2013-14 FACULTY SENATE
GRADUATES STUDIES POLICIES COMMITTEE
MINUTES
04 February 2014
Approved 2/18/14

Members Present: Blanton, Cowan, Hamilton, Heather, Kaplan, May, Miller, Reddick,
Sprott, Steinwert, Wassmer

Members Absent: Barakatt, Hembree

Guests: None present

1. **Call to order:** Called to order at approximately 8:30 a.m.

2. **Minutes of 03 December 2013:** Approved with corrections for those present.
   Add May and Steinwert.

3. **Information Items:**
   a. Chair Hamilton report: Report from Executive Committee. There was a
      discussion about creating language that changes the policy on program
      deletion or on preventing program deletion through the actions of a
      department or dean.
      Chris: Arguments were made against the proposed policy changes
      because the circumstance that created the need was a one-time
      problem. But if it happened once and there was no policy language to
      deal with the circumstance, what will we do when it happens again?
      Concerns were raised to the dean of the department in question at the
      time, but there was no policy to address his actions at the time, so
      nothing could be done.

4. **Report from Dean of Graduate Studies:**
   a. Chevelle: OGS has money granted to support the development of a fully
      automated grad admissions process. OGS and IRT are working together to
      do this.
      Will be attending the Southern California graduate diversity program at Cal
      Poly, April 26, 2014.
      Chris: Any grad students doing CourseMatch?
      Newsome: No, not online. These courses don't meet graduate needs and
      aren't really set up to do so.

Chris: The faculty endowment scholarship is giving two graduate awards this semester.

Tracy: I fought for this in the meeting. They considered giving the second grad award to another undergrad, but I refused to allow it.

Chris: Grad numbers?

Chevelle: Down but holding. Roughly 7.8%, 7.9%. Quality is an issue so programs are trying to keep from going too far down in their applicant pool. Other programs in the system are seeing more growth in their grad programs, but not Sac State.

Mary: Why?

Chevelle: Other campuses are seeing enrollment growth from foreign students, but not this one. It's the quality issue that's holding growth down here in some programs.

5. **Report from Statewide Senator Chris Miller:**
   a. Nothing to report at this time.

6. **New Business**
   a. Jonathan: The committee is putting together a work plan to form a document. Got a report from UCD, so we have a roadmap, things like who's responsible for degrees, what is a degree, what are the requirements, what can you do with the degree. Plus quality and integrity, which is ambiguous, but there are prompts for developing our plan from WASC and the Davis report. But it comes down to having assessments in place, reporting on the results, and then taking action based on test results. The last part is key. Do something. Mostly, we need to take all the institutional knowledge we have and put it in the essay report.

   A lot of the report from Davis encompasses all degrees. We need to do this document in tandem with other interested reporting committees. Graduate programs are a part of a larger document. We need to work with the grad council, report from shared governance,.

   Chevelle: Last time, everyone involved gave a report, so there's a group of reports. And WASC can look at all of them or not.

   Jonathan: We need to be more specific on what we want this committee to do in drafting the document. Need to set a deadline for having it ready, in place, and operational.

   Chevelle: The provost's committee will meet soon and will get a structure and a timeline set. It would be good for this group to have an answer to some questions.

   Jonathan: We will want something in place for grad studies. We need to decide how specific we want to get on the types of degrees we offer. WASC wants more of an over-arching report. Look at the posted

documents. Look at the Davis report and what WASC is asking us to do. We don't need to reinvent the wheel.

Tracy: I looked at UCD and finally understood what it was supposed to look like.

Jonathan: We wait for further direction.

b. Tracy: And now we're back to the definition of a credit hour. The CPSP (Council on Preparation of School Personnel) sent what they have. Graduate and credential definitions are separate. "3 guidelines for the credential." This is from Pia.

(Committee read the document.)

