about how Maymester came about. Deb commented that Laurie introduced the Maymester concept from a model that she had experience with at a former institution. Gloria stated that it may be better to wait to see all the data before taking any action. Barry confirmed that we initially wanted to do the evaluation including reviewing the syllabi. Barry informed Deb that the committee had voted her and Laurie in contempt of committee for not providing the syllabi. Deb stated Laurie had not gathered the syllabi and that once the committee reviews the results of the report if there is a desire for additional information that can happen. Barry indicated that the committee can move forward with the new course proposal form since it is not just aimed at Maymester but seeks to address all courses and if a course is offered in another format how will it differ from the regular course format. If a course is being offered in Maymester, Holt summer or some other form and it has been previously approved as a regular semester course, it will have to go through approval process again. Chris emphasized that this will prompt reflection on how the course will be delivered differently in the new format. Darren brought the conversation back to Gloria's position and suggested a tabling of the issue until the report has been reviewed.

Gloria made a motion to table the discussion on the effectiveness of Maymester until the Maymester report is completed by the Provost on Oct 3 and that the syllabi be provided.

Darren seconded the motion

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Valedictorian Requirements.

Members reported on the information collected from the designated schools about requirements for Valedictorian. Barry stated that eleven of the institutions do not have a valedictorian. He shared the proposal and the form that is used by the Holt School. This is similar to the process used at Davidson and Sebastian indicated that the students would support this model. Barry suggested that the Division heads could comprise the committee. The process would consist of identifying the top ten students with the highest GPA and inviting them to apply. A student has been at the College for two years would not have the same type of service experiences as one who has been here for four years. This system will benefit the student who has been at Rollins for a longer time period. Alex expressed a concern that the person with the highest GPA could be an ineffective public speaker. Barry responded that the selection committee would be examining this as a part of the criteria. Gloria suggested that a question on the application form should address the level of public speaking experience. Each candidate would need two faculty references and a reference from the community connected to their service experience. Chris questioned what happens if the top 5 candidates are all ineffective public speakers. Deb commented that the selection committee members will be able to evaluate the level of public experience effectiveness of those who have applied.

Gloria stated that this will not be an issue. Darren pointed out that the reference form has a question asking for references to comment on their public speaking ability. Dawn stated that it is 'more likely' that a student will have more service experience; however, it is possible that a transfer student could have extensive service while they are at Rollins. Chris indicated that this process is asking for the students to identify how they have served the community and not just how they have done in course work. Christian stated that it asks a lot more from the student beyond having good grades. Being a member of such things as the honor council, SGA, and being a major part of the community, is what really counts, in addition to their grade point average. Barry noted that the number of students entering Rollins with at least 40 credit hours is very high. They have IB credit and joint enrollment and are no different than an actual transfer student. Deb confirmed this. Barry asked if we want to set a minimum number of hours and Deb stated that the minimum number of hours to get a Rollins degree is sixty. Chris indicated that the form provides students with the opportunity to verify their accomplishments and no one will question that they are a Rollins student if they have been working hard from day one. Dawn pointed out that this was the case last year and Chris responded that the only criterion that was examined was the GPA. Sebastian confirmed this. Barry stated that we can vote on the issue and then he will take it to the Executive Committee to determine if it needs to go to the full faculty. Sebastian emphasized that SGA wants to see this. Darren asked if Division chairs would be willing to serve on the committee. Barry pointed out that this process would be done early in the spring semester. Deb inquired why AAC would not be the appropriate group to perform the function. After discussion about AAC's role in the process, Barry summarized that the selection committee would be comprised of member of AAC, the Dean of Student Affairs and the Director of Community Engagement. Gloria asked what the term will be for the speaker and Barry responded that the Holt school uses 'Outstanding Graduating Senior'. Barry will take the proposal to the next Executive Committee which will meet next in October. Barry suggested that Sebastian take the proposal to the SGA for review.

Chris made a motion: To present the outstanding graduate proposal and nominating forms for review by the Executive Committee.

Darren seconded the motion

Motion passes unanimously

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion about Computer Science major

Barry stated that he had become aware that the Provost told the Computer Science department that they have to come up with an action plan to increase the number of student majors. Apparently their existence was being threatened. Barry expressed concern that something like this has to come to AAC. Deb stated that she thought the purpose of the meeting was to assist the department to develop an action plan. There was an extended dialogue on who has the right to eliminate a major. Barry indicated that historically, every major that has been eliminated has had faculty involvement.

2. Academic Warning System

Barry expressed concern about the current academic warning system. He questioned why the time period couldn't be extended beyond week eight. After extensive dialogue about

alternative ending dates it was agreed that the system will cut off at the 12th week and multiple submissions can be made rather than restricting it to the current number of one.

**Chris made a motion: To extend the academic warning system to the 12th week
Alex seconded the motion.**

Motion passes unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:46 PM.

Rick Bommelje
Secretary