**University Academic Affairs Committee**

**Minutes:** Jan. 21, 2021

Members: (2020-2021)

Paul D. Fallon, Associate Professor, English & Linguistics, CAS. At large. *Chair*

Shumona Dasgupta, Associate Professor, English & Linguistics, CAS. *Secretary*

Michael Benson, Assistant Professor, Theater, CAS. At large.

Kim Gower, Assistant Professor, COB

Jane Huffman, Associate Professor, COE

*Ex officio* members (or their designees):

Provost (Associate Provost for Academic Affairs)

Vice President for Enrollment Management (Kimberley Buster-Williams)

Registrar (Rita Dunston)

Associate Provost for Academic Engagement and Student Success (Timothy O’Donnell).

Denise Naughton (student member)

1. Call to Order: 3:33pm
2. Meeting Minutes (Dec. 03 meeting). Approved unanimously
3. Old Business
   1. College of Business MBA Acceptance Proposal

MBA-AdmissionsChangesApprovalDean.doc

Proposed Edits to the 2020-2021 Graduate Academic Catalog VI.doc.

MBA-Acceptance-Process-Flowchart-1-16-21.pptx

Some discussion ensued and minor editorial changes were made.

The proposal to change the admissions requirements and associated catalog and website changes were approved unanimously.

* 1. Recording policy. The decision has already been taken by the UFC. No further discussion needed.
  2. Alternative Grade Scale: A discussion ensued

--Some preliminary data was shared by Rita Dunston- the preliminary data does not support adopting it in the Spring 2021 semester- most students used it to protect their GPA. More data is expected soon. According to Rita, adopting this in the Spring could put financial aid in real jeopardy for some students. The threshold for academic standing based on attempted hours would also be negatively affected.

-- Tim O’Donnell suggested adopting a more flexible option for a few students who would genuinely benefit from something like an alternative grade scale. Tim suggested minor adjustments to the retroactive withdrawal process which allows students to withdraw for the whole semester after grades are posted. It was suggested that students be allowed the flexibility to withdraw from one or two courses instead of the entire semester–this option will be shared with the UFC for their deliberation.

-- According to student representative Naughton, based on her personal experience talking to her peers, many students regret using the alternative grading scale in hindsight. These were students were already struggling academically and hoped this would be their saving grace and the measure did not really help.

1. Upcoming UFC agenda items
2. Finalize decision on extending alternative grading to spring (tabled in Dec to await data/outcomes report for fall).
3. Establish a process and timeline for determining J-term’s future. Vis-à-vis how and when to:
   1. Assemble and distribute feedback from students and faculty who participated in J-term.
   2. Solicit and assemble feedback from all stakeholders on implications for the spring calendar change that would be necessary to continue offering a J-term.
   3. Determine means to collect general faculty input (questionnaire? forum? both?)
   4. Conduct faculty vote
   5. Form an ad hoc committee to manage all of this (maybe a couple reps from UFC and UAAC and Debra Schleef)? (Emphasis on question mark.)

Some informal discussion ensued. According to Rita Dunston, about 40 J- term classes were offered which did extremely well. The experience has been overwhelmingly positive. Very few classes had to be cancelled because of low registration. The order of registration may need to change going forward if we decide to retain the J- term, allowing students to register for the J- term before Spring registration starts.

According to student representative Naughton, if the J- term would not entail the sacrifice of the Spring Break during a regular year, it would a positive for students overall.

Questions remain about how the J- term would impact faculty workloads and contracts.

1. Announcements
   1. Future Meeting Times: Feb 11 (Thurs) at 3:30pm
2. Adjournment: 4:12pm