

Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2023

Voting Members Present: Michelle Berry, Joan Curry, Leslie Dennis, Karin Nolan, Amber Rice, Caleb Simmons

Non-voting Members Present: Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski, Cassidy Bartlett, Carmin Chan, Abbie Sorg, Claudia Stanescu, Alex Underwood

Guests Present: Bobbi Lehman, Art Young

Voting Members Absent: Jeff Millburg, Richard Vaillancourt, Joost Van Haren

Acting UGC Chair Claudia Stanescu called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. A quorum was established with 5 voting members; one additional member arrived after the approval of the minutes.

- I. **Approval of Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee meeting minutes, 2/14/2023**
Caleb Simmons moved to accept the meeting minutes from 2/14/2023 as submitted. Leslie Dennis seconded the motion. The motion passed with 5 votes in favor.

- II. **Continued Discussion Items**
 - A. **Grades and the Grading System**
Presenter: Abbie Sorg

Continuing the discussion from the February meeting, the committee was reminded of the agreed-upon removal of the Withdrawal maximum and the interest in removing some of the barriers from students electing Pass/Fail optional grading bases. One such barrier was the requirement that students enroll in 12 units of regularly-graded courses in order to concurrently take a course that is P/F optional.

Discussion continued:

- Representatives from the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid clarified that there is no distinction in terms of financial aid eligibility between P/F optional and regularly graded courses. The majority of a student's courses overall should have regular grades, so that their GPA can be accurately calculated (students need a 2.0 to remain eligible for aid).
 - OSFA representatives recommended keeping the stipulation that students need a 2.0 to take courses that are P/F optional, as this is also the threshold to be eligible for aid.
- As 12 units of regular grades are not necessary for compliance, committee members were interested in removing this stipulation.
 - One member expressed that part-time students would never get to utilize P/F option grading with the current requirement.
- One committee member pointed out that the 12-unit stipulation may be for international students, as a condition for their visa may be earning regular grades. It was

suggested that there be communication with International Student Services to determine whether this is the case.

- Moving discussion toward the I grade, subcommittee members requested that the rationale for changes be updated, as the language was restrictive and did not accurately reflect the process.
- One member felt that “all but a minor portion of the coursework” should be defined.
 - Other members responded that this minor portion is defined in course syllabi, and that flexibility should be left to the instructor.
 - Another member clarified that while this minor portion of coursework is at the faculty’s discretion, the unfinished coursework should not require further instruction from faculty, but only used for outstanding projects or exams.
- Members felt the proposed language of I grades not being used in place of a failing grade wasn’t specific enough. They stated it should be clarified that I grades are for extenuating circumstances, and individual faculty may define what this means on their syllabi. Additionally, the I grade form may expand upon the details.
- One member also thought it should be clarified that the I grade needs to be requested by the student and approved by the instructor, as some instructors automatically assign an I to try and benefit students when the student doesn’t actually want it or intend to complete outstanding assignments.
 - Other members countered that many students don’t know they have the option of an I, or may be unreachable when experiencing a hardship, so it should not be left entirely up to the student to request the grade.
- Members suggested reformatting the language to say that students *should* retain copies and *should* work with their instructor.
- One member clarified that students can appeal a grade for an I through the regular grade appeal process.
 - It was suggested that the policy direct students unhappy with their denial of an I grade to consult their advisor to see whether a grade appeal should be filed.

The subcommittee agreed to the following updates for the proposal:

- **Replace the rationale “Clarify purpose of I grade; mandate that instructors file a Report of an Incomplete Grade when relevant” with “Clarify purpose of I grade; require instructors and students to use a Report of an Incomplete Grade to document requirements for completing an incomplete course.”**
- **Replace “As with all courses, the option of awarding an I remains available in emergency situations” with “As with all courses, the option of awarding an I remains available in extenuating circumstances.”**
- **Expand “The grade of I may be awarded only at the end of a term, when all but a minor portion of the course work has been satisfactorily completed” to “The grade of I may be awarded only at the end of a term, when all but a minor portion of the course work has been satisfactorily completed, and when the student is unable to finish due to extenuating circumstances.”**
- **Replace “Students are advised to work with the instructor to receive an incomplete grade...” with “Students should work with the instructor to receive an incomplete grade...”**

- Replace “Both the instructor and student sign this agreement and both are advised to retain copies” with “Both the instructor and student sign this agreement and both should retain copies.”
- Replace all remaining usages of “semester” with “term”

The Office of the Registrar will make these updates to the draft and contact International Student Support to learn whether international students need to be enrolled in 12 units of regular grades to fulfill visa requirements. Discussion will continue at the April subcommittee meeting.

III. New Discussion Items

B. Enrollment Policies

Presenter: Abbie Sorg

The committee was informed that The Office of the Registrar is interested in reducing full-time status to 9 units in summer term for undergraduate students to establish a courseload equivalent to fall and spring semesters. This is in line with benchmarking, which shows many peer institutions have a reduced full-time status over summer.

Discussion began:

- Representatives from the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid explained that Title IV gives the right to define full-time status differently in an academic versus financial standpoint. However, this can be confusing for students who are defined as full time by one standpoint and not the other. OSFA’s recommendation is to keep full-time status for summer at 12 units.
- A member asked what the benefit would be of reducing summer full time status to 9 units.
 - Another member informed that reduced full-time status during summer was a change International Student Services was interested in for the sake of international students beginning in summer.
 - Enrollment reporting would be based off meeting academic (versus financial) full-time status, so students would be eligible for good driver discounts and/or cat card discounts (but not financial aid or loan deferment).
 - It was explained that visas require full-time enrollment, which is difficult for students to currently meet when arriving in the summer. Online courses may only fulfill up to 3 credits, meaning the remaining 9 need to be in-person/hybrid courses. As most courses offered in summer are in the online modality, this can be difficult to accomplish.
 - A member echoed that 9 units for full-time status may be a more friendly way for international students to get acclimated in the summer.
 - Another member countered that changing the policy to benefit the small population of international students would make matters more confusing and complicated for the larger group of Pell grant-eligible students.
 - One member voiced that from an Arizona Online perspective, which sees the largest enrollment for incoming students over summer, it is clear and consistent for those students to keep full-time status at 12 units.

The subcommittee agreed that the Office of the Registrar should contact International Student Services to determine if ISS is still interested in reducing summer full-time status. They will be invited to the next subcommittee meeting to provide their perspective. Discussion will continue at the April subcommittee meeting.

Claudia adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The next subcommittee meeting will be held on April 11, 2023.

Respectfully submitted by Cassidy Bartlett, 3/17/2023