**CLAS Faculty Council**

**February 11, 2021**

**Meeting via ZOOM**

**MINUTES**

**Participating:**

Michael Abeyta, Masoud Asadi-Zeydabadi, Jennifer Boylan, Sasha Breger Bush, Michelle Comstock, Benjamin Crawford, Candan Duran-Aydintug, Gabriel Finkelstein, Mia Fischer, Nick Fisk, Rachel Harding, Pam Jansma, Marjorie Levine-Clark, Darryl Mehring, Annika Mosier, Erik Oleson, Florian Pfender, Sarah Tyson, Anna Warrener, Margaret Woodhull, Anna Warrener

**Guests**: Dave Albeck, Cecