

Faculty Senate Meeting  
February 25th, 2019

Present:

Senators: Chair Sara Freeman, Kristin Johnson, Tiffany Aldrich MacBain, Alison Tracy Hale, Uchenna Baker, Heather White, Bryan Thines, Jung Kim, Kris Bartanen, Peter Wimberger, Andrew Monaco, Heather Bailey, Kelly Johnson, Sara Freeman, Megan Gessel, Gwynne Brown

Guests: Carrie Woods, Joanna Carey Cleveland, John Lear

I. Chair Freeman called the meeting to order at 12pm.

II. Announcements: *Threepenny Opera* opens on Friday! Dean Bartanen welcomed new VP Joanna Carey Cleveland

III. Approval of Minutes **M/S/A** from February 18th

IV. Updates from ASUPS & Staff Senate: Kelly Johnson noted elections are in process, executive debates are on Thursday at 8pm in Murray Boardroom. Staff Senate: nothing new since last week

V. Reports from Standing Committees: none

Kim shared that the CTF is fine tuning two options to place before the faculty: pathways through the core and pathways and the core. Listening sessions were held last week and continue this week. All summary notes are on the shared google drive. The next step is to formulate what might go inside each model, focusing on the core and the five ways of knowing. The CTF is also looking into the inclusion of high impact practices, and how we mentor and support our students are ongoing conversations in small working groups.

VI. ASC Proposal regarding Credit/No Credit options: The ASC is requesting feedback from Senate prior to starting the 30 day clock on their proposal (see **Appendix A**). They will be voting at their next meeting. The 30-day clock will start upon posting of minutes from that meeting. The aim of the proposed changes is to encourage students to explore outside their major/minor since a CR/NC course would not impact their final GPA. ASC liaison MacBain highlighted the proposal's note regarding the three kinds of tiers of classes that are not assigned a letter grade. Conversation included the following points:

- \* faculty concern with P/F are that students might be less invested in a course - and that this problem might be exacerbated by CR/NC option (although offering the option of P/F CR/NC is still at the faculty member's discretion)
- \* the question of whether activity credit could be graded is worth considering
- \* the use of P/F is not massive

- \* one reason P/F use is so low is because the fail could impact the GPA, and the pass doesn't do much, and thus the CR/NC option might be more net positive in encouraging students to explore more
- \* what makes CR/NC different from an audit? The professor still renders a grade (versus the audit).
- \* a reminder regarding why P/F is anonymous reflected worry of stigma being attached to taking P/F
- \* the limit of 4 courses CR/NC seems like a lot
- \* these courses can't be used for core, major/minor, UDOM, KNOW, etc. and can generally only be used for extra units, so the possibility of a student taking four is unlikely
- \* this option will be beneficial for students who struggle with anxiety - as they sometimes achieve even more in P/F courses.
- \* Is it worth considering whether second major or minor should allow CR/NC? Does this change allow them to do more exploring versus amassing minors? (conversation then segwayed a bit toward the potential implications of pathways for minors, etc.).
- \* Could CR/NC be an option for UDOM? If so, changing the rules might need to be followed by a revision in the maximum number of CR/NC
- \* CR/NC in the core could grab students who won't otherwise explore but then love the subject, especially if the number allowed is limited
- \* Can students petition classes they fell in love with to change to graded? Consensus was that backwards revising transcripts comes with too many pitfalls
- \* A lot depends on how we market it to students; if the argument is in interest of exploration, then encouraging students to consider these no-grade options may have more impact than the policy change.
- \* The transcript records as CR/NC, which are also used for transfer credits.

Conversation then segued into why students minor rather than just take classes (in the context of what this will do for incentivizing minors or no); some departments depend a lot on minors, so we need to be careful in removing incentives to minor, and minors are built to give structure and make sense of a path. The question was posed whether the change should be postponed given the CTF work; but the suggestion was made that this P/F -> CR/NC change could be made, and the broader issues noted above discussed later.

