

## Academic Standing Committee (ASC)

Meeting Minutes for Nov. 13, 2023

Present: Lilla Toke (Chair, English), Caterina Almendral (ELA), Jackie Lee (Registrar), Dionne Miller (Academic Affairs), Ana Mora (Wellness Center), Andrew McFarland (Humanities), Janet Gonzalez (Natural Sciences), Erika Correa (ACE), Alexandra Rojas (Library), Renee Daniels (Admissions)

Meeting started at 2:30PM.

- 1. The committee passed minutes from Sept. 18, 2023. There were no October meeting minutes since the ASC policy workshop took place in its stead.**
- 2. W/WU (Withdrawal/Withdrawal Unauthorized) policy**

The discussion focused on data about the impact of the non-punitive W policy. The analysis covered degree-seeking students from fall 2019 through spring 2023, with a focus on the semesters where the W policy changed to be non-punitive. The data included individual students who received WU grades and the total number of W grades. The committee discussed the impact of the policy change, emphasizing that the W grade becoming non-punitive led to increased withdrawal rates. They also noted that the percentage of W grades went up after the policy change, as expected. The committee raised concerns about the higher rates of withdrawal and potential impact on students' financial responsibility. Questions about the rationale behind considering policy changes and whether it was related to limiting the number of W's a student can take. There were suggestions considering additional data, such as the GPA of students who withdrew and their eventual graduation rates. The committee acknowledgment that there might be limited options for the committee to address the issue through policy changes. Discussion on the challenge of influencing students' behavior regarding withdrawals followed, with the recognition of the difficulty in implementing policies to discourage students from withdrawing or receiving WUs. Another concern was about student withdrawals (WUs) and their impact on academic policies like the Dean's List.

- 3. Academic Forgiveness Policy**

There was also a conversation about academic forgiveness and reinstatement policies, focusing on students who were suspended and later reinstated. The data presented showed low percentages of students returning after suspension or dismissal. The conversation touched on the idea of shortening the time frame for academic forgiveness from the current five years to potentially three years. The participants expressed concerns about the low rate of students returning and suggested exploring initiatives to support students who had stopped attending and encourage their return, including considering lowering the number of years in the academic forgiveness policy from 5 to either 3 or 2. The participants agreed to lower the number of years but were undecided on whether it should be 3 or 2. Some expressed concerns that 2 years might be too few. There was a discussion about whether the academic

forgiveness policy applied only to students who were permanently dismissed or also to those on probation. The participants learned that the policy only applied to students who were permanently dismissed after 5 years. The conversation moved towards discussing a clarification about the appeal process for students on probation who wanted to improve their GPA.

#### **4. Voting Members of the ASC**

There were talks about voting and potential changes to the language of policies. Another significant point of discussion was who could vote on the committee, particularly addressing the role of ex-officio members. Some members expressed a desire for all committee members, including ex-officio members, to have voting rights. The conversation delved into the definition of ex-officio members and whether changes to their voting status could be made.

#### **5. Student-Friendly Section of the Website**

There was an update on efforts to create a student-friendly section on the website, involving students making videos to explain various policies like the course repeat policy, emphasizing the importance of understanding its implications. The speaker shared insights about GPA calculation, limits on course repeats, and considerations for financial aid and transfer implications. Later, there was a proposal to develop similar videos for various policies and a suggestion to involve students in creating these videos. The discussion also touched on potential challenges like space limitations on the college website and the idea of displaying videos on screens around the campus. Accessibility concerns, particularly closed captioning, were raised, and there was a plan to reach out to relevant departments for collaboration.

#### **6. Finding an Interim ASC Chair**

The discussion revolved around the upcoming sabbatical of the current chair and the need for someone to fill in during the spring. The chair encouraged a faculty member to step up.

#### **7. Online Catalog**

The conversation then shifted to concerns about the online version of the catalog, specifically regarding the lack of a PDF option, user-friendliness, and difficulties in finding policies. The chair explained the transition to an online system, the challenges with the PDF version, and the unavailability of print copies. Members expressed dissatisfaction with the search functionality and layout, with a call for feedback to improve organization and accessibility. Members expressed the need for a more intuitive search function and offered to provide feedback for improvement.

#### **8. Academic Integrity Update**

The discussion shifted to the absence of a transparent process for academic integrity complaints and a proposal to create an elected body for review. One member of the ASC was

part of the working group tasked with developing a new academic integrity process and agreed to update the rest of the committee as new information arose.

## **9. Discussion of plans regarding Spring 2024**

The committee raised the question of returning to the topic of lack of an A+ grade. The committee also suggested the need to discuss feedback on AI and plagiarism policies, aiming to update the academic integrity policy. There was a proposal from the Faculty Council to add language to CUNY's academic integrity policy. The issue of academic probation policy and a request to discuss it in the next meeting was also raised.

Meeting adjourned at 4:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew McFarland