Faculty Senate Minutes

November 24, 2020

**Virtual Meeting**

*Primarily paperless, wou.edu/facultysenate*

# 3:15 - 3:30 p.m.

*Better Know a Colleague* (informal gathering, optional)

# 3:30 – 5 p.m.

# *Business Meeting*

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# 1. Call to order

# 2. Call of the roll (by typing your name into the chat)

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# 3. Corrections to and approval of minutes from previous meeting (see website)

* Motion to approve-seconded
* Minutes approved as posted

# 4. Institutional Reports

# 4.1. Faculty Senate President

* Report available on the Faculty Senate website

# 4.2. University President

* Unavailable to attend

# 4.3. University Provost

* Report available on the Faculty Senate website

# 4.4. IFS Report

* Report will be posted on the Faculty Senate website

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# 5. Consideration of Old Business: General Education -- AAOT & Other Transfer Degrees (Erin Baumgartner)

* Report available on the FS website
* **Question:** How do students discover this option?
* **Erin:** Good question. Largely when students are one requirement/course from completing a transfer degree, they are usually hyper-aware of this, but there may be a time in which a student is not sure, or a student is coming in from another institution with a 2-year degree that they think it could serve the Gen Ed requirements and want it to be reviewed. We use a petition form to double check credits and make sure they align to what the transfer degree would be in order to make sure they actually have the degree done. In short, they fill out the petition and I do all the double-checking.
* **Follow-up question**: So they would pretty much self-identify?
* **Erin**: Yes, and this is meant to help students that are really close to completing a transfer degree and something prevented them from doing that. We work with advisors to figure out best way forward. Kristin is also helpful in this whole process.
* **Kristin Mauro**: If you meet with a student, such as from out of state, and they haven’t been admitted and you aren’t sure if they completed the degree, send them my way. We can look into it.

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# 6. Consideration of New Business: Support for S/NC Grading (Stewart Baker; Liz Marquez Gutierrez, NJ Johnson, Elizabeth Braatz)

