

Academic Policies Committee

[Google Meet] Meeting Minutes

11 February 2021

Meeting commenced at 11:03am.

I. Attendance

Erik Brzoska, Jean Cook, Jill Drake, Donna Haley, Michael Hooper, Jairus-Joaquin Matthews, Emily McKendry-Smith, Shea Rose, Ethel Santiago, Scott Sykes, Ericka Wentz,

II. Approval of Minutes from November 20, 2020 meeting

Minutes were approved in the chat.

III. Change to AP Policy for History exams

See files: "AP_Update_113020" and "History AP Exam Info for APC"

McKendry-Smith asked for discussion for this information item. Donna Haley was asked for comments. She asked for clarification about whether this will be retroactive as she knows students will ask and if retroactive, how retroactive? McKendry-Smith will contact Stephanie Challifoux in History and respond to Donna as needed.

IV. New USG One-Step Proposal form and UWG New Program Concept form

AVPAA Drake presented the entirely new program proposal process being rolled out by the USG. This is an information item because the USG reserves the right to define the processes for requesting new. AVPAA Drake showed the USG website with all the recorded webinars and a new process. Forms have been revised and added (the Budget Forms). She summarized the most significant changes as follows

- Very data driven: must show demand locally; demand five and ten years out; must show alignment with your Strategic Plan; spelling out specific career and labor force demand is more explicit
- USG has also strengthened the requirements that institutions show they have the space and workload to deliver the requested new programs.
- It appears that the USG will be stricter about what new programs they approve
- The USG asked that all campuses to develop new processes so they could do a more thorough job of preparing high quality proposals. This is the pertinent information moving forward
 - UWG already had a "short form" that has been revised; it is longer than before but still short but in relation to the USG forms
 - Before filling out the short form, interested faculty are advised to schedule a pre short form concept discussion with Jill Drake and David Jenks
 - Per USG-requirements, the "short forms" will also be reviewed by a UWG team including ITS and Budget who will consider necessary resources to support the new program requested on the short form; this team's work is to weigh in on the

- things necessary to support a requested new program, not to judge the curriculum of the new program
- After the team has reviewed and approved, the item can go through curriculum and shared governance on campus
 - The deadline for UWG submitting the Academic Forecast to the USG deadline will be February. The Academic Forecast will be presented along with budgets to the USG. It has been “later”: August for the next academic year; now it will be February to approve the budget for the academic year two years in the future

Questions: the process has always been mysterious and there wasn't much support; one might look at what was approved and what wasn't approved, but it was hard to tell why one was approved and one wasn't; will faculty have more support?

Answer: For the new forms, the USG requires certain common data sets. And because we have only limited licenses for these, faculty will need to have more support. Also, if universities say the program needs two more lines, the USG is requiring the university to show they have this. We are aligning ourselves with the body that approves these programs.

Observation: at the fall trainings, it was noted that rural colleges will have a greater challenge than urban campuses, because if you can't show you have a significant number of students wanting the degree program in your county, you can't

Question: If you've already submitted, do you have to go through this process now?

Answer: This appears to be still an open question. Initially institutions were told no, but the programs weren't sent up haven't been approved, so perhaps the USG is reconsidering. We have three programs sitting there--one has been there more than a year.

V. Review of Incomplete policy

See Google Doc with info on incomplete policies at other USG institutions

Chair directed attention to the google doc contributed to by committee members. She defined today's item as a discussion and invited members to contribute ideas about where they thought the process should go.

She observed the difference between how the incompletes are discussed in the undergrad and graduate catalogs and asked about getting clearer language in the undergrad catalog about deadlines for the incomplete.

Donna Haley added that the committee might we think about why we even need different policies for undergrads and graduate students. AVPAA Drake added that in practice, faculty have been able to define deadlines.

Question: is there a university-wide form for incompletes?

Answer: the provost does have a form from December 2011 (<https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/assets/docs/faculty-resources/IncompleteGradeFormRevised1Dec2011.pdf>), it's not clear that the form is binding.

Concern was also raised that the structures (e.g. departments and colleges) retain a place in the process, as part time faculty can come and go before an incomplete could be completed.

Question: you can assign an incomplete so easily...what if faculty don't even know the form exists?

Answer: It would be cost prohibitive to add a field to BanWeb requiring faculty to put in a deadline there, but the committee could write verbiage that could be added to the emails that the Registrar sends out to faculty, reminding faculty to fill out the form and send a copy to the student and their department. A link to that form could also be included.

A list of students receiving incompletes could be generated after grades have been rolled to academic history. Faculty of those students could be contacted and be reminded to fill out the form, share it with their student, and file it with their department retroactively if they haven't yet.

Conversation returned to catalog language and whether language should be added defining how much of a course should be completed before an incomplete could be assigned as a reasonable solution to unforeseen student issues.

The committee agreed to form a subcommittee to look at possible language for this and any other concerns in other pre-existing policies gathered in the google doc. Jill volunteered to help those on the subcommittee. Nancy Penco and Emily McKendry-Smith agreed to work on this. The committee affirmed the Chair reaching out to faculty who had approached her with concerns about incompletes to engage their help. It was noted that this language should be added to the catalogs, the faculty handbook, and the student handbook. The subcommittee will add their observations and recommendations to the current google doc so that all committee members can review them.

Game plan. The committee will

- Consider adding time limits for completing incompletes to the undergraduate catalog
- Consider adding a requirement about how much of the class should be complete before a student is considered for an incomplete
- Consider standardizing the time limits for incompletes for undergraduate and graduate students
- Contact the TLA committee about modifications to the incomplete form itself.

VI. New Business and VII Old Business

Concern: Academic Advising center would like Biology to limit the number of times a student has taken a course; Banner can't count this, but departments can.

This was discussed last year on the APC and continues to be a concern with the Biology program and the advisors working with them. The concern is that students repetitively register and then fail, meaning that the seat is not available for other students who need the class.

It seems that the UWG version of Banner can't "count" student attempts at a course, although possibly the Kennesaw State version of Banner can. If the committee were to make a recommendation, it would need to be broader than about just one course or one department. Programs and Departments can have their own policies. It was also observed that there would be a difference in policies for classes part of the general core and for classes required for a major.

If the student continues to pay, no avenue has yet been found to block them from registration except for a "permission of instructor" pre-requisite for the course. Faculty have been advised to submit these repeat students as "at risk." We can advise students to talk to a faculty member before signing up a third time, but we can't prohibit them from signing up. We can advise students to not sign up a third time and make the notes in WolfWatch or EAB Navigate, but it's still student prerogative to register as they wish.

McKendry-Smith asked for members to return to their colleges and observe how widespread the problem is. Nursing and COE members reported that this hasn't been a problem. It hasn't been a problem for some programs in CACSI.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30pm