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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, October 5, 2010

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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AAC Minutes – October 5, 2010

In attendance: Barry Levis (Chair), Rick Bommelje (Secretary), Gloria Cook, Lila Martin, Sebastian Novak, Dawn Roe, Darren Stoub, Martina Vidovic, Deb Wellman

Guests in attendance: Toni Stollo

The meeting was called to order at 12:33 PM.

Minutes. The minutes of the September 28, 2010 meeting were approved with correction.

Announcement: Sebastian announced that the Curriculum Review Committee is considering the following changes: shifting to 3 semester hour courses; requiring 120 semester hours to graduate; reduce the faculty teaching course load to 5 courses per year; adding the January term. Barry recommended that a joint AAC and CRC meeting be held to discuss the issues. Sebastian stated that a report of recommendations will be submitted to AAC.

Old Business

1. Distinguished Graduate

Barry included a question in the proposed application form that Gloria recommended to demonstrate the applicant's activities at Rollins that reflect the mission statement of global citizenship and responsible leadership. It was confirmed that three letters will be required – two on academic performance from faculty members, and one on service initiatives. It was decided that the letter identifying service performance can come from a person who is directly knowledgeable of the student's service. This can be either a community representative or a faculty member. Sebastian reported that the opinion from the SGA executive board is to retain the title, 'Valedictorian'. Barry stated the term valedictorian suggests the highest grade point average. Rick questioned the committee's position on changing the name of the award as long as there is a new selection process that includes academic and service performance in place. Toni stated that most of the ACS institutions have valedictorians. After additional conversation on the matter of title, Barry proposed to retain the title "valedictorian" and that the selection process that has been developed will be recommended. The committee agreed and Barry will take the item to the Executive Committee.

2. Tuition for Excess Credits.

Members reported on the information gathered from peer and aspirant institutions on tuition for excess credits. Barry summarized that the majority of the institutions don't allow overloads or are charging tuition for excess credits. Barry stated that the Music and Theater departments expressed concern for students who are taking double majors. He also noted that, in his opinion, the policy will penalize our best students in not allowing them to go beyond their majors. Barry also pointed out that the President's concern was that students

will graduate in three years and the College will lose one year's worth of tuition. Toni emphasized that obtaining the data on students who graduate early is a very difficult and time consuming process. She did indicate that the number of December graduates has grown steadily over the years. There were approximately 55-60 December graduates last year. Toni also stated that transfer hours that are brought in by students will play into the issue of the double majors. Barry stated that the Gen Ed issue is a more important issue. Gloria noted that we should examine the Elon University model in which all Gen Eds must be taken at the institution. Toni pointed out that Rollins is part of the articulation agreement with the State of Florida. Any student who completes an A.A. degree at a state institution comes to Rollins with all Gen Eds completed. Barry pointed out that breaking the articulation agreement would adversely impact the Holt School. Toni expressed a concern about the articulation agreement because it is uneven in implementation. Some students who come from a state college have all of their Gen Ed's in place. However, most of them don't and by the agreement, the Gen Ed's are waived when they enter Rollins. Toni did gather information on the number of hours that students are taking across the four majors in which there were concerns. The majority of students are taking the college average of 18 credit hours. There is a distribution with some students taking more hours. Barry noted that there is currently a Theater major that is enrolled in 34 hours. Barry questioned what the new policy will do to students who take more than 23 hours. Deb stated that students must get their advisor's approval if they take 24 hours or more. Toni noted that anything beyond 23 hours requires a grade point average of at least 3.2. Anything above 30 hours must go through academic appeals. Deb emphasized that Laurie has no intention of penalizing students in the three categories especially where music, theater and chemistry majors are involved. Darren repeated that John Sinclair and Kevin Murphy emphasized that the external courses serve an educational role. He emphasized to Deb that if we devalue pragmatic education and say that these are not worthy of any credit, it does us a huge disservice. Barry stated that to be fair we would have to take credit away from all lab science courses. Toni pointed out that you would have to take away credit from anything that is outside of the classroom. She also indicated that one possibility is that the Bursar could assign waivers to some majors. Darren stated that a policy that has imbedded in it a waiver process is problematic. Toni pointed out that this would be a difficult process to administer. Barry emphasized that this solution would not keep students from graduating in December. The real problem is the transfer credit issue. Deb stressed that we have to stop giving away what we are doing when other institutions do not. Barry asked Deb if there has been serious discussion in the Administration about the transfer issue. Deb stated that there is nothing to discuss of the articulation agreement. Barry pointed it out that the issue is not for transfer students but applies to native students or students who do not come under the articulation agreement. For example, if a student transferred in from Valencia with one year's worth of credit, we could say that none of the Gen Ed's count. Toni believes this is a reasonable approach and we could say that only upon matriculation is transfer credit accepted. Deb believes that the majority of students take Gen Eds outside during the summer in order to complete in four years.

Barry queried the committee if it wants to take this issue further. Speaking for the Music department, Gloria believes that her department can work with the Dean's office. From Toni's experience with ACS Registrars, she gets immediate response that every degree, every piece of academic credit that issued ought to be associated with a tuition charge. She

asked if it is equitable that a student who has one major is paying the same thing as a student who is carrying two majors, two minors, and a concentration. Darren also pointed out that this issue can apply to a student who takes advantage of service learning opportunities and only takes 17 credit hours. Toni stated that this issue is very complicated. Barry emphasized that what the President has been concerned about is just one aspect of a very complex issue and that we need to look at it holistically. Toni will examine the double majors to see what the hours per term are. Darren asked if there are any examples of what the President is concerned about. Deb stated that there is evidence of some students who double up taking credits and graduate early. Toni will determine the total number of students that are in this category. Barry stated that the object is to make money. Deb pointed out that the object is to not losing money and there is big difference. Rick pointed out that Barry asked the committee what it wants to do with this issue. Barry indicated that we will wait for Toni to complete her analysis of the data before moving forward.

Deb distributed the list of peer and aspirant schools.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:52 PM.

Rick Bommelje
Secretary