Chris: What I read looks fine for someone who has no clue about this stuff. It looks specifically focused on Teacher Ed. Some of it looks like something PT or Nursing might do. So a clinical perspective may be different than teacher ed.

Tracy. They mimicked us in form.

Chevelle: This was distributed to a committee meeting and to other offices.

Geni: We may want to take out 'intern' and 'student teaching' and call it 'supervised field experience'.

Tracy: Remember how this is used. Federal law says we have to have a definition of these things so a student paying for 3 units get 3 units. So each program will designate what course goes where.

Geni: But it's too specific. That's not the only culminating experience. There are others, so the last sentence is misleading.

Tracy: In terms of satisfying what a credit hour means, the information is there.

Geni: If that sentence wasn't there, then it could include administrative internships and field study. The point is that the specificity excludes some programs. I move to remove the sentence.

Mary: Second.

Tracy: Any opposed? No. Sentence removed. We will get feedback as it goes forward.

Chris: We may need to remove other language as well. The words about specific field placements are not necessarily needed.

Julian: The overlaps of language are confusing. We need something that pithily overviews the placements.

Geni: But the specific placements illustrate professional practice. Maybe edit it down so it's not so verbose.

Chris: The last sentence confused it, so take it off.

Geni: The list of placements for professional practice makes it clear to someone who does not know about these placements.

Chris: But what does this have to do with the definition of a credit hour?

Geni: The list makes clear what kind of experiences are comprising the coursework. I need to know how professional practice is different than an internship.

Chris: Send it to CPC and look at it in the context of the definitions and operationalize where a course fits in these descriptions.

Chevelle: CPSP has a representative from every department that has something to do with this, placing students and determining credit hours.

Mary: Professional programs?

Chevelle: Not professional programs, this is just for credential courses.

Chris: The memo from CPSP giving an endorsement of this policy for it to go forward with the transmittal letter and the policy. What does CPSP think of these changes?

Geni: Our input is requested, that's why we looked at the policy.

Chris: We want to know if we stepped in something.

Geni: Send it back to CPSP then, with the explanation that we deleted 2 sentences for clarity, not content.

Chris: Use a back channel – send it back to Pia to see the edits. Closing the loop to be sure there's no problem.

Tracy: We will do that. So, we're forwarding the policy with a memorandum, but checking with Pia to be sure.

c. Tracy: GWAR

Geni: Looked for standards to use to assess grad level writing across the nation. Most programs are fairly consistent on how grad level writing is defined. What's inconsistent is how it's assessed. Standards are so similar, but assessment is so varied. Most give programs latitude on how to remediate but set standards for quality university-wide.

Tracy: We're trying to capture what was discussed in our last meetings; A 2- or 3-step processes was discussed. The culminating experience will remain as the final certification of the GWAR. That's not going away. Sheri e-mailed that she likes the 3-step process. A diagnostic, placement or remediation, then the culminating experience. Grad programs should have the room to decide how to do remediation. Do they want a GWI or an outside course. The issue is going to be having the resources to deal with remediation.

Geni: If you have a GWI course, the issue then is that students who didn't pass the diagnostic would not do well without some intervention.

Chevelle: Julian, remember when we talked about it before? We could offer modules that teach specific deficiencies because it's not the 'writing' it's the structural, grammatical issues.

Geni: Used to be that everyone had to go through an initial writing class that taught bare-bones rules.

Mary: But big departments would be hurt by having to offer this step to so many students. It's a lot of students with the writing that has to be assessed.

Chevelle: Do we know what San Marcos does?

Chris: Each program has a remediation protocol.

Geni: Programs have the option to decide what to do. Our program would rather have an online workshop.

Tracy: We need to have options to give people.

Chevelle: There needs to be a university option.

Chris: Why?

Chevelle: Because some programs will not know what to do. Other programs don't take students who don't write well. But some programs have a social justice component, and they need help. A university model spreads the cost.

Mary: We need a proposal to show the new provost.

