

Academic Standards Committee Meeting

April 18, 2007
ACATT Building

Committee Members Present:

Bruce Crawford, Vice President for Instructional Services
Karl A. Pruitt, Chair
Cynthia Anthony
Sherri Davis
Charles Murray
Nancy Wilson
Donald Sledge
Rhonda Branch
Vyavuka Masi Masi
Alice Milton
Charles Fowler
Patricia McCullum
Eleanor Pitts

Committee Members Absent:

Stephen Monti
Tom Berryman
Sharon Romine
Shelia P. Marable

Proceedings:

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 pm by Dr. Karl Pruitt. He asked the committee members to look over the minutes from the last meeting that was held on February 9, 2007. Dr. Charles Fowler noticed a change that needed to be made on the final suggestion of section B. He stated that the sentence should read, 'Dr. Fowler asked if a **D would** remain on the transcript....' in lieu of 'Dr. Fowler asked if a D could remain on the transcript....' Afterwards Dr. Pruitt motioned that the minutes be approved and received as written with the necessary corrections. The motion was seconded by Nancy Wilson.

Old Business

A. Academic Standards Committee: Duties and Responsibilities (Dr. Karl Pruitt)

- Dr. Pruitt asked the members to take a look at the draft (handout) of duties and responsibilities of the Academic Standards Committee to determine whether or not the policies are sufficient. He stated that we would table the draft for approval at our next meeting scheduled for June 15, 2007.
- Dr. Pruitt then turned the remaining of the meeting into the hands of Dr. Crawford.

B. Grievance Procedures: Adoption (Dr. Bruce Crawford)

- Dr. Crawford began by stating that 'Grievance Procedures' should read '**Grade Appeal Procedures.**' The committee reviewed grade appeal procedures that were presented for approval on April 18, 2007. Dr. Crawford noted that a **Step 3** had been added to the official review process in order that the Associate Dean and Dean have the opportunity to review any complaints concerning grades or professional conduct that may arise from a complainant.
- Dr. Davis recommended that the committee should establish formal papers for documentation once we've adopted the grade appeal procedures.
- Dr. Crawford stated that we need to define what we mean by grievance. A complaint may not be a grievance; thus, we have to use our judgment. We need documentation, but one problem is that students don't like to put things in writing. Thus, many times we don't solve the problem. We need to make them comfortable enough to fill out a form. Dr. Crawford stated that we would continue our discussion on grievances at our next meeting.

C. Independent Study Policy/ Procedures (Dr. Pruitt)

- Dr. Pruitt asked that the members review a draft (handout) of policies for independent study and to bring any ideas, recommendations, or revisions to the next meeting.
- Dr. Davis asked if we could limit the approval for the number of credit hours that a student can receive for independent study. It's noted on the form that a total of six credit hours can be received (three in students' field). We could change this to two courses – one in the general area and one in the field of study.
- Dr. Pruitt explained that sometimes there are situations in which students are graduating and the needed course(s) are not being offered. There are cases in which some classes are continually dropped each semester. Independent study is usually the result of such situations.
- Dr. Davis stated that she would like to see some plan of action. She further stated that we need to assess and have some rationale as to how faculty members are going about covering this agenda. How often are they meeting? How long? Instructors should not provide a "general" syllabus for these special circumstances.
- Dr. Crawford stated that he asked chairpersons to produce a plan of action for independent courses. Approval must be received from the Vice President before providing independent study to students.
- Dr. Fowler asked if the courses will appear on Blackboard or the schedule of classes. Dr. Milton stated that the classes are out there, but they will show as being 'closed.' The courses will show up in Blackboard.

D. D-Grade Policy: Status Report (Dr. Crawford)

- Dr. Crawford explained that Dr. Ward is waiting on him to bring this issue back to the cabinet. We still don't have it to the level where it will pass. Dr. Ward is still not convinced that students can possess academic excellence with a grade of a 'D.' Dr. Crawford stated that we will hold off until this summer and present the policy for adoption and hopefully implement it for the fall semester.
- Dr. Crawford noted that through the fall of 2005, the Bessemer campus students could still graduate if they received a 'D' in a course. Anything beyond this time, they will have to retake the course. Birmingham students are not under this same policy.

Instructional Services Items

A. Developmental Studies

- ENG 092, ENG 093, MTH 090 and MTH 098 have been increased from 3 to 4 credit hours. RDG 084 and MTH 091 have been deleted from course offerings. RDG 085 will increase to 4 credit hours.

