

Curricular Affairs Committee
Meeting Minutes for February 3, 2016, 1-2:30 pm

Present: Ken Abramowicz, Casey Byrne, Jennie Carroll, Mike Earnest, Alex Fitts (via Zoom), Doug Goering, Catherine Hanks, Cindy Hardy, Eileen Harney, Jayne Harvie, Joan Hornig, Ginny Kinne, Lisa Lunn, Rainer Newberry, Caty Oehring, Patrick Plattet, Holly Sherouse

Absent: Jenny Liu

Guests: Mathew Carrick (ASUAF); Amber Cagwin (Dean of Students Office)

1. Approval/Amendment of Agenda
The agenda was approved with addition of looking over two new minors.
2. Approval of minutes
 - a. Draft Minutes 1/20/16
Minutes were approved as submitted.
3. Old Business
 - a. Grade Appeals Policy
 - i. Special guests Amber Cagwin, Dean of Students Office, and Mathew Carrick, ASUAF President

ASUAF President Mathew Carrick presented three main questions about the grade appeals policy to the committee.

Questions submitted by Mr. Carrick

- i. Why is the student member of the grades appeal committee appointed by the dean, and why is the student nonvoting?

In the case of judicial reviews, Mathew noted that student government appoints the student member. So, he wanted to learn why the dean does so with regard to grade appeals.

- ii. Why is the appealing student not allowed an advocate when he or she has the second meeting with the dean and professor?

He pointed out that current policy is out of compliance with Regents' Policy at P09.03.040, which says that an advisor may be present at all times for the student.

- iii. Why is the review committee's decision final? Does this mean there's no way to appeal the committee's decision at all?

While the decision being final does not contradict BOR policy, Mathew still wanted to understand why that was the case. Ken A. pointed out that the committee review was the third and final step in the three-step process, so he could understand why it would be considered final.

Members of the committee responded that the grade appeals policy was many decades old (actually predating Faculty Senate and "UAF"), having been in place before anyone present even worked at the university. They agreed the questions had merit, particularly in light of the contradiction with BOR policy concerning advocates. Some of the faculty members had served on appeals committees where the student had been allowed to have an advocate present.

Amber commented that her office has not been allowing advocates because of the current UAF policy, but that the contradiction with BOR policy was also a point she had noted down in order to raise today. What would be the most helpful for students would be guidance about the process before they submit their appeal and a discussion about what kind of documentation they need to put together.

Alex F. noted that an academic appeals advisor position was created a couple of years ago to provide this sort of guidance, and this is mentioned in the catalog. It would be helpful if this were noted in the policy.

Procedural changes that would be helpful were discussed at length. Dean Goering brought up the issue of e-learning and changing modes of instruction, which are raising new issues the policy does not address. Having an academic appeals advisor could be very helpful in this regard, also, to help sort through problems and perhaps prevent unnecessary appeals. Ginny K. commented that since the former advisor who was tasked with the appeals advising duties left UAF employment, the role has not been reassigned. Mathew commented that the role of student peer advisor could also be very helpful to students, but the policy does not provide an established role for them. The committee expressed support for the roles of appeals advisors (both staff and student).

The committee decided that the issues could be most effectively addressed by creating a subcommittee to look at the issues in depth and to find better ways to advise students about appeals. Joan, Ken, Mathew, Alex, Ginny, Mike and Amber agreed to serve on the subcommittee. The new subcommittee will provide a status report by the first of April, and they will consult with General Counsel to be sure changes are in line with BOR policy. Potentially, there would be time to get any changes to Faculty Senate at the May meeting.

- b. GER classification implementation
 - i. Foreign Languages
 - 1. Draft guidelines (attached)

Rainer reported about the discussion at the Administrative Committee concerning allowing the second semester language courses. They were supportive of making languages an exception to the 'no prerequisites' standard. The topic will be brought to the full Faculty Senate as an information item.

The UA Regulations do not address the 3 credits vs. 5 credits language courses. The Foreign Languages department does not wish to have the 3 credit (100A and 100B) courses count toward the GER because they are not the equivalent of the first-year, 5-credit courses. The 3-credit language courses are more like continuing ed courses, or developmental level. The committee debated requiring 3- vs. 5-credit language courses for the GER. The majority felt the decision in that regard should belong to the Foreign Language Department.

Caty O. provided some clarification about how language courses transfer in to UAF with regard to number of credits.

The majority of the committee approved the amended guidelines that included the exception for the second-semester language courses. There was one objection to the language exception.

- 4. New Business
 - a. New Minors

Rainer noted that both minors are essentially zero-cost, utilizing existing courses and faculty.

It was noted that the courses for the Art History minor are taught by one faculty person (term instructor). The approval signatures denote there is commitment to offer the minor at the program and college.

The committee approved sending both minors to the Faculty Senate for a vote.

b. Meeting duration

Cathy commented that meeting business could be accomplished in one hour. Due to time constraints and meeting adjournment, there was no further discussion.