## VII. Report from Committee on Diversity, courtesy CoD members Carrie Woods and John Lear

Woods described the charge (see Appendix B) and outlined how the CoD has proceeded in addressing the charge. First, the CoD reviewed responses to Question 6 of the Departmental and Program Curriculum Reviews. Second, they conducted a survey to assess how departments are engaging with diversity with respect to hiring, retention and professional development. Woods also shared that the Education Department has developed an equity action plan, and the CoD is planning to see if it could be implemented across the board. The survey showed that everyone seems to want more in diversity and equity training. Next steps

include developing the mean of providing more support for such training. The CoD is focusing on hiring and retention (see “To meet the charge 1b by the Senate, we intend to work on the following” in Appendix B), rather than professional development issues at this time, and is hesitant to tackle SETs or curricular decisions since those are under review by other committees.

Chair Freeman asked what would be helpful for the CoD at this moment? Lear noted that they would like to know whether they are going down the right track or duplicating what is going on elsewhere, and whether their priorities are on track. Woods noted that one of the Senate’s charges was to define the CoD’s role, and they are trying to hone in on that, for example by looking at hiring retention and best practices. Their sense is such a trajectory would map on well to what students are asking for. Such work doesn’t necessarily have to result in always hiring faculty of color, but should at least entail looking for people committed to the Diversity Strategic Plan. Browne commended the committee and the bullet points of ‘next steps’ - but asked, with respect to mentoring, if that is within the CoD’s purview? MacBain noted that we are the only college among the NW5 without a mentoring program, and it wouldn’t be hard to do. Wimberger suggested departments could focus on developing mentoring plans, and the CoD could find resources to help departments, but that it is departments’ role to compose a plan that speaks to the needs of their faculty. Woods noted the CoD has talked about revamping the diversity website to include relevant links, templates, and resources. Bartanen noted that mentoring is under the CoD’s purview according to the bylaws, and provided Woods and Lear with information on previous and ongoing work to aid their endeavors. Freeman affirmed that issues of hiring, retention and mentoring is within the purview of CoD yet mentoring also has a larger umbrella as well that is beyond Diversity SP and inclusion work, and they do not need to spearhead the latter alone. Bailey noted that professional development events over the break always include great workshops on diversity and inclusion, and could be a place for potential discussions. MacBain noted the importance of having everyone participate in such workshops rather than just chairs, given some of the ideas (such as: ‘work on not replicating yourselves’) can be hard to translate.

**Departments can submit late responses to the survey via contacting Ellen Peters.** The suggestion was made that CoD could reach out to CTF and SET to ensure connections. Chair Freeman noted the question regarding the role of the CoD in relation to the Diversity Advisory Council, and that we need a narration about the relationship between the two groups.

#### VIII. Other Business.

Chair Freeman made note of things in the pipeline for future Senate meetings: Julie Nelson Christoph will report on information regarding contingent faculty; faculty reps on to the Board of Trustees will be visiting; we will complete preparations for the next Senate and Faculty Salary committee elections; examine initiatives around immersive experiences; March 25th will hear from Faculty Salary Committee and have a report from

Kate Cohn on the common hour; April meetings will be devoted to standing committee reports.

IX. M/S/P to adjourn at 1:03pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin Johnson

**Appendix A: Charge #1 from the Faculty Senate to the Academic Standards Committee** (“to review the utility and grading standards of the pass/fail option and, if deemed necessary, recommend policy changes”)

Background/Discussion:

The reason for a P/F is to encourage exploration; however, very few students use the P/F, ~10 per year.

We reviewed regional and peer institutions policies on P/F in terms of what constitutes a passing score, restrictions of who qualifies for P/F, and impact on the student’s GPA.

We decided that there is an inconsistency in the current policy. Using the Graded option, a D- is considered passing, however, using the P/F option, a C- is required to pass. The C- requirement does create an incentive for students to put in a fair amount of effort. If changed to a D- then the amount of effort could be too low, with negative externalities on the class.

The P/F system could be changed to credit/no credit where neither would be included in the GPA. Anything below a C- would lead to no credit but would not be factored in the student’s GPA.

By excluding the no credit option from the GPA, there may be students who avoid being placed on academic probation (compared to the P/F option, where F does get included as a 0 in the GPA).

The potential negative effects of the changes were considered to be, on balance, fairly minor.

Questions/Possible Solutions:

Should we keep P/F notation on transcript for mandatory pass-fail courses (where there is no graded option) as well as separate P/NP notation for optional courses with the current proposal under discussion? Some concerns about possible confusion about this distinction were raised.

The option of eliminating the P/F option entirely was discussed, as well as using a Credit/No Credit distinction (with notation of CR/NC on the transcript) to avoid confusion and overlap of Pass/No Pass with Pass/Fail.

