**University Academic Affairs Committee**

**MINUTES:** Feb. 23, 2021 meeting, 3:30 p.m.

Members: (2020-2021) (*Present*)

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, currently filled by Timothy O'Donnell)

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-3:32pm
2. Meeting Minutes (January minutes approved by email)
3. Old Business
   1. Alternative Grading: Chair Paul Fallon summarized the flurry of activity around this issue. Student representative Denise Naughton summarized the SGA survey she administered regarding alternative grading. Most students were positively inclined and perceived it as a safety net for students who needed the option. Of the 1215 students who responded on the alternative grading survey, 89% thought it was helpful, and 94% said that having the option alleviated stress. Denise will send the survey results to the UAAC.

A very lengthy discussion ensued, regarding the long-term consequences of using the COVID alternative grading for students and institutional responsibility. Using the alternative grading scale runs the risk of jeopardizing students’ financial aid. The committee carefully deliberated upon a range of options, including making the retroactive withdrawal process more flexible to accommodate students in crisis because of COVID-19. The committee reiterated the need to communicate better with students.

The following motion was proposed (Benson), seconded (Gower) and unanimously passed by the committee:

**Temporary policy change for Nonacademic Administrative Withdrawal for Spring 2021 and Summer 2021**

In spring 2021 and summer 2021 the policy governing Administrative Withdrawal (Non-Academic) shall be expanded to provide additional temporary support for students in lieu of the discontinuation of the COVID-19 alternate grading scale in effect for spring 2020, summer 2020, and fall 2020. Following the posting of final grades, students may petition the University for a retroactive administrative withdrawal from specific courses in which they earned a grade of F for substantiated nonacademic reasons following the procedures outlined in the Academic Catalog. The petition must specify the courses for which the student is seeking a retroactive grade of W, and provide a detailed COVID-19 related rationale and appropriate documentation. In contrast to the Administrative Withdrawal policy, which specifies that students have until the last day of classes in the subsequent semester to submit this petition, individual course withdrawals provided for in this emergency exception to university policy must be submitted no later than 3 weeks after grades post.

* 1. J- Term: Student representative Denise Naughton talked about the positive student survey responses to the J-term. About 306 students responded. A discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of having a J- term, arguments brought up during the UFC meeting were summarized. Dr. Kim Gower (COB) volunteered to serve on the ad hoc committee to further explore the J- term. The UAAC will start developing and emailing some survey questions to Dr. Gower.

1. New Business
   1. Dept. of Psychological Science 1 credit P/F career exploration course

The UAAC declined a request by the Dept. of Psychological Science to permit a 1-credit course in the major for the After Mary Washington requirement to be offered Pass/Fail.

A lengthy deliberation ensued.

The rationale provided was not compelling enough to allow P/F courses in the major since graded assessment was an integral part of teaching and learning. Motion to reject (Benson), second (Gower). 4 for, 1 against. The motion to decline the request from the Psychological Science department passed.

4.2 The UAAC passed two motions submitted by the College of Education. The first updated

the Catalog copy and changed the GPA requirements for transfer students. The second eliminated a now unneeded policy limiting the number of education credits to count toward the bachelor's degree. The proposals are in line with University policies on transfer.

Motion to pass (Benson), second (Gower). Passed unanimously.

1. Announcements
   1. Next meeting: 3/11 at 3:30pm
2. Adjournment: 5:48pm