**Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

**January 25, 2022**

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

**Non-voting Members Present:**  Molly Bolger, Carmin Chan, Abbie Sorg, Alex Underwood

Chair Claudia Stanescu called the meeting to order at ­­­3:30 p.m. A quorum was established with 6 voting members. 4 additional members arrived after the minutes were approved.

1. **Approval of Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee meeting minutes, 11/23/2021**

Caleb Simmons moved to accept the meeting minutes from 11/23/2021 as submitted. Joost Van Haren seconded the motion. The motion passed with 5 votes in favor and 1 abstention.

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

**Presenter:** Abbie Sorg

The proposed Change of Schedule policy is a consolidation of the separate Undergraduate and Graduate Change of Schedule policies, with the addition of the Administrative Drop language that the subcommittee recommended removing from the Class Attendance and Participation policy during the previous meeting.

* Comparison of the Graduate and Undergraduate Change of Schedule policies show very similar policy structure and content; recommending the two policies be consolidated, with call-outs to describe the few differences between careers.
* The Administrative Drop policy language that was recently detached from the Class Attendance & Participation policy aligns well with the rest of the content in the Change of Schedule policy. Incorporating it here keeps all information about the effects of drops and withdrawals in one place.
* Aligning dates and processes for adding and changing courses. Although Graduate-level policy currently shows a Change of Schedule form with instructor signature require as of the first day of classes, that has not been the practice for some time. Proposing an update to this language so the policy and procedure are in agreement.
* The advising community has requested to remove the 18-unit withdrawal cap for undergraduates, update the retroactive withdrawal process, and remove developmental courses from the withdrawal cap if the cap isn’t removed completely. These requests are undergoing benchmarking against other institutions and will be considered separately from this proposal.

Discussion commenced:

* Subcommittee members appreciated that the 1st and 2nd deadlines are now labeled in a more descriptive way as Drop and Withdrawal deadlines. This better reflects how students, faculty and staff refer to the deadlines.
* Update to language requested- since the 7.5 week and 5 week sessions are growing in popularity, references to “semesters” should be updated to “sessions” to include sessions of all lengths and reduce confusion. Sessions of lengths other than 16 weeks should not be labeled “nonstandard” as they are indeed standard session lengths for the institution. The term “accelerated” was suggested as an alternative, but this would not be appropriate as some courses are scheduled for longer than 16 weeks, and would also have deadlines proportional to that longer session length.
* Update to table requested- given the popularity of the 7.5 week sessions, especially through UA Online, a separate line should be added with the specific deadlines for those sessions. The 5 week sessions are not used as widely as 7.5 week, and thus can be covered by the generic final line for each deadline.
* The policy text still refers to a paper form that is no longer used at the institution. The references to this form should be replaced with the Change of Schedule process, accessible on the Office of the Registrar website.
* The note at the end of the policy warning students of financial implications of withdrawing from courses currently only applies to students in the graduate career. The subcommittee agreed that this information would be useful for all students, and recommended the language be moved higher up in the policy so it can apply to students in all careers.
* There was discussion about the final deadline for Late Change Petitions- should both careers have the same deadline, rather than the end of the 13th week for undergraduate and last day of class for graduate?
	+ Since these requests are routed online now, rather than via paper, would it be okay to give everyone until the last day of classes to get a late withdrawal approved?
	+ The 13th week deadline for undergraduates was flexible during the Spring 2020-Fall 2021 semesters due to the pandemic, though starting with Spring 2022 the deadline will be enforced. Some colleges have indicated a preference for the 13 week deadline, while others prefer a deadline of the last day of classes; for those colleges that request additional time, the Office of the Registrar will allow late change petitions to be submitted until the final day of classes for the session.
	+ For courses that include group projects that are due at the end of the semester, allowing students to continue to withdraw late into the semester can result in students being “ghosted” when their group members withdraw. While this may happen from time to time, the late change petition is meant for exceptional cases, and would still require college approval.
	+ A more generous deadline for graduate students is preferable as these students do not have the option to GRO courses and have stricter GPA requirements for their programs. Based on this understanding, the subcommittee agreed that the earlier deadline for undergraduates should remain at the 13th week.
	+ It was noted that the last day of classes deadline for graduate students can be problematic for courses in 5- and 7.5-week sessions, as the final exams for these courses are held on the final day of classes rather than in a separate final exam period. The current language for this policy would make it possible for a student to submit a late change petition after completing the final exam for the course. The subcommittee recommended bringing that issue up to the Graduate Council to determine how that might be rectified.