B. RDG 114- Critical Reading (Dr. Davis)

- Dr. Davis stated that this course will increase from 2 to 3 credit hours in order to become transferable. The flip side is that RDG 114 has been a concern for Career Tech students that have to go through this course. Right now there is no compass test for them to test out.
- Dr. Crawford suggested that we need to investigate to see if there is another reading course, but wondered if that would be a workable solution. Could there be a possibility of offering another section? Could we establish an ACT or Compass cut off score that would allow students to be tested out?
- Dr. Anthony stated that the problem with that would be that Nursing would say that their students have to take RDG 114 regardless.
- Dr. Crawford continued and stated that we will have to see how that option would affect all degree plans. The reading competencies are what we as an institution want to hold on to. Our students overall need better reading skills.

C. State-wide Curriculum Modifications (Dr. Crawford)

- Dr. Crawford stated that no action items are necessary. Modifications are made throughout the year and are implemented in the fall of every year unless stipulated by post-secondary.

D. Degree Plan Modifications- Career Technical (Dr. Charles Murray)

- Dr. Murray stated that some course deletions have occurred due to some statewide curriculum modifications. Moreover, fewer credit hours are being approved for financial aid.
- Dr. Murray further stated that there are too many courses for one or two teachers to teach; thus, they're trying to tighten the courses for rotation.
- The Electronic Engineering Award program is being eliminated; it proved to be nonviable; however, Career Tech is retaining the short certificate program.
- Dr. Crawford read a list of course deletions. The list included ACR, Automotive Asset, DDT, ITS, EET, ILT, AUM, IND, Fire Science, TRF, C191A, 191B, and 191C and adding 191 Coop (1 credit hr). RTV is deleting one class.
- Dr. Murray made a suggestion that CIS 146 be removed from the Career Tech degree plans in order to be compliant with 76 credit hours.
- Dr. Davis explained that CIS 146 builds student knowledge to another level. Many students are already familiar with the computer; this course can be an enhancement to any subject.
- Dr. Murray stated that this issue is a question of what we want our students to know when they graduate. Dr. Murray felt that students shouldn't have to take CIS 146 to learn Microsoft Word.
- Dr. Davis stated that they're learning much more than Word.
- Dr. Murray continued. He stated that Career Tech students are here to learn how to work on cars and build buildings. Thus, if we need to get rid of a course, he asked for a suggestion of what to delete.
- Dr. Crawford asked, "What are the skills we expect students to transfer as a result of taking CIS 146?"
- Dr. Davis explained that she's wasn't specifically zoned to Word software only, but that students can gain the knowledge of reading Excel spreadsheets, which could be beneficial in their area of expertise.
- Dr. Crawford stated that we need to see the components and examples of computer skills in automotive classes and in CIS 146 and do a comparison before coming to a decision.
- Dr. Murray then asked, "How will we get down to 76 credit hours? If we do allow CIS 146, we will still be over by one credit hour according to the state."
- Dr. Crawford answered, "If we don't get the credit hours down, we can still show that we're actually working to do so."

Student Services Items (Dr. Cynthia Anthony)

A. Impact of Curriculum Changes on Financial Aid/ ECAR

- Dr. Anthony explained that if courses are not within a degree plan, financial aid will not pay for them. ECAR is not something that Lawson State decides on. Title IV financial aid looks statewide and decides on what they will pay for. ECAR addresses career programs and certificates. Make sure that the courses in the programs are in the degree plan. Everything has to be entered correctly in AS400. Make options within degree plans if students need to take courses that will aid them when they transfer to another college.

Closing

A. General Updates

- Dr. Crawford provided a copy of a proposal that was issued by the OCR Compliance Committee. He asked that members review the proposal to see if any modifications should be made.
- Dr. Anthony suggested that the sentence: *Students should present the documentation to their advisors who will submit a Course Substitution form....*- should be amended to read: Students should present the documentation **from**

the ADA coordinator to their advisors who will submit a Course Substitution form. She further stated that if the original document comes to the advisor, he/she should direct it to the ADA coordinator.

- Dr. Anthony ended by stating that it is against the law to *assume* that a student has a disability.

B. Next Meeting Date

- The next meeting for the committee is scheduled for June 15, 2007 at 11:00 am in the ACATT building.

C. Process for getting items on the agenda

- Dr. Pruitt stated that if you have something that you would like to put on the agenda, contact him via e-mail.

D. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 4:11 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Rhonda Branch

Academic Standards Committee Meeting
April 7, 2008
ACATT Building

Committee Members Present:

Bruce Crawford, Vice President for Instructional Services
Karl Pruitt, Chair
Cynthia Anthony
Rhonda Branch
Charles Fowler
Shelia Marable
Vyavuka Masi Masi
Alice Milton
Steven Monti
Eleanor Pitts
Sharon Romine

Committee Members Absent:

Sherri Davis
Patricia McCullum
Charles Murray
Nancy Wilson
Donald Sledge
Tom Berryman

I. Proceedings:

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 pm by Dr. Karl Pruitt. He asked the committee members to review the minutes from the last meeting that was held on April 18, 2007. Dr. Bruce Crawford noticed an error in a sentence under Part B- Grievance Procedures. The sentence reading ‘...we have to use or judgment’ should read ‘...we have to use **our** judgment.’ Afterwards Dr. Fowler motioned that the minutes be approved and received based on modifications. The motion was seconded by Sharon Romine.

II. Discussion/ Approval of Duties and Responsibilities of Academic Standards Committee

Dr. Karl Pruitt asked that the members review the draft of the ‘Academic Standards Committee Duties and Responsibilities.’ The question was raised as to whether or not this committee should be the hearing board for academic dishonesty or should we just have a representative from the committee in order to know what went on with the student from a disciplinary standpoint. The following suggestions were made to the list of duties and responsibilities:

Number **2** read ‘to serve as the hearing board in all matters regarding academic probation and academic dismissal from the college.’ Dr. Crawford suggested that number 2 read ‘to serve as the hearing board in all **academic and curriculum matters of the college.**’

The following sentence read ‘The committee is empowered to make exceptions to academic regulations if, in spirit, such regulations are satisfied or, if the strict application of the policies would impose an educational disadvantage or undue hardship on the student.’ Dr. Crawford suggested that the sentence read ‘The committee is empowered to make exceptions to academic regulations if **such exceptions are academically sound and meet the accreditation requirements and state board policies.**’

Dr. Cynthia Anthony suggested that ‘**admission**’ be removed from number 4.

Number 7 read 'to reserve the right to review existing certificates and degree programs (program reviews).' Dr. Crawford and Dr. Pruitt suggested that 'to reserve the right' be deleted. Number 7 should be revised to read '**To review existing certificates and degree programs (program reviews) for the purpose of sound academic principles and practices.**'

Number 10 should read '**to monitor**' the effectiveness of the **other governing committees of the college...** in lieu of 'to evaluate' the effectiveness of the other governing committees of the college.

Dr. Crawford suggested that the word '**to**' be added at the beginning of numbers 11 and 12 to maintain parallelism amongst the listed duties.

For number 8 under the 'Administrative Assistant' section, the sentence should read 'Destroy all **draft** copies... in lieu of 'destroy all document copies.'

The grievance appeal process may need to be reviewed per Dr. Anthony.

III. Discussion/ Degree plan modifications- Removal of CIS 146 from Career Tech Degree Plan

Dr. Milton stated that she would get with Dr. Murray and bring recommendations back to the committee.

IV. Independent Study Policy/ Procedures Discussion/ Approval

Dr. Pruitt asked that committee members review the Independent Study draft located in the folders. Bullet 6 under Independent Study Policies reads 'No more than 3 semester hours of directed study will be granted in any one field of study and no more than 6 hours total may be applied to a student's graduation requirements.' Dr. Pruitt suggested that '**no more than 6 hours total**' be removed from this statement.

The last bullet under Independent Study Policies reads 'Course syllabi should include a detailed outline of how the course content will be taught on an independent study basis.' Dr. Crawford stated that it should include '**The course must be designed to meet student learner outcomes for the program. The content should not be a duplication of any of the courses taken.**'

Dr. Crawford stated that we need to get working definitions of independent study and directive study.

V. New Business/ Set Next Meeting Date

Sharon Romine stated that RDG114 is not a requirement for nursing and pre-nursing students; they can graduate without this course.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2008 at 1:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 2:31 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Rhonda Branch

**Academic Standards Committee Meeting
October 31, 2008
ACATT Building**

Committee Members Present:

Bruce Crawford, Vice President for Instructional Services
Karl Pruitt, Chair
Rhonda Branch
Sherri Davis
Charles Fowler
Sheila Marable
Vyavuka Masi Masi
Sharon Romine
Donald Sledge

Non-Committee Members Present:

Darren Allen
Lori Chisem
Mark Whigham

Committee Members Absent:

Cynthia Anthony
Tom Berryman
Alice Milton
Steven Monti
Charles Murray
Eleanor Pitts
Nancy Wilson

A. Proceedings

The meeting was called to order at 10:20 am by Dr. Karl Pruitt. He asked the committee members to review the minutes from the last meeting that was held on April 7, 2008. Dr. Davis asked for an answer to a question that was raised in the previous meeting. The question was whether or not the Academic Standards Committee should be the hearing board for academic dishonesty or should we just have a representative from the committee in order to know what occurred with the student from a disciplinary standpoint. It was proposed that one person from this committee would serve as a liaison. Afterwards, Dr. Crawford motioned that the minutes be approved and received based on modifications. The motion was seconded by Masi Masi.