After discussing these issues, the committee came up with a *modified proposal, which entails essentially 3 different “tiers” of classes that are not assigned letter grades:*

1) *Mandatory P/F academic classes* (e.g., certain music courses and others, where P/F is the only option for these courses), which would continue to use the P/F notation on transcripts.

2) *P/F activity courses* (such as varsity sports and P.E. courses), which would also continue to use the P/F notation.

3) *Credit/No Credit course option*, which would use the CR/NC notation on transcripts, and which would not count toward the GPA. These courses would require a C- or above to receive credit for the course, and students could take a maximum of 4 units using the CR/NC option.

For classes covered under #1 and #2 above, there would be no option for students to petition to switch these courses either to a letter-graded option or to the Credit/No Credit option.

Also, for the courses covered under #1 and #2, it would be up to each department/program to determine the desired criteria for P/F (e.g., D-, C-, or perhaps some other threshold), which individual instructors within the department/program would then apply, making sure that the passing criterion is clearly stated in syllabi for students.

Individual instructors (in consultation with the requirements and guidelines of their respective departments and programs) would reserve the right to decide whether certain courses were not eligible for the P/F or CR/NC options. The course proposal forms (from the Curriculum Committee) may need to be revised to include the CR/NC option and departments/programs/instructors should review these forms (annually?) for each course to see that they reflect the desired grading options.

## CR/NC and P/F Grading

### System of Permanent Grades

Courses at the university of Puget Sound use one of two possible grading systems: (1) Courses that assign letters grades on an A through F scale and (2) courses that assign Pass or Fail grades. Most academic courses are offered on the letter-grading system. Activity courses and a small number of academic courses are offered on the Pass/Fail system. As discussed below, courses on the letter-grading system may be taken on a Credit/No Credit basis. Pass/Fail courses cannot be taken on a Credit/No Credit basis.

Letter Grade	Grade Points
A	4.00
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00

B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.00
D-	0.67
F	0.00
Credit (CR)	Not computed in grade point average
No Credit (NC)	Not computed in grade point average
Pass (P)	Not computed in grade point average
Fail (F)	Equivalent to a F letter grade and computed in grade point average accordingly
Audit (AU)	Not computed in grade point average

### **Credit/No Credit Grading (Student Option)**

Unless otherwise restricted, a student may choose to take a letter-graded course with a Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) option. The Credit/No Credit option is designed to encourage students to explore courses in academic areas outside of the major or minor. Therefore, courses taken with the Credit/No Credit option are not calculated into the student's grade point average. If the professor submits a letter grade of C- or higher the student will receive credit for the course; if the professor submits a letter grade of D+ or lower the student will not receive credit for the course.

Credit/No Credit registrations are not reported to the instructor; however, an instructor may prohibit the Credit/No Credit option or may limit the number of students who may enroll using the Credit/No Credit option. Students who wish to exercise the Credit/No Credit option must do so at the Office of the Registrar on or before the last day to add a class. After the add period, the grading option cannot be changed.

A student may elect to take one academic course with the Credit/No Credit grading option each semester in their junior and senior year. A maximum of 4.0 Credit/No Credit units can be applied to the 32.00 units required for graduation.

A course taken with the Credit/No Credit option cannot satisfy:

1. University Core requirements
2. Major/Minor degree requirements
3. Foreign Language graduation requirement

4. Upper-Division graduation requirement
5. KNOW requirement
6. Graduate degree requirements

#### **Pass-Fail Courses (Faculty Designation)**

Courses that do not assign letter grades are designated as Pass/Fail (P/F) Courses. Pass/Fail is a faculty designation for a course. Pass/Fail courses may not be taken for a letter grade or as Credit/No Credit. The instructor of the course shall establish the criteria for the determination of passing and failing the course and shall include that information in the syllabus. Students who pass the course will receive credit for the course but no adjustment will be made to the grade point average. Students who fail the course will receive no credit for the course and 0.0 grade points will be included in their grade point average.

A maximum of 2.0 *activity* Pass/Fail units can be applied to the 32.00 units required for graduation.

#### **Appendix B Committee on Diversity Report to the Senate** Monday, February 25, 2019

The Committee on Diversity (CoD) was charged (1a) by the Senate to:

- Learn about the practices through which various departments, schools, and programs are independently striving to advance the diversity goals laid out in Puget Sound's Diversity Statement and Diversity Strategic Plan (DSP);
- Assess the mechanisms that are currently in place to evaluate departmental (etc.) practices regarding diversity (such as Q6 on the Departmental and Program Curriculum Review);
- Present preliminary findings to the Faculty Senate around midyear.

In response to this charge, the CoD reviewed responses to Q6 on the Departmental and Program Curriculum Review. We found a variety of responses that focused on the curriculum and believe them to be helpful but there was little information on hiring and retention. Thus, the CoD developed a survey in the fall of 2018 to gather information on how departments (etc.) have responded to goal 1 (faculty recruitment and retention) and goal 2 (contribution to campus climate cultivation) of the DSP.

The survey was administered to the chairs or heads of each department/school/program in January 2019 through the Office of Institutional Research. We received responses from an average of 25 respondents, a 63% response rate (25/40; Table 1).

#### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

##### Hiring practices

- diversity statement requirement (88% of respondents included one)

- how did candidate demonstrate commitment to DSP
  - diversity was a part of application materials (54%)
  - was from an underrepresented group (50%)
- a sampling of practices that address recruitment of faculty from underrepresented and minoritized groups
  - not privileging candidates with liberal arts backgrounds
  - advertising broadly
  - candidates meet with Dean of Diversity and Inclusion
  - diversity liaison for each search

#### Retention

- mentoring plan for faculty
  - 28% of respondents have a mentoring plan, 44% do not but intend to develop one
  - mentoring plans do not meet the goals of the DSP except for one department that has created an “equity action plan” and another who negotiated reduced teaching and service loads
  - no department has assessed their mentoring plan but 83% intend to in the future

#### Professional development

- professional development experience related to diversity, equity, or inclusion
  - 80% had experience and 100% wanted more
- Plan to advance goals of DSP
  - 28% have a plan and 58% intend to develop one in the next 2 years
- Support requested to better reach the goals of the DSP include
  - More workshops/retreats on diversity and inclusion
  - A best practices checklist
  - A formal university-wide faculty mentoring plan
  - Creating more time and space for faculty to conduct this work, such as monetary incentives to attend workshops
  - Curricular development support
  - Equity action plan

Upon review of these findings, the CoD moved to the next charge (1b) by the Senate to:

- Recommend to the Senate one or more mechanisms by which all departments, schools, and programs should regularly and meaningfully evaluate and enrich their engagement with diversity with regard to curricular design, hiring and retention practices, assessment of faculty performance, and departmental (etc.) culture.

We decided to focus on *hiring and retention practices* this year as other committees are working on faculty assessment (ad hoc Senate SET committee) and curricular design (Curriculum Task Force). We intend to engage with the CTF to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion are a part of the dialogue.

To meet the charge 1b by the Senate, we intend to work on the following:



- Develop an equity action plan that all departments (etc.) could use or tailor
- Develop a list of best practices for hiring to be shared at a full faculty meeting and online
- Explore the creation of a faculty mentoring plan draft and assessment
- Offer a list of diversity and inclusion workshop ideas

Table 1. Departments/schools/programs that started or completed the Diversity Survey for the Committee on Diversity administered in January 2019 by the Office of Institutional Research.

Department/School/Program	Completed survey
African American Studies	No
Art and Art History	Yes
Asian Languages and Cultures	Yes (incomplete)
Asian Studies	Yes
Biology	Yes
Business	Yes
Chemistry	Yes
Classics	Yes
Communication Studies	No
Computer Science	No
Economics	No

Education	Yes
Engineering (Dual Degree)	No
English	Yes
Environmental Policy and Decision Making	Yes
Exercise Science	No
French Studies	Yes
Gender and Queer Studies	Yes
Geology	No
German Studies	No
Global Development Studies	No
Hispanic Studies	Yes
History	Yes
Honors	Yes
Humanities	Yes
International Political Economy	Yes
Latin American Studies	Yes (incomplete)
Latina/o Studies	No
Math and Computer Science	No
Music	Yes
Neuroscience	No
Philosophy	No
Physical Education	No
Physics	Yes
Politics & Government	Yes
Psychology	Yes

Religious Studies	No
Science, Technology & Society	Yes
Sociology and Anthropology	Yes
Theatre Arts	Yes

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