**Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

**February 22, 2022**

**Voting Members Present:** Michelle Berry,Joan Curry, Leslie Dennis, Moe Momayez, Amber Rice, Caleb Simmons, Chair Claudia Stanescu, Jordan-Isaiah Toyos, Richard Vaillancourt, Joost Van Haren

**Non-voting Members Present:**  Molly Bolger, Nicole Gonzalez (on behalf of Carmin Chan), Abbie Sorg, Alex Underwood

Chair Claudia Stanescu called the meeting to order at ­­­3:30 p.m. A quorum was established with 7 voting members. 3 additional members arrived after the minutes were approved.

1. **Approval of Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee meeting minutes, 1/25/2022**

Joost Van Haren moved to accept the meeting minutes from 1/25/2022 as submitted. Michelle Berry seconded the motion. The motion passed with 7 votes in favor.

1. **Policy Proposals**
   1. **Change of Schedule Policy proposal**

**Presenter:** Abbie Sorg

Based on feedback provided at the January subcommittee meeting, an updated version of the Change of Schedule Policy proposal was provided and reviewed. Subcommittee members noted that the inclusion of a grid with the drop, withdrawal, and late withdrawal deadlines listed by career and session length would be helpful for students and faculty.

**Caleb Simmons moved to approve the updated proposal as requested, and Joost Van Haren seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 8 votes in favor.**

1. **Continued Discussion Items**
2. **Proposal to Eliminate the 60 University Credit Requirement for GRO Eligibility**

Continuing the discussion started during the January meeting, the subcommittee was provided with data from peer institutions’ grade forgiveness policies.

Of 18 institutions reviewed, 7 do not offer grade forgiveness at all; 7 offer grade forgiveness for a limited number of units, regardless of the student’s progress toward degree; 3 offer grade forgiveness for an unlimited number of units; 1 offers grade forgiveness only during the first 1 semester or 24 attempted units.

Discussion continued:

* Should we be looking at the whole GRO policy, or just the 60-unit limit on who can use GRO? At this time, what the advising community asked to review is just the 60-unit limit.
* Removing the limit would help make the impact of GRO more equitable for students regardless of whether they started at the UA or transferred in. Current policy is more lenient for transfer students than for non-transfer.
* After retroactive withdrawals, GRO is probably the second most commonly seen issue that students submit General Petitions for. This is clearly a process that students run into issues with often. The 60-unit limit makes this process even more complicated than it already is. The subcommittee asked if it would be possible to get statistics on how many general petitions are submitted and approved/denied for GRO.
* The policy doesn’t address the actual process clearly. Reformatting of the policy text itself for clarity would be helpful in addition to removing the 60-unit limit. At this time the subcommittee is most interested in substantively changing items 2 and possibly 10 in the policy, and simply reformatting the rest to make it more readable.
* Currently, if a student withdraws from a course they’d previously elected to GRO, the W counts as the GRO. Would it be appropriate to look at only counting non-W grades as an actual GRO, so students can still have the option to GRO the course in a later semester?
  + This might encourage a loop of applying for GRO, starting to do badly, then withdrawing from the course to try again in the next semester. Is there a point at which this shouldn’t be allowed? Would this favor students for which tuition is not an obstacle, and punish those that struggle to pay tuition each semester?
  + Subcommittee members brought up the possibility of allowing students to reuse GRO attempts that ended in a Complete Withdrawal (from the whole semester) but not a withdrawal from a single course.
  + Limiting W’s but not WC’s (complete withdrawals) could disproportionately impact 1st generation students that have less opportunity to learn and “work the system”.
* Currently students may only GRO using the exact same course, with the same number of units. Should this piece be more lenient, allowing for changes to the total units or situations where the course has been renumbered or replaced by a similar course?

**Amber Rice moved to approve the removal of the 60-unit limit as proposed, and to request a reformatting of the policy text for clarity; Michelle Berry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 8 votes in favor.**

**The Office of the Registrar will provide a proposal draft with updated policy text for consideration at the March meeting.**

1. **Proposal to Eliminate the W Grade Unit Maximum Policy**

Continuing the discussion started during the January meeting, the subcommittee was provided with data from peer institutions’ grade replacement policies.

Of 12 institutions reviewed, 5 do not limit the number of times a student can perform a course withdrawal; 5 allow students to withdraw from a limited number of units; 2 do not allow individual course withdrawals but do allow complete semester withdrawals.

Discussion continued:

* Removing the W maximum could make grade manipulation a greater possibility, if it’s easier for students to withdraw from courses they’re not doing well in.
  + Since students still pay for courses they withdraw from, there could be financial pressures that would prevent rampant misuse of withdrawal. As with the GRO discussion above, there is concern that depending on the cost of tuition to limit students’ academic behaviors could lead to equity issues. This needs to be considered carefully to reduce possible unintended consequences.
* Allowing students to withdraw and retake courses more easily could also affect seat availability for incoming students, and might affect departments’ ability to effectively predict the number of sections they need to offer each semester for more difficult/commonly withdrawn courses.
* How many times can students repeat a course that isn’t marked as repeatable for credit? Policy says students get 2 attempts, but how well is this enforced by the system?
* There are some courses that are key to accessing particular majors (eg introductory physiology, chemistry, and math courses) which would likely see a higher number of multiple enrollments. Other courses like General Education courses would likely see fewer cases of withdrawal/repeats.
* Why are Complete Withdrawals not allowed in the winter and summer semesters?
  + Winter is a short session during which students generally only take 1 course. The session is short enough that the timeline for a complete withdrawal doesn’t make sense.
  + Summer is more complicated because there are a number of sequential and overlapping sessions. It’s more common for students to enroll in courses during multiple sessions in the summer. If a student successfully finished classes in the pre-session and 5W1 session, then needed to withdraw from their 5W2 session class, a complete withdrawal would be inappropriate.
* The subcommittee requested more data to better understand the issue:
  + How many students repeat courses multiple times? Anecdotally, when in Spring 2020 additional repeats were allowed due to the pandemic, the number of students that needed a system override to repeat a course was relatively low. It’s possible this wouldn’t be a significant issue.
  + How much do students take advantage of W and WC grades? Are there any trends in which students use them, or when in their career they use them?
  + Is there data from other institutions that don’t limit W grades?

**The subcommittee will continue to discuss this issue with their college colleagues, and the Office of the Registrar will provide more data from the UA and other institutions for further discussion at the March meeting.**

Claudia adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The next Subcommittee meeting will be held on March 29, 2022.

*Respectfully submitted by Abbie Sorg, 3/15/22*