**Curriculum and Policies Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

**November 26, 2019**

**Voting Members Present:** Chair Molly Bolger, Kirk Dimond, Moe Momayez, David Ortiz, Jennifer Schnellmann, Claudia Stanescu, Joost Van Haren

**Non-voting Members Present:**  Neel Ghosh, Martin Marquez, Abbie Sorg, Alex Underwood

**Voting Members Absent:** Bennett Adamson, Joan Curry, Leslie Dennis

Chair Molly Bolger called the meeting to order at ­­­3:31 p.m. A quorum was established with 6 voting members. An additional member arrived after the approval of the minutes.

1. **Approval of Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee meeting minutes, 10/22/19**

David Ortiz moved to accept the meeting minutes from 10/22/19 as submitted. Claudia Stanescu seconded the motion. The motion passed with 5 votes in favor and 1 abstention.

1. **Discussion Item**
   1. **Speed and Steps in the Approval Process for Courses and Academic Programs**

Alex Underwood described the current process for approving new courses and modifications to existing courses. Courses are submitted in UAccess by departmental staff (usually a Program Coordinator) and follow this approval route: RCS Preview (Room and Course Scheduling staff review the request for any structural issues or inconsistencies), Department Head approval, Crosslisting and prerequisite Department Head approval, College Dean approval, Crosslisting and prerequisite College Dean approval, General Education approval (if needed), Graduate College approval (if needed), Honors College approval (if needed), Curricular Affairs approval (review of learning outcomes and syllabus, plus a required 10 business day campus review period), RCS Approval (final accounting of any comments and changes to the request, and addition of the course to the catalog). Courses don’t come before UGC for approval; the only university-wide body that reviews courses is the University Wide General Education Committee, which reviews Tier 1, Tier 2, Diversity Emphasis, Foundations (English, Second Language, and Math), and Success courses.

Martin Marquez described the current process for approving new programs. New programs are reviewed by a departmental curriculum committee and college curriculum committee (the timing of these reviews is flexible depending on the college), then undergo Curricular Affairs and Graduate Council Executive review as appropriate for the career level of the program, and then are reviewed by CAAC. Once approved by CAAC, new programs are sent to ABOR for their approval; concurrent to that approval, they go to UGC and/or Graduate Council, then to Provost Council, and finally to Faculty Senate. Once the program is approved by both ABOR and Faculty Senate, the process is complete and the program is activated.

Discussion commenced:

* For the course approval process, would it be safe to assume that the submission of the course request indicates the approval of the department? This is true for some departments, but not all. It is possible for a faculty member to have a program coordinator submit a course request without the department chair being aware of it. The department approval step is important for these cases (and to help catch possible errors or misunderstandings in the submission).
* In cases where a new program is being created, do departments submit the program before or after they submit the new courses needed for that program? This depends on the department and college. Some units submit the program first and then create the necessary courses over the next few years. Other units create all the courses in the system before submitting the request for the new program. The two processes aren’t tied to each other in a way that requires one set order of operations.
* For program approvals, the Curricular Affairs review is complete within 1-2 days of being received, but depending on the feedback given, it may take much longer for the proposing unit to make revisions to the proposal. This revision process can vary based on whether the unit sought guidance from Curricular Affairs early in the process, how open to feedback the unit is, and how much bandwidth the proposers have for making adjustments to the proposal. Curricular Affairs encourages academic units to reach out early in the planning process; getting guidance early can prevent delays and ensure the unit is developing a proposal that will be easy for the various committees to approve. The program proposal form was built to capture the information that ABOR requires for their approval as well as the University’s needs.
* Why is UGC an approver for new programs? UGC is one of two faculty committees that review programs, and Faculty Senate (the other faculty committee) doesn’t spend much time reviewing them. This is the opportunity for faculty to catch possible curricular issues that would create difficulties for students in the program. CAAC’s approval of programs largely focuses on the budgetary aspect rather than the specifics of the curriculum, and the Provost’s Council is being removed from the approval process. ABOR’s approval is administrative in nature, but UGC’s approval is based on faculty understanding of curriculum needs.
* What are some ways the course approval process could be sped up?
  + Rather than requiring approvals to be granted in a specific order, could all the required approvers receive the request at the same time and approve in any order? That way even if one approver takes a long time to take action on the request, that doesn’t delay the other approvers.
  + Could the 10 business day review period be started when the course is initially submitted, rather than after all other approvals have been granted? If the review period could run concurrently with the departmental and college approvals, that would save time without limiting the campus’ opportunity to review. Additionally, the weekly review period email would be more useful if the list of courses appeared in the body of the email rather than as an attachment.
  + The General Education approval takes the longest out of all approval steps (35 days on average) since the committee meets to approve courses monthly. Is there a way that committee could meet more often, or approve courses on a rolling basis through an e-vote process, to speed up that approval step?
  + Include automatic reminder notifications for approvers who have requests waiting for their action in the system.
  + Could the Department or College level approval step be changed from a required approval to simply a notification? This may depend on the college, and a change of this nature would require the assent of CAAC.
* The breakdown of average days to course approval by college and department shows that some units are much quicker than others. It may be helpful to identify what the faster departments are doing differently, to see if there are recommendations that could be made to help the other departments. Possibly create sample text for request forms to show examples of solid course submissions.

**As no proposals were put forward, no vote was taken. The Registrar’s Office and Curricular Affairs will return with reports once updated processes have been determined based on this feedback.**

Molly adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m. The next Subcommittee meeting will be on January 28, 2020.

*Respectfully Submitted by Abbie Sorg, 11/27/19*