

## **Senate Academic Standards Council**

### **Annual Report 2015-2016**

**Council Members:** Christina Aiello, Pamela Brillante, Stephen Hahn, Richard Kearney, David Koistinen, Sudha Mani, Jill Nocella (Chair), Chriss Williams

The Council met a total of seven times during the academic year to discuss a variety of issues.

#### **Charges for 2015-2016:**

- a. Discuss the relationship between University and Department policies. eg. Can Departments/Programs have policies that are stricter than the University's?
- b. What role should the Academic Standard Council play in the review and development of University academic standards?
- c. A review of the plagiarism policy, specifically in light of new issues that arise from teaching online.
  - a. Consult with technology council
  - b. Outdated academic Integrity Policy
- d. Examine course WD Policy.

#### **Summary of activities during 2015-2016:**

##### **Withdrawals:**

The Council requested and was supplied with a number of years of data related to withdrawals from the Registrar's office. After meeting with the Registrar and discussing at length, the Council determined that:

1. Since the Course Repeat Policy has not yet been implemented, data does not yet exist to determine the need for revision to the Withdrawal Policy
2. Based on the data that was provided by the Registrar related to withdrawals from the previous four semesters, the council members were not convinced that a problem with withdrawals exists
3. The council agreed that more education related to the academic and financial consequences of withdrawing from a course is needed for students as well as for faculty.

Therefore, the Withdrawal Policy will not be revised by this Council.

##### **Proposal to add FN to Grading Policy:**

The Council met with Provost Sandmann, Nina Trelisky (Registrar), Michael Corso (Financial Aid), and Reginald Ross (Admissions) in November to discuss the implications for adding FN designation to the current grading policy. The Council voted to approve the proposal and submitted to the Senate,

however, the item did not pass at the Senate. After additional clarification regarding the FN designation was provided to all faculty, Provost Sandmann notified faculty that the designation would be in place for the Spring 2016 semester.

#### **Course Repeat Policy :**

The Council met with Provost Sandmann, Senate President Diane Falk, and Senate Vice-President Nicole Magaldi in December to discuss an amendment to the Course Repeat Policy that was passed in the Senate in September 2015. The line: "Individual programs may have more restrictive course repeat and other academic standard policies due to accreditation demands and/or standards of the profession." was noted to be in opposition to the university standards which note that the only exceptions to university requirements for academic standards are for programs that have different standards imposed on them by either state law (Education programs) or have a mandatory entrance into the profession examination (Nursing and Athletic training). The current policy as recommended expands this exception to include "accreditation demands and/or standards of the profession".

The discussion with the council included the revision to read- "Individual programs may have more restrictive course repeat and other academic standard policies due to state laws or mandatory entrance into the profession examinations." The Council voted to approve the proposal and submitted to the Senate, however, the item did not pass at the Senate.

#### **Academic Integrity Policy:**

The Council was charged with examination of the plagiarism policy in light of technology and online courses, in collaboration with the Technology Council. Minor edits noted to the revised Academic Integrity Policy that was approved by the Senate in 2008 but not implemented. The Council provided the document to the general counsel as well as to the Technology Council for input. Minor edits noted from the Technology Council but further discussion and meeting should take place in order to move this forward to the Senate. Noted as a recommended charge for the 2016-2017 year.

#### **Attendance Policy:**

Discussion regarding email from faculty member requesting the Council address the current attendance policy and ways in which this might be strengthened. After lengthy discussion and examination of attendance policies from other universities, decision that the policy itself would not be revised. However, in light of student success initiatives, the Council agreed that there is benefit in surveying faculty (particularly those teaching 1000 and 2000 level courses) to determine best practices and make a recommendation to the Senate regarding attendance. Survey and outcomes of survey noted as a recommended charge for the 2016-2017 year.

**Recommendations for next year's Council:**

- Examination of the Academic Integrity Policy that was approved by the Senate in 2008 but not implemented. Liaise with the Technology Council to determine edits; work with General Counsel to determine any implementation/enforcement concerns
- Survey faculty of 1000 and 2000 level courses for best practice related to attendance. Consider making recommendation to the Senate regarding standardization of language to be places in course syllabi related to attendance.
- Review documentation related to program review and make recommendations on how to better clarify the process. Liaise with Assessment Council and Jonathan Lincoln in Provost's office