EPC Minutes
September 17, 2015
Academic Affairs Conference Room

Meeting called to order at 11:03am.

Present: Laura Watt (LW), Kristen Daley (KD), Kathryn Chang (KC), Jenn Lillig (JL), Nathan Rank (NR), Melinda Milligan (MM), Laura Krier (LK), Chiara Bacigalupa (CB), Alvin Nguyen (AN), Olivia Smith (OS), Luisa Grossi (LG), Richard Whitkus (RW – arrived at 11:53am)

Absent: Tim Wandling (TW)

Guests: Heather Smith (HS – arrived at 12:08pm)

Approval of Agenda: Added two MCCCFs for experimental courses as information items. Agenda approved with modifications at 11:06am**.**

Approval of Minutes from 9/3/15: Minutes from previous meeting unavailable for approval.

Reports

RW is now AVP of Academic Programs. President met with Chancellor. Chancellor will pressure all presidents with a focus 4 year graduation rate. SSU is 28.4%, third best in CSU.

Discussion Items

1. Liaison Assignments for F15

Discussion to determine committee liaisons.

Discussion about whether there should be a liaison for UNIV Curriculum Committee. It was decided that it would be helpful to be in communication with the committee, however a formal liaison is not required.

Liaison assignments will remain the same for now until members can check schedules for availability.

2. Chair of GE Subcommittee

HS was in attendance to discuss what GE subcommittee will be working on (i.e. GE program review) and to answer questions.

Discussion about how GE subcommittee will address holes in GE offerings (i.e. ethnic studies, upper-division, 2-unit courses).

> HS – GE is driven from departments and schools. The committee cannot force departments to offer more courses.

> CW – Perhaps the committee can be more of an advocate.

LW – Maybe EPC and GE subcommittee can work together, along with Richard Whitkus, to find out where the holes are and make it known.

RW – There are already enough courses, it's more so if departments and deans are actually offering them.

NR – Instead of creating new ethnic studies courses, maybe we can identify the requirements and look at which courses can meet the ethnic studies requirement.

MM – It should be determined who does the analysis. Work with Academic Affairs to determine the holes.

Discussion about how ownership of GE areas is determined in regards to getting letters from departments when proposing new GE courses.

NR – How it was originally framed was that getting letters from departments with courses in a GE area was meant to be more of a best practice. Strong proposals would not need the letters, but it does help to have letters.

MM – Last year, we framed it where proposers should go to school curriculum committees, not departments, and ask specifically for input and not approval.

Discussion about when/how GE courses should be assessed in regards to meeting learning objectives of GE areas and sub-categories. JL was involved with assessing courses in GE area B and will pass long.

It was suggested that GE subcommittee be mindful of proposals that make changes to GE courses. EPC will route them to GE and they should look at them carefully.

It was suggested that GE subcommittee look at which courses have restrictions on them that end up bottlenecking.

GE subcommittee will be looking at how to deal with yearlong courses – when and how are grades given when students fail one part of yearlong course that satisfies multiple GE areas?

3. EPC Statement on Proposed Reorganization of Faculty Governance

LW provided background about how the reorganization came about. EPC was asked to provide feedback since many of the proposed changes impact EPC. Proposed structure was reviewed and feedback discussed by EPC members.

LW will compile EPC's response and will pass on to Reorganization Committee.

Edit: Compilation is pasted in to the minutes here, to reflect the conversation that took place during our meeting:

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As I mentioned in my Senate report from EPC today, we had a discussion at our earlier meeting about recommendations on the possible reorganization of the faculty governance committee structure — and from what I heard at Senate, Structures & Functions and/or the ad hoc Reorganization committee intend to move forward on this issue soon, as soon as next week, so getting our suggestions in sooner rather than later seems wise. I'd originally planned to draft a document & circulate to EPC before sending it forward, but I don't think that there will be time,

so here are our thoughts from today, and I hope my committee members will forgive the draft version of this going forward! I'm sure if anyone has any additional comments to add, they'd be more than welcome.

several ideas or suggestions that came forward today include, in no particular order:

— clarifying the role of ACT, especially in relation to (and potential overlap with) the charge for APC — and also clarifying/making more explicit ACT's connection to faculty governance overall.

— EPC currently has a long list of eight working groups or tasks forces that are addressing policy-related issues, some of which we've been charged by ExCom with addressing, others we'd tasked ourselves with — perhaps, instead of reconstituting APC, create a fifth subcommittee of EPC that would take up these kinds of policy-related issues. (I can send you our list of task forces etc. if that would help.)