B. Discuss Duties and Responsibilities of the Academic Standards Committee

Under Hearing Procedures, Dr. Davis noted that our duties need to be better defined in the first sentence. Currently, it reads that the committee meets with

students to discuss academic difficulties and deliberates about their future status as a student at LSCC. For example, is the committee to deal with student complaints that have not been resolved and what is appropriate and at what point should an issue come to the committee.

Also, we need to define what we believe to be misconduct and include it under the hearing guidelines.

Under Administrative Assistant, Mr. Allen stated that the department cannot agree to all of the duties listed under the 'Administrative Assistant' section. For example, the duty of 'Reserve a secure and private room for meetings and provide equipment as needed' should be removed from the list.

C. Independent Study

On the independent registration form, a statement should be included above the signature of the instructor so he/she will know that there is no compensation for the independent study.

Dr. Davis noted an error under the section 'Course Enrollment Term.' The third choice should read 'Interim' in lieu of 'Interterm.'

Under 'Rationale for Independent Study,' **remove** the word '**or**' from the second choice of documentation. Change the third choice, 'Academic Plan for remainder of Degree Program,' to read '**Degree Plan.**'

Masi Masi suggested that the statement above the signature space for Academic Advisor should read 'I certify that this request complies with and meets **the policy criteria...**' in lieu of '...one of the four policy criteria.'

Under 'Approval Signatures' do the following per Dr. Davis:
Place the **Registrar** signature under Vice President of Instruction
Change Dean- Academic Affairs to read **Dean/ Associate Dean**

There should be a statement noting the timeline for an application to be turned in.

Members of the committee suggested that the following changes be made within the **Independent Study Policies**:

Masi Masi noted to put the word '**faculty**' first in Bullet 1.

Dr. Crawford stated to **remove** the second sentence under bullet 3 which reads 'In rare cases a freshman may petition the Academic Committee for special permission.'

Bullet 5 – change the word ‘field’ to ‘**program**’ per Lori Chisem.

Bullet 7 – change ‘Approximately 35 to 45 hours...’ to read ‘Approximately **45 hours.**’ per Dr. Crawford.

Bullet 9 – **Remove** the word ‘**directed.**’

Changes to be made under ‘**Process to Secure Approval for an Independent Study**’:

The first sentence reads, ‘Before you register for a directed study, you must secure the approval of the chair of the department offering your degree, a faculty member, and the Academic Standard Committee for final approval.’ Dr. Crawford suggested the following: ‘Before **a student** registers for **an independent study, he/ she** must secure the approval of the chair of the department offering the degree, a faculty member, and the **vice president** for final approval.’

Remove number **5** from this section.

D. Curriculum Update

We will hold up on approving the Fire Science Amendment Form.

We have moved from Commercial Sewing to Interior Design.

Business Technology – Dr. Crawford will meet with Dr. Milton before releasing any recommendations.

No changes to Industrial Electronics.

Degree Plan – Dr. Crawford noted that he would like for Mr. Allen to help adapt a plan as to how long a catalog is in effect for a student. For example, if a student is out for the fall and spring semesters of a school year and returns to school the next fall, that student should be under the new plan. This needs to be a written policy. Also, Mr. Sledge noted that there should be a disclaimer upfront on the website to inform students to check for possible changes to their degree plan if they are returning after being out of school for a while.

E. Course Substitution Update

Dr. Crawford wants the policy for course substitutions to be more clear and precise as to what needs to be done for him to approve a substitution.

F. Curriculum Procedural Recommendations

Dr. Davis noted that we need a Course Exemption Policy in place. For example, there was a student with a Master's Degree that enrolled at Lawson and she was placed in a RDG 114 class. There should be a policy in place stating what to do when situations such as these arise.

Mr. Allen posed a question as to whether one person should determine whether a course should be one, two, or three credit hours or should a committee determine this. STARS may note that a course is three hours and we may make it two hours. He went on to state that this is why we should attach a copy of STARS as it will be best for the student and the institution.

The next meeting is scheduled for April of 2009.

The meeting adjourned at 12:25 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Rhonda Branch