**The subcommittee requested revisions be made to the policy based on the feedback provided in discussion. An updated version will be provided to the subcommittee for an e-vote prior to the February UGC meeting.**

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

The Academic Advising Council respectfully requests a review of this proposal to eliminate the 60 University Credit Requirement associated with the GRO policy. The current policy doesn’t allow students to apply for GRO if they have completed more than 60 UArizona units. While the cumulative GPA will not be significantly impacted by a GRO when the student has attained junior or senior class standing, there are reasons beyond the cumulative GPA to consider the removal of the 60 unit restriction.

* Some students will benefit from having GRO available when nearing graduation and needing to elevate the major or minor GPA to meet the 2.0 minimum requirement.
* Eliminating the 60 unit barrier will make it possible for some students to meet scholarship or financial aid GPA requirements thus allowing them to continue enrollment.
* Transfer students who are most often taking upper-division coursework have GRO available to them for the more challenging courses; yet students who begin as first years are only able to GRO lower-division courses.
* GRO is difficult to manage for student eligibility. With the Pass grade option made available for spring 2020, an unintended outcome is system accuracy with respect to whether a student is eligible to GRO a course. Additionally, students may repeat any course taken during spring 2020 without having this subsequent attempt count toward GRO or repeat option limits. Therefore, advisors must manually count units to determine student eligibility.

Discussion commenced:

* What was the original purpose for this limit?
	+ Concern about students abusing or manipulating their grades as upperclassmen in courses they originally took as lowerclassmen. Is there data that indicates this should still be a concern?
	+ The goal of the GRO process could be seen as smoothing the way for students transitioning into college; if this is the case, the 60 unit limit may make sense. If the goal of the policy is to prevent students from GRO-ing upper division courses, it may make more sense to write the policy that way rather than keeping the current 60-unit limit.
* This can be a real concern for students who do well as underclassmen, but hit a bump in the road as upperclassmen.
* What would be the result of removing the limit? We already limit the total number of courses that students can GRO (3 courses), so removing the 60-unit limit wouldn’t mean that students could start GRO-ing greater numbers of courses.
	+ Is there a reason we limit students to 3 GROs? What result would we see if we allowed unlimited GROs? This limit could be in place to help prevent students from digging themselves into a financial hole, in which they pay tuition to take the same course(s) multiple times without making progress toward graduation.

**The subcommittee will bring this issue up to their college colleagues, and the Office of the Registrar will provide benchmarking data from other institutions for further discussion at the February meeting.**

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

The Academic Advising Council respectfully requests a review of this proposal to eliminate the W Grade Unit Maximum Policy. The current policy limits students to 18 total units of W during their undergraduate career, which can be reset when a student completes their bachelor's degree and begins a second bachelor's degree.

* The 18 unit W limit puts an undue burden on students, particularly those who must withdraw from winter or summer sessions as there is no complete withdrawal (WC) available for these terms. The WC grade does not count toward the 18 unit cap of W’s.
* Totaling the 18 units is difficult to manage for student eligibility. With the temporary suspension of the 18-unit cap during the pandemic (2020-2021 academic year), there is no calculation to determine whether students have reached the 18 units or not. Advisors must manually count units to determine student eligibility.
* Policy disproportionately impacts students with chronic health issues or unstable/challenging life circumstances. These are the students who are often most in need of our support.
* Students resort to Complete Withdrawal as their only option, when they may have been able to successfully complete some of their courses if not for the W cap.
* Students are finding workarounds for the unit cap, including switching to audit or petitioning for increased W units. These workarounds are cumbersome, and are only available to students who seek out exceptions. Students who stick to the rules are penalized.

Discussion commenced:

* What does a W do on a student’s transcript? It displays on the transcript, but doesn’t affect the student’s GPA. Some employers and graduate school admissions committees may make inferences based on the number and placement of W’s on a student’s transcript, but this is something that a student’s personal statement should address (especially in cases where there are a large number of W’s).
* Is there a reason the institution should limit the number of W’s a student can accrue?
* There are financial implications for withdrawal that need to be considered
	+ Students’ financial aid eligibility is linked to the percentage of attempted courses the student completed
	+ A withdrawn course is still a course that a student paid tuition for, that they’re not getting credit for. Is it irresponsible of the institution not to limit the amount of tuition money collected from students that don’t receive credit in return for that money and time?

**The subcommittee will bring this issue up to their college colleagues, and the Office of the Registrar will provide benchmarking data from other institutions for further discussion at the February meeting.**

Claudia adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The next Subcommittee meeting will be held on February 22, 2022.

*Respectfully submitted by Abbie Sorg, 2/3/22*