— re-draft APC's charge to focus more explicitly on assessment, as a regularized and on-going component of faculty governance — keeping an eye out for possible overlap with the University Program Review Subcommittee

— avoid creating sub-sub committees, as in the "straw man" reorganization proposal that was circulated last year, the GE subcommittee would have become (i.e. it was a subcommittee of the University Curriculum Committee, which itself was a subcommittee of the Curricula Planning and Oversight Committee) — this would add yet another level of review for all GE changes and complicate the process.

— at times in the past, APC has also taken a role of "defending" other faculty roles against administrative pressure (it seems this was an issue during the Ochoa years, when the APC chair was someone the provost was more willing to listen to) — might there be a way to explicitly articulate this?

— possibly "elevate" the Graduate Studies Subcommittee to full standing committee status, although that would require clear articulation with curricular responsibilities of EPC.

While we are supportive of faculty governance reorganization to address the problem of committees that do not have a clear charge, or enough workload to warrant regular meetings, or insufficient representation to make a quorum (like APC currently), we also have a strong sense within the EPC committee membership, and buttressed by the opinions of several recent EPC committee chairs, that EPC works very well right now — we manage to process through an enormous volume of curricular proposals and issues, and we do with a strong sense of collegiality and thinking of the University as a whole. We also are working this fall to reconnect with our four subcommittees and making sure the communication channels are open and clear, so that we might be even more efficient in moving things forward. This is a committee that is highly functional, and so we recommend that its structure should remain unchanged at this time, except possibly with some of the suggestions listed above.

4. Proposed Revisions to MCCCF Forms

LW – As it stands, there is only one MCCCF form but for three different processes: revisions to programs, new standalone courses, and small changes to existing courses – all of which are routed differently. As such, it would be helpful to create three different forms for each of the three processes. Dennis Goss and David Hartranft are working on the proposed drafts.

MM – Agrees that it is a good idea, especially for program revisions since routing is different and forms often get lost. It is still a little unclear as to how to determine what are considered minor changes in order to use the third form.

KD – Is this process related to GE vs. non-GE and experimental vs. non-experimental proposals.

LW – This was a topic of discussion last year and something that Heather Smith and the GE subcommittee will work on.

MM – It should be made clear when GE subcommittee should be looking at GE course revisions.

LW – Additionally, School of Social Sciences will be using form signing software, so hopefully this software will help with the routing/signing of MCCCFs. Created new email address: curriculum@sonoma.edu so there is one general email that individuals can email to instead of having to find the appropriate person to ask questions.

New Business

1. Review of Segments of Curriculum Guide Website

LW – Curriculum Guide is being transferred to a website so that it is more user-friendly/intuitive. No need to wordsmith it during the meeting, but want to get some feedback from the committee.

Some members asked about "hegis codes." LW will look into it.

Some minor suggestions made by members, otherwise the committee agrees that it is a good idea. It will be made live and new information will be filled in later (examples of good proposals, etc.)

JL – There should be a FAQ area and clearer routing instructions.

LW – Other suggestions can be sent to the Curriculum Guide Working Group.

Old Business

1. Selection of an "EPC Vice-Chair"

Nathan Rank has agreed to be EPC Vice-Chair. Will receive 4 unit course release in the spring. Nathan has experience as chair of GE subcommittee last time GE program review was done, so it will be helpful to have him as EPC Vice-Chair for the next GE program review as well as policy-related work in EPC.

2. Status of EPC Working Groups/Task Forces/Charges

Curriculum Guide Working Group (R. Whitkus, L. Watt, M. Milligan)

LW – This working group has met a couple of times. No new members.

TA Policy Working Group (T. Wandling, L. Watt)

LW – This working group is not about graduate student TAs, but rather about undergraduate TAs. We need to create consistency about how TAs are used. What they are allowed to do, and not allowed to do. Tim Wandling suggested we come up with best practices to send out to department chairs.

MM – This may cause a lot of disagreements, so it would be helpful to start with what is allowed and prohibited by the university.

LW – We have not been able to find any clear university constraints on how TAs are used, nor is it included in the Curriculum Guide.

NR – To avoid disagreements, we can look at what people are doing first. Reach out to chairs first or go to department meetings.

MM – Perhaps we can find workarounds or solutions to address discrepancies in how TAs are being used (i.e. confidentiality training regarding student access).

LW – Something to consider is who undergraduate TAs should go to if they have concerns such as workload. Also, we should avoid using the word "policy" and go with the word "guidelines" to avoid further disagreements.

OS and KD will join this working group. LW may step down. TW will remain.

MM – Online-Hybrid Course Policy Working Group and Academic Certificate Policy Working Group are charges from Ex Com, so we should go back to them and see if those charges still exist, or which ones are high priorities.

In the meanwhile, LW will follow-up with Ex Com to determine which working groups/task forces need attention.

Meeting adjourned at 12:49pm.