* Report available on the FS website
* **Faculty Senate President**: For context, we need to make this discussion quickly for it to be implemented next term. This needs to be voted on December 8th. There are some key points and important things to know and discuss. First, students can have until Week 7 to decide if they want this option, similar to in Spring. Also, there is no way to make this option recognize grades for courses that are pre-reqs; this is a concern for programs that have grade minimums and are making data-driven decisions. In addition to sharing information with students about this option, we need to also advise them carefully so that they know programs for which they need a grade and that we don’t recommend they choose this option for certain programs. If this passes, students will not be prohibited from choosing the option, but they can make an informed choice by talking to instructors and advisors to mitigate any problems.
* **Question**: If this really is critical in some departments, can we just make some classes ineligible for this option?
* **Amy Clark**: There is no way to have individual sections (or an individual student) opt out, but maybe the entire *course* because it is a grade type for a particular course. It would be all or nothing for a course (it could be ineligible, opt out).
* **Question**: That is really great information. Is this just for Winter term? or Spring too?
* **Faculty Senate President**: My understanding of the resolution and motion is to enact this for the academic year provided we remain remote throughout the Spring.
* **Question**: If this goes through, would the instructors need to know they have students using this grading option? With Moodle I have to input a passing score in addition to putting grading options in... would we know about this or need to do anything different?
* **Amy Clark**: You don’t need to do anything different. The system takes care of it.
* **Question**: Should waiting until the 7th week for students to make a decision still be an option (thinking about the delivery method for a course)?
* **NJ:** I understand the question, though I would recommend that due to unforeseen life events the senate consider that a student might need to choose an option in week 7 and not earlier.
* **Elizabeth**: Having a later option gives students more flexibility.
* **Amy Clark**: We aligned this in spring with withdrawal deadline for this reason.
* **Question**: Do we have to use D- as the passing grade? D- seems like a really low threshold, so this is a big concern that it would be passing.
* **Amy Clark**: That is the lowest score you can get to pass a class. Whether a program accepts it (e.g., for the major) is another issue.
* **Question**: I was wondering if an individual course decides an S/NC but there is a sequence of courses, is there any way for the system to catch that?
* **Amy Clark**: There is not a way for the system to catch if a student got a D- versus a C; they can move on through the sequence.
* **Comment**: I strongly support this and puts responsibility on us as instructors to really communicate with our students about this.
* **Question**: Would it be possible to make it visible to students when they go to register which courses opted out of this option?
* **Amy Clark**: No; the system would not display for the course in WolfWeb.
* **Question**: Perhaps this is too much of a barrier, but would it be possible/a good idea for this to be something an advisor/instructor could select for the student after they meet?
* **Amy Clark**: We did encourage in the spring that students have approval from their advisors, but the only way to require it is to take it out of WolfWeb, and use a paper form (or some other form?). This would be very difficult to create and manage. I wouldn’t recommend this, but I do understand what you are asking and in an ideal world we could build in an advisor approval.
* **Question**: I wanted to clarify that if the students were going to use this option, the instructors would not know about this, so instructors would not be able to advise the students on their choice.
* **Amy Clark**: Correct. There was some discussion about this in the Spring, but ultimately instructors will not know and we leave it to the students to decide what they want to do.
* **Question**: I appreciate this coming forward and also concerned about an unintentional selection preventing them from moving forward. Could we create an open doc for students to see that includes all courses that require a minimum grade? So that students can look at this list and see if which courses require it and which don’t?
* **Amy Clark**: The danger for this is that it could be a prereq for a different program so even if a department has allowed this it could get confusing.
* **Comment:** I’m generally in support of this, and we have a robust system set up for advising and this comes down to how we advise. I am concerned that outside of WOU this is not always going to be an accepted option. We should think about this and try to impress this upon students.
* **Amy Clark:** Yes, we can’t guarantee what other institutions will accept. At OSU this option was very popular and did not seem to have much negative impact for students transferring/moving on. Also, the actual grades that students receive are recorded, so if a transfer institution requests a grade, we can still provide it, so that also mitigates problems.
* **Elizabeth**: Just confirming that this will be voted on December 8th, and I will try to be here. I think amongst everything, a key point is that for Spring Term, this was a very good option for students who had traumatic experiences. I relate to a lot of students and what they’re going through. I just want to thank everyone and it’s nice to hear the logistics of everything.
* **Niki Weight**: Listening in, I wanted to share some things about what we did in the Spring to see if this would work for Graduate programs, etc. We did create a robust FAQ about this option. We can expand this if there are specific programs that are concerned. We can get this out in front of advisors before the term starts to make sure they are able to advise students appropriately. We cannot control how this will affect your ability to transfer. We can however work on showing impacts now that we have gone through a term of this. From what it sounds like, having the option sounds good and students can revert back to their original letter grade if needed.

# 7. Discussion items: None

# 8. Informational Presentations and Committee Reports:

# 8.1 Program Assessment (Mike Baltzley)

* Report available on the FS website
* **Question**: I’m in support of thinking about the calendar and ways to do this assessment; last year it got stalled because of programs having different needs at certain times in the calendar year. What solutions can come forward from different programs to make this work? Was there an organized way to collect responses? I would throw that out as a way to address the hitch in this issue last year.
* **Faculty Senate President**: Faculty Senate can facilitate a survey to determine strengths, if we need time to assess the next steps.
* **Question**: Can we make our old plans automatically re-populate from year to year in TK20? That way our job is just to update each year? That may also improve the submission rate.
* **Mike**: No, TK20 doesn’t make it possible. It’s not the most user-friendly software. You could think of it as a feature, not a glitch, to force you to think about it every year. Cutting and pasting is probable the quickest way to do this since it doesn’t re-populate.
* **Comment**: Not so much a question but I am supportive of a brief survey. It is cumbersome to do this work and trying to keep track can be a headache. And we probably need some flexibility for different program needs.
* **Mike**: This does speak to the issue which is that we don’t remember what we did a year ago; the more frequently we talk about it, the easier it is. So if we are going to dedicate time for this we need to figure out where that time will come from.

# 8.2 NWCCU Accreditation Update (Sue Monahan)

* Report available on the FS website
* **Question**: Given that Oregon ranks so low nationally in terms of state support for higher education, have you looked at how state funding impacts finding comparators?
* **Sue**: We can look back through the data and see if we are the outlier; we may want to include it as context. It is difficult to find peer institutions that are similar to ours.

# 8.3 Fall 2021 Recruitment (Gary Dukes, Rob Findtner)

* Report available on the FS website
* Offered to move to Dec. 8th

# 9. Announcements: None

## 4:55 motion to adjourn

# 5 – 5:15 p.m.

*Better Know a Colleague* (informal gathering continued, optional)