2015-16 FACULTY SENATE
ACADEMIC POLICIES COMMITTEE
MINUTES October 16, 2015
Approved (as Amended): November 6, 2015

October 23, 2015

Members Present: Escobar, Schmidtlein, Migliaccio, Geyer, Fields, Trigales, Gonsier-

Gerdin, Gonzalez, Van Gaasbeck

Members Absent: Bowie, Murphy, Taylor, Watson-Derbigny, Hunt, Vogt, Blumberg,

Bradley, Irwin, Li

Guests Present: Malroutu, Slabinski, Wu

Call to Order: Called to order at 2:16 p.m. ** started late to ensure satisfactory attendance **

1. **Open Forum**:
    General Studies Degree…
    * Schmidtlein: The idea of a General Studies degree, or General Education degree,
    has surfaced in conversations around the university again. But there are questions as
    to where the degree would be based (i.e., which college(s)?). The College of SSIS
    seemed to be a "natural home" for a General Studies-type of program, but there may
    be others as well (e.g, A & L, NSM). If this is a new program that is developed, this
    issue would likely go to Curriculum Policies Committee (CPC). Criteria for a new
    degree/new program would need to be established. Basically, the idea is about how
    to develop a program to serve students who may have left the university for a period
    of time, returned, and wanted to finish their degree.

    * Escobar suggested that perhaps a Task Force or Ad Hoc Working Group be put
    together because it seemed that a number of APC members were interested in this
    issue and had input in the conversation. Migliaccio offered to take the lead on this in
    terms of contacting other individuals who might be interested. Other APC members
    who are going to be involved include Schmidtlein and Van Gaasbeck. The creative
    name for this new group is: "The Ad Hoc Working Task Force… [to Explore the
    Development of a General Studies Degree.]" [*language in brackets added by Escobar
    with creative license during the write-up of these minutes* ☺]

    Accessing All Language in Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy

    * Escobar shared that Bob Buckley had asked if someone could look into how he and his
    first year experience students might be able to have access to all of the relevant
    information concerning the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy. It has been his
    experience that the information has been difficult find on campus websites and that some
    of the embedded links are broken. He wondered who would be the point person to

contact about it. Escobar will follow up with folks in Administrative and Business Affairs.

2. **Agenda Approved**: Approved 2:35pm

3. **Minutes October 2, 2015 Reviewed.** Minutes approved, 2:37pm

4. **Repeat Policy.** The Committee discussed further changes that were made to drafts of the amended policy. For purposes of clarity, the Committee decided to include specific language, in two separate sentences, which states that courses may be repeated at Sacramento State University for grades lower than a C grade and that courses may be repeated at another college or university for grades lower than a C grade. With these changes, the policy concerning repeated courses will now apply to ALL students.

    [For additional information, see Executive Order 1037, which provides policies on

    repeating courses, among other things: https://www.calstate.edu/eo/EO-1037.html]

5. **Department/Division/Program Chairs' or Directors' Right to Deny Students Admission into Major Policy, Establishment of.** Bohsiu Wu, Chair of Sociology, and Dianne Hyson, Associate Dean of SSIS, were invited to return to another APC meeting at the request of Chair Escobar. Dr. Wu attended this portion of the meeting primarily to observe the discussion of this proposed new policy. <u>The Committee discussed the proposed policy once again and ultimately decided not to support it going forward.</u> The general sentiment among those in attendance was that departments/divisions/programs should be encouraged to establish a pre-major, primarily as an advising tool and a way to communicate with students and inform them of what they need to do in order to be successful in that major program. This may be a way of establishing some consistency among programs in the sense that students have some classes to try out before officially entering the major and they receive some advising and guidance about retention and success. At this time, the process for admitting students into non-impacted programs and those also without pre-major criteria will remain the same.

    The Committee decided to draft a policy which states that Chairs cannot deny students admission into a major program outright. Chairs may only refuse to admit students to their major program only in cases where there are established pre-major criteria or if the major program is officially impacted.

6. **Online Course Evaluation Program**. **(Appendix D).** This was an information item. The Committee had looked at the document entitled "The Effectiveness of the Class Climate Evaluation System," which was put together by Mark Rodriguez and Shawn Sumner. The issue originally arose this semester from a question raised by Blumberg during Open Forum of the September 18th meeting. See the information below, excerpted from the Sept. 18th meeting minutes→

    * **Online Evaluation Process**—S. Blumberg raised questions about it and wondered if faculty could individually decide when to release the evaluation to their students/classes rather than IT. It would be better if that decision were the faculty

member's because, at the times when it is released, it's often not a great point in the semester where students could provide complete feedback. Migliaccio stated that a request for data had been made in the past, which centered on assessing response rates and scores and how those may have changed in units that have made the shift from paper to electronic evaluations. Migliaccio suggested that Escobar, as APC Chair have S. Bowie (Senate Chair) get in touch with Mark Rodriguez about this, as he was contacted in the past. Escobar will follow up with Bowie about this.

Escobar had gotten in touch with Mark Rodriguez, via initial contact by Bowie, primarily because this information (data) was supposed to have been presented to APC sometime last year, as well as the Faculty Senate in Spring 2014, for which the PPT slides (the document) had been prepared. Consequently, the item before APC at this time does not necessarily reflect Blumberg's original question but instead, is the response to the request for data, which was supposed to have been presented to us last semester.

The Committee reviewed the PPT slides/document and concluded that it addresses issues of "efficiency," in terms of administering the evaluations and being able to get them to the faculty for their review in a timely manner. However, there appears to be a negative impact on response rates with online evaluations that the PPT/document does not address and nor does it address the nature of qualitative responses, which often tend to me more negative in online evaluations (i.e., students who feel very strongly or negatively about the instructor or the course will be the most common to respond). Consequently, neither the response rates nor the content of narrative responses accurately reflect the quality of the instructor or the course. In fact, they suggest the opposite, which was the case with one faculty member whose quantitative scores went down with the online evaluations and only student complaints about the course and instructor had been shared. Prior paper evaluations reflected much higher quantitative scores and more positive narrative student responses. Lastly, the issue that Blumberg raised at the Sept 18th meeting in Open Forum is not addressed by the document either, and that is that the faculty member should control when the evaluations are released. Currently, they are being released too early in the semester, according to Blumberg and others. ** Escobar will contact Mark Rodriguez to share these concerns and invite him to a future APC meeting.

7. Meeting Schedule for Fall 2015

~~September 4~~	~~October 16~~	December 4
~~September 18~~	November 6	
~~October 2~~	November 20	

8. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.   _____

Sue C. Escobar, Committee

Chair