Ken: Well, what about if you don't pass these, you have to go to ARC and take these courses. Why do we have to have a remediation program?

Chris: The writing course is the gateway course. If you didn't demonstrate your ability, you don't get to take a seat in another class.

Geni: I was sent away to remediate my writing. They make a point to their students that graduate school is the top percentage of students in the country.

Chris: Step one is an early diagnosis. A writing sample is required. Sometimes they take a risk without the diagnosis but not usually.

Tracy: If you don't meet certain standards, then don't come in.

Jonathan: A common problem with students who are ELL is that they provide writing samples that are not written by them. These programs then have a remediation program for those students. In many disciplines, they don't require students to write in a style that fits the profession. They teach discipline-specific writing.

Ken: If you weren't honest coming in and you don't actually have that level of writing, sorry.

Chris: Essentially what we're talking about is whether we need a policy to require remediation. We just have to provide a certification. You're certified if you pass the GWI and the culminating experience. We don't have to require remediation, just certification. But a program can decide what to do after the assessment.

Ken: Students come in, a program does the assessment. If a program wants to admit them, it's up to the program.

Geni: It's not about the assessment. What happens after?

Tracy: The assessment certifies advancement to candidacy.

Jonathan: The program decides what to do after the assessment.

Mary: Early on, the process was supposed to set a standard and if students didn't meet the standard, we help them.

Julian: We keep talking about remediation, but we're not talking about what type of remediation we mean. A certain department could provide the help for certain types of remediation.

Tracy: What it would like to me is the first step is an assessment to see that you meet the standards to advance to candidacy. The certification before you advance. The second step is the culminating experience. Remediation is not the policy. Departments can decide that. Provide evidence that each student has shown a proficiency. Yes, it's being assessed programmatically, but they don't advance to candidacy until they've done one of these things. A GWI, a paper, something. If students don't pass on the first try, there has to be a policy in place that responds to the results. Even if it's that they're out, that they then have to go someplace else.

Chris: Each program will articulate a pathway for what happens when students don't succeed.

Julian: Each program has to have a protocol as to what they do.

Geni: A program has to have a policy.

Tracy: The protocol could be you don't pass on the first try you're out. Or you can try again. Or you can take this coursework.

Ken: Each program has to have a GWI?

Tracy: No, can be a paper, a GRE score, a class. Something that a department has as their policy requirement.

Jonathan: Then you're asking students to do something above and beyond?

Tracy: The assessments have always been above and beyond. You can ask a student to turn in previous classwork. Programs that have a GWI course will probably want to keep them.

Jonathan: Anyone who teaches in the grad program would be happy to look at papers to keep out poor writers.

Chris: A student in a program who doesn't pass the gateway course can petition for an exception and have a paper evaluated by someone else as well so one professor isn't able to keep them out.

Tracy: Early assessment, evaluation prior to advancement to candidacy, culminating experience.

Ken: There are programs that don't require writing in their culminating experience.

Tracy: We'll just let them do their thing.

Jonathan: You've advanced to candidacy off your writing prior.

Chevelle: System policy requires that you have a culminating experience but it doesn't have to be part of the GWAR.

Julian: The culminating experience can be no less than an undergrad requirement. Advancement to candidacy meets those requirements.

Chris: Then do we want to leave it at advancement to candidacy? For non-GWI programs, they wanted to have something in place as a culminating experience to satisfy the GWAR.
(Through discussion, the committee agrees that advancement to candidacy can satisfy GWAR, but not the culminating experience.)
Tracy: So we agree on a two-step process.
Julian: What has been presented overstates its effectiveness. I believe if we include it as an option, the reading and writing committee will not be happy with directed self-placement. Research on that suggests it doesn't work.
Tracy: We're just including all options, but not recommending it.
Tracy: We will bring forward a draft with the 2-step process, then.

7. **Other Business:** There was no other business.

   Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:15

   _____

   Ann Blanton, Vice Chair, GSPC