

Faculty Senate Standing Committee Annual Report (2013-2014)

Standing Committee:	Academic Affairs	Prepared By:	Rebecca Leugers, Chair	Date: May 8, 2014
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Committee Charge:	<p>“There shall be a standing committee known as the academic affairs committee. It shall have seven members elected by the faculty senate, serving two-year staggered terms. The chairperson of the university faculty shall annually appoint an individual who is both a member of the committee and a member of the faculty senate to serve as the chairperson of this committee. The committee on committees shall nominate, when feasible, two persons for every vacancy of the committee. The academic affairs committee shall investigate and make recommendations for faculty senate action concerning any educational or academic policy or practice at the university, or any proposed practice or policy, that is referred to the committee by the university faculty, the faculty senate or the chairperson of the university faculty. One or more of its members may serve as faculty senate representative and liaison to all university committees responsible for academic affairs.”</p>
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Committee Membership (Faculty Names, College, Term Years):	<p>Rebecca Leugers, PT, MS (Chair), College of Allied Health Sciences, 2013-2015 Lisa Beckelhimer, MA, College of Arts and Sciences, 2013-2015 Julia Gill, PhD, RT(R)(QM), UCBA, 2012-2014 Linda Graeter, PhD, College of Allied Health Sciences, 2012-2014 Beverly Reigle, RN, PhD, College of Nursing, 2013-2015 Teresa Roig-Torres, PhD, UCBA, 2012-2014</p>
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Meeting Dates during 2013-2014:	<p>Oct 11, 2013 Jan 23, 2014 April 22, 2014 May 5, 2014 In addition, much of the work of the committee was conducted by “virtual meetings”; email.</p>
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Committee Activities and Key Actions during 2013-2014:	<p>In performance of its duties to its charge by the UC Faculty Senate, the Academic Affairs Standing Committee (“FSAAC”) has had a busy year in which multiple issues were brought forward for consideration. Below are the wide ranging issues (Prior Learning Assessment, Cross-College Curricular Coordinating Committees, Distance Education and Online Teaching, a review of the Winter Weather Closure Policy and Procedures, a request regarding the procedure of awarding Emertus status, the Complete College Ohio plan, and a request to award a grade of “Not Proficient” for basic Math) upon which FSAAC discussed and acted.</p>
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FSAAC reviewed the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) plan that was shared with Faculty Senate during Fall, 2013. The committee agreed that representation on the PLA committee by a member of Academic Affairs would be beneficial.

FSAAC reviewed the plan for establishment of permanent Cross-College Curricular Coordinating Committees. This plan was met with much enthusiasm from the FSAAC as members felt strongly that this plan addressed an academic need and the implementation of this plan would facilitate communication between colleges for the betterment of curricular and ultimately student outcomes. FSAAC supported this plan and recommended that Faculty Senate support the plan.

FSAAC reviewed a proposal from the Best Practices in Distance Education and Online Teaching Task Force. After thorough review of this document, FSAAC proposed a motion to the Faculty Senate for the creation of a faculty taskforce that would continue the work of the above taskforce to develop a list of best practices in distance education and online teaching, as well as work to address preparation, training, and curricular development, faculty workload, evaluation and assessment. FSAAC recommended that the composition of the task force members include faculty with significant experience in developing and leading online education courses and/or programs, and included faculty from a variety of departments and programs which may have diverse perspectives. This motion passed and the task force was created through appointment of members by the Chair of Faculty Senate.

The FSAAC also reviewed the University of Cincinnati Winter Weather Closure Policy and Procedures. This academic year has been one in which the university was closed several times and had delayed starts several times due to severe winter weather, and thus the request to review this policy and procedure. A few editorial comments were offered by the committee for improvements in wording, but no substantive changes were recommended.

Additionally, the FSAAC reviewed a request by the Emeriti Faculty regarding the procedure of awarding Emeritus status. FSAAC reviewed the University Rules (30-28-04), which has been copied below for clarification:
3361:30-28-04 Retirement: emeritus status.

(A) "Emeritus rank" of a faculty member, librarian or other academic officer of the university is defined as a non-salaried, non-official position and academic title of honor, usually corresponding to that held in the last period of active academic service.

(B) Full professors, associate professors, assistant professors, associate librarians, associate senior librarians, senior librarians, deans and other academic administrative officers as determined by the appropriate provost and the president shall be eligible for appointment to emeritus rank.

Appointment to emeritus rank shall be made through the same channels as regular appointments to active status.

FSAAC deliberated about the suggested procedure raised by the Emeriti faculty, and determined that FSAAC supports the idea that Emeriti status is an honor, that there should be clear procedures developed and communicated to faculty as to how faculty might move into Emeriti status, and that each academic unit may wish to develop these procedures for their faculty. However, FSAAC was not supportive of dictating procedure that is covered by the AAUP contract.

FSAAC received a request to review the "Complete College Ohio" plan, and the committee discussed this plan vigorously. The committee ultimately supported the plan with several contingencies and additions that were sent on to the Chair of Faculty Senate to be included in the plan. FSAAC also requested that the "Complete College Ohio" plan be brought before Faculty Senate with the revisions submitted by FSAAC.

FSAAC received a request from the Director of the Undergraduate Studies, Psychology to review the awarding of "Not Proficient" for Basic Math and to review/develop policy specific to awarding "Not Proficient" grades to other foundational courses throughout the university. The FSAAC Chair spoke with the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Psychology to clarify the request and to determine the rationale for the awarding of a

“Not Proficient” grade rather than having the students utilize the already established mechanism of grade replacement. Additionally, members solicited input from the math department heads at regional campuses to determine if there was a need or desire for this type of grade. The feedback received was distinctly unfavorable from the math department. One comment, from the Adjunct and Developmental Mathematics Program Coordinator University of Cincinnati Blue Ash stated, “my feeling is that there does need to be the accountability of a true grade for our developmental courses. We already have difficulties with attendance and students taking these courses seriously -- I believe a grade of NP would only worsen these issues with less accountability.” Given that FSAAC did not find any support for the “Not Proficient” grade from the math departments that teach developmental/basic math, we do not support the awarding of a “Not Proficient” grade for Basic Math or other courses.

In conclusion, the FSAAC had a productive year and the members are deserving of gratitude for the service they extended to the University.

Committee Recommendations or Follow-Up for 2014-2015:

The committee has completed all tasks for the AY 2013-2014 and has no remaining issues to carry over to the following year.