Academic Standards Committee

Minutes of the 15 February 20, 2002 Meeting
261 Gardner Hall, 2:10-3:30pm

Present:
Committee Members: Elizabeth Gates, Samira Towfic, Ted Parsons, Steve Steiner, Beth Frieders
Ex Officio: David Van Buren, David Boyles

1. "Upgrade" of Academic Standards Committee to Commission level
   The committee discussed the differences between committees, commissions and councils (as per definitions on pp. 4.45 and 4.54 of the Faculty Handbook). A general consensus was to remain as a committee until the warranted in the future, i.e., after the committee matures into its new responsibilities.

2. Recommendation for 2002-2003 committee meeting time -- Weds 4pm, opposite UUCC?
   General consensus at the meeting to hold it Wednesdays at 4pm, opposite UUCC. Please note -- David Boyles pointed out after the meeting that APC has this Weds. time slot. Will this conflict be a potential problem? What about Thursdays at 4pm? There do not seem to be any other university committees at this time.

   **It was pointed out that we need to determine the election procedures for next year's committee members ASAP. Beth will contact John Krogman (Faculty Senate chair) to inquire if elections will be run through Faculty Senate or through normal college committee election procedures.

3. Admissions Office trend observation -- what information do we request?
   - We agreed that our intent is to look at discretionary admissions over time, and compare to "regular" admits.
     - GPA standards
     - Total number and % of student population that are discretionary admits
     - Comparative retention and graduation rates
     - A general profile of discretionary students
   - Beth will contact Dick Schumacher and inform him of his ex-officio standing on this committee, and ask him to be present at the next meeting to discuss what can and cannot be provided to us for review.

4. Assessment Plan for General Education courses
   Issues addressed:
• Is the new Review Schedule, as proposed to Faculty Senate acceptable?
  Yes by everyone present. At least until the committee has functioned for
  awhile with the new responsibilities.

• For which gen ed courses would information be requested?
  Agreed that we would request information from all courses offered the
  calendar year in which the department/program is up for review. I presume
  that this includes summer and winterim sessions, as well as spring and fall
  semester?? We should agree to avoid future problems!

• How many sections of multiple section courses?
  We discussed options of requesting material from every section of a
  course, or just from the different instructors. One instructor might teach
  multiple sections, and our assumption is that s/he would teach each section
  the same way. Thus we felt we should only request information from each
  person who instructs the course in that calendar year. We realized that for
  some courses, there would still be a lot of information to review (a large
  number of instructors). This committee should reserve the right to select a
  sample of the instructors for some courses for review (not to be less than 50%
  of those instructing any one course).

  [I just thought of something while typing this: what about cases, mainly in
  the sciences, where there is one lecture instructor but several different
  laboratory or discussion instructors. How do we deal with this??]

• What materials do we request from instructors?
  A cover letter will be sent to the departments/programs under review for
  that academic year. This letter should be sent during the spring semester of
  the preceding academic year to alert faculty and allow them time to acquire
  information. [Example - a letter should be sent this spring to departments up
  for review next academic year so that instructors this semester know they
  must submit information.] The letter will state the purpose of this committee,
  explain the UWP general education standards as they pertain to that
  department/program, and list the information being requested (which
  should demonstrate how the instructor is meeting the educational standards).
  We will require the following information:
    - course syllabus
    - examples of student assessment strategies (exams, assignments)
    - examples of class activities (in or out of class)
  We also encourage instructors to provide the following:
    - a short narrative or personal statement about how you think you are
      meeting the general education standards
    - copy of course text(s)
Requesting submission of graded student work was discussed, but I do not recall any decision being made. It was emphatically agreed that any submitted student work must remain anonymous.

The issue of instructor anonymity was brought up (at least in my office between David Boyles and myself, and I can't recall if it also came up at the meeting). Should the Academic Standards Committee know which individuals are being reviewed? There are a lot of potential ramifications related to this. But David and I agreed that if we go with "anonymous instructor review", someone should know what information goes with which instructor a code system. (I suggested he should know the codes, as the person who would be responsible, theoretically, for dealing with any potential problems one-on-one with the instructor)

This committee should decide if the submitted course material will be anonymously reviewed or not.

• What does "significant writing component" mean? Should it be the same standard for each discipline?
  Tabled until next meeting.

• What options can we come up with for the actual evaluation -- do we give numerical scores in categories or submit a written subjective evaluation....
  Tabled until next meeting.

5. Next Meeting
Friday 1 March 2002, 261 Gardner Hall, 2:10-3:10 pm.
Agenda items:
- Discuss with Dick Schumacher, Dean of Admissions and Enrollment Standards, the information we would like to request and review.
- Discuss election procedures
- Approve phrasing of partial cover letter draft, to be sent to departments being reviewed, covering "requested information" and how to handle multiple section/ instructor courses. See attached Draft.
- Discuss other ideas and issues to go into the cover letter -- how to phrase competencies/ standards. You were requested to think about and/ or discuss this before the next meeting.
- What does "significant writing component" mean? Should it be the same standard for each discipline?
- What options can we come up with for the actual evaluation -- do we give numerical scores in categories or submit a written subjective evaluation....
DATE: 
TO: 
FROM: 
RE: 

The UW-P Academic Standards Committee has been charged with the duty of systematically reviewing courses that satisfy general education requirements (competencies or liberal arts areas) to assure these courses are meeting the overall goals set forth in the General Education Plan. Our results and recommendations will be reported to the UUCC. This review process is scheduled to begin in Fall 2002, and follow the schedule outlined in the attached table. We will be reviewing only those courses in your department or program that fulfill the UW-P general education requirements, and only those that are offered in the calendar year for which your program is up for review. (insert something about spring and fall semesters, winterim, and summer session once committee has finalized this issue).

In cases where more than one instructor teaches a course during the calendar year in which the review occurs, the committee requests submission of course information from each individual instructor. (insert how we deal with labs and discussion sections...) Although the Academic Standards Committee is requesting information from all instructors of a course, the committee may choose to review only a sample of the reports; in this case, at least 50% of the instructors for a course will be reviewed. Selection of instructors being evaluated will be at the discretion of the committee. (insert anonymity of instructors here if committee decides to do this)

The committee requests that each instructor demonstrate, by providing appropriate documentation, how the course(s) s/he instructs meet (or fulfill?) the UW-P general education liberal arts or competency standards, as outlined in the most recent undergraduate catalog. Information each instructor is required to submit includes a course syllabus, examples of student assessment strategies (i.e., exams or assignments), and examples of class activities (in or out of class). In addition, we encourage instructors to submit a copy of course text(s), and a short narrative or personal statement relating how you think you are meeting the general education standards in that course (also possibly add submission of graded student work if committee agrees).

Deadline for submission of materials:
Contact person, to whom information should be submitted:
# UW-P Academic Standards Committee Schedule of Review for Courses Fulfilling Competency and Liberal Arts Requirements

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<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
<th>Fall 2005</th>
<th>Fall 2006</th>
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<td>2. Foreign Languages</td>
<td>2. Humanities, excluding Foreign Languages</td>
<td>2. Natural Sciences</td>
<td>2. Social Sciences excluding Political Sciences</td>
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<td>3. Foreign Language Literature/Humanities</td>
<td>3. Any of the above areas cross-listed as International Education, Ethnic or Gender Studies</td>
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<td>4. Fine Arts</td>
<td>4. All International Education, Ethnic or Gender Studies courses NOT cross-listed under any other area</td>
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<td>5. Women's Studies</td>
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<td>6. Any of the above areas cross-listed as International Education, Ethnic or Gender Studies</td>
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