

## MINUTES

**University Council Academic Policy Committee**  
**Monday, March 18, 2019, 1 p.m.**  
**Holmes Student Center 303**  
**Northern Illinois University**  
**DeKalb, Illinois**

**VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:** Burton, Chen, Chmaissem, Collins, Ghrayeb, Henry (for Block), Ledgerwood, Newman

**VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT:** Block, Mershon, Staikidis, Stephen, Zamora

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

University Council Academic Policy Committee chair **V. Collins** called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

### **II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM**

A quorum was established.

### **III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**J. Burton** moved to adopt the agenda, seconded by **O. Chmaissem**. Motion passed.

### **IV. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 22, 2019 MINUTES**

**J. Chen** moved to approve the minutes, seconded by **J. Burton**. Motion passed.

### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. Review Policies for Distance Education Courses Carrying Undergraduate Credit  
[APPM Section III, Item 23](#) and [Approved Review Process](#)

Establish a plan for addressing topics/themes/considerations from survey data in our review of the current policy

Review guidelines for online courses carrying graduate credit offered by NIU  
[APPM Section II, Item 22](#)

Review policies from other institutions

**V. Collins** reported on her meeting with Dean of the Graduate School, Brad Bond, regarding the possibility of combining the Policies for Distance Education Courses Carrying Undergraduate Credit with the Guidelines for Online Courses Carrying Graduate Credit Offered by NIU:

- Bond supports the idea of combining the two policies and welcomes the opportunity to work with the committee on this project. He would like to take the committee's recommendation to the Graduate Council before it goes to the University Council.
- Other stakeholders, such as Jason Rhode and Carolinda Douglass, should be included in the discussion.
- Items 4, 5 and 9 of the graduate policy are important and should be retained. In particular item 9 impacts financial aid. Samantha McCarron and Rebecca Babel would be valuable resource people on item 9.
- Consider the audience for this policy document. It makes sense that it would be faculty, but also the Office of the Provost and the Graduate School.
- Consider the possibility of requiring that online courses go through the curricular process.
- Consider the impact of faculty having needed resources (also noted in the survey).
- Consider faculty training on how to design online courses (also noted in the survey).
- Give attention to the quality of online programs (also noted in the survey)
- Keep in mind the difference between online programs vs. online courses.
- Consider using the term, “online” instead of “distance education.” **V. Collins** noted that the committee discussed this at the February 22, 2019 meeting and decided to use the broader term, “distance education.” The committee revisited this discussion during today’s meeting and, after further consideration, decided to use the term “online and hybrid” instead of “distance education.”
- There is a need for the two currently existing policies on the grade appeal process to be reviewed. The committee acknowledged that this is not on its 2018-19 agenda.

Following **V. Collins'** summary of her meeting with Brad Bond, the committee agreed to develop a proposal that combines the two existing policies into one policy for online and hybrid courses.

First the committee members compared the two existing policies:

- Content contained within Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, and 10 of the graduate policy is also included within the undergraduate policy. The content contained within items 5-8 of the graduate policy are not.
- The graduate policy does not include definitions.
- The graduate policy does not include the HLC language.
- The policies use different titles.
- The policies use different structures/formats.
- The graduate policy does not include accessibility information.

The committee members worked to create a first draft of a combined policy using the 10-item graduate policy as a starting point. Discussion included the following:

- First, all guidelines to include in the combined policy will be identified. Decisions on how to categorize the guidelines will be discussed at a later meeting.
- The policy will begin with a definitions category that will include definitions of “online” and “hybrid.”
- The policy will refer to, but not include, the related HLC language.
- The title and specific policy guidelines will refer to online and hybrid courses.
- The revised policy will be numbered and may include headings.
- Two guidelines were deleted from the graduate policy.
  - Guideline 6 – because the committee felt the information was covered in other policies
  - Guideline 7 – because the committee felt the information was covered in guideline 4

- Guidelines were added (pulling from the undergraduate policy and considering feedback from the survey data) for the following topics:
  - Academic equivalency – replacing language in the undergraduate policy deemed unclear
  - Accessibility – using language from the Illinois State University (ISU) policy
  - Ownership/Intellectual Property – **O. Ghrayeb** will seek proposed language from Jason Rhode to share with the committee.
  - Identity verification – from the undergraduate policy
  - Evaluating online teaching – Some committee members believe this topic has been covered in other points dealing with academic rigor, through the use of the term, “academic equivalency.” Others believe the policy should include a point specifically about evaluation.
  - Quality – The committee discussed potential language on this point, acknowledged its importance, and wondered if it had already been covered in other points.
  - Faculty resources – using language similar to that used in the ISU policy
  - Technical/staff support – The committee discussed potential language to highlight a commitment to providing the necessary infrastructure for online and hybrid courses. **A. Newman** will work on some language and send it to **V. Collins**.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**O. Chmaissem** moved to adjourn, seconded by **J. Burton**. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.