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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, October 7, 2014

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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Academic Affairs Committee
Oct 7

Attendance:

Jill Jones, Vidhu Aggarwal, Martha Cheng, Paul Reich, Meribeth Huebner, Chris McManus, Mariam Tabrez, Lexi Tomkunas, Phillip Denizaro, Holly Pohlig, Robin Mateo, Greg Cavanaugh, Emmanuel Kodzi, Jonathan Walz, Claire Strom, Philip Deaver, Gloria Cook, Jennifer Cavanaugh, David Richards

I Approve the amended minutes from Sept 23, 2014

Motion (Gloria, Phil 2nd)

Unanimous approval

II Sub-Committee Announcements or reports

New Course Subcommittee (Walz): reminder to review the courses; Jenny/Jonathan will review after the committee reviews posted items and submits by email any concerns.

III Old Business

1. A bit more information about the policy regarding the no-credit PEA classes (Claire Strom): Under new gen ed curriculum, PEAs will not be offered for credit; current system doesn't actually specify whether they bear credit, but they have been offered for credit. We can likely hold off on the transition to next fall to give students more time to get used to the idea. There is an important issue with SACS (PEA courses are being taught by people without terminal degrees), so this HAS to change. We should call for a vote to defer implementation until next fall.

Student Chris McManus: concerned that there will be a high PEA demand from students for the last time for PEAs with credit; Claire assures that there will be sufficient offerings next term, including IFT courses, which also may be impacted. Claire will contact PE department regarding this issue.

Motion (Emmanuel; 2nd Greg): Delay changing of PEA courses to no-credit to Fall 2015. Unanimous pass.

IV. New Business:

1. **Proposed summer program, online learning (David Richard):** This is an initial discussion (there is no proposal to AAC yet) of this issue. Holt has been considering online distance courses, which would be available to both Holt and A&S students. Given that we already allow extensive transfer credits from community colleges and some online sources, wouldn't it be better if Rollins offered our own courses, only in the summer, to assure quality and revenue of/from these credits? Student feedback indicates that this is worth pursuing. There are no current plans to extend this beyond the summer.
Greg: accreditation for this?

Claire: we should consider how this fits in with a new model for Maymester and wait on this discussion until the blended pilot is finished and reported on Jonathan: Language may have a place in this forum. (Though Jenny said that online courses are not currently accepted by the foreign language dept).

General consensus: This is an issue that many will be concerned about.

Jenny: Though the college policy is that we do accept on-line courses, there are still some departments that have expressed concerns about accepting online courses in their curriculum. Since any transfer course in the major must be approved by the department chair, individual departments still have some control on whether or not they will accept an online class. Could having Rollins online courses circumvent the departmental approval process of online transfer courses? This may be problematic. There probably needs to be a larger discussion about online courses in general.

Greg: when are we switching to 128? Part of the motivation for students to take summer classes is the 140-credit load...if this goes away, how would this affect the design/number/nature of these classes? And is this an issue of "if" or "when" will this become a reality??

Jill: any kind of pilot needs to go before entire faculty

Jenny: we still need to address online learning in general to the entire faculty, given that these classes will have the Rollins name on them.

Chris: Students support online learning opportunities at Rollins in lieu of community college credits.

Claire/Gloria: what kind of demand will there be for such a system, given the new geneds...we need to carefully define what purpose these courses have and consider what this may do to the identity of the school as a whole?

David: We are increasingly confident that Rollins professors can offer a high-quality product, but we need more conversations and a general consensus derived from the faculty as a whole is important. Holt would rather have a faculty-driven model before moving forward.

2. **Proposed changes to the English major (Martha Cheng, Paul Reich):** At a departmental retreat to discuss the major/curriculum, a new English major map (distributed via email) was created. The new approach focuses on distributional requirements, a developmental model to learning, and allows better integration of writing into the major. Research on peer/aspirant institutional trends suggests that these changes will bring Rollins more into line with others. There are no changes to total credits of the major or minor.

Jenny: do we need new courses? Martha: both new and old courses; overall the new major gives more flexibility.

Jill: the main thing that may disappear is the list of currently available survey courses.

Chris (student): wondered how these are phased in (faculty filled him in on std. procedure)

Emmanuel: would the 128 affect this? (no)

Jenny: how will final major map look (and how will this work with Degreeworks)? Will courses be populated into the map? Martha: yes.

Jonathan: why is there only one transnational literature requirement when internationalization is such a focus of the college? Jill: Distribution model allows for more of these classes to fit into the new model, though our English dept. doesn't have a lot of experts in this field.

Motion (Kasandra), 2nd Gloria: accept changes to the English major/minor; unanimous acceptance

3. Grade Appeal (Jennifer Cavanaugh):

Jenny: when a student wants to contest a grade, after talking to the professor, the student goes to the Dean's office for the grade appeal process. The student presents their case to the Dept. chair acts as mediator. If no resolution is made, then the appeal is sent to the president of the faculty, dean of students, and dept. chair. If 2/3 decide it doesn't have merit, it dies. If it has merit, it comes to AAC for a final decision.

Jill: poorly written and hard to understand

Jenny: The syllabus did indicate that grades would be curved; the syllabus didn't describe *how* the course would be curved. In general, there are many types of curving models/methods. The professor, upon discussion with Jenny, was unwilling to change the grade. He was asked to clearly outline the nature of the curve in the future. The student didn't address that both the assignments were curved AND the overall grade was curved.

Jill: the appeal is VERY poorly written, and there is not technically enough information in the report to clearly support it as written.

Kasandra: concerns about changing one single student's grade when it technically went into the calculation of other students' scores.

Greg: does not like how either side presents the case, and it makes it very hard to make a decision. Was this not the student's responsibility during the class?

Gloria: it is clear that this person cares a lot about their GPA

Holly: it's not clear how participation was actually scored (or what grade was earned)

Jonathan: what do we actually change the grade to, given the nature of the fuzzy grading?

Emmanuel: this begs additional questions about whether expectations are actually provided to new faculty; the quality of the actual appeal should be addressed?

Motion (Gloria, Chris 2nd): grant appeal but defer to Jenny to clarify actual grade merited; unanimous approval

V. Announcements: additional INB issues are coming to the executive committee

VI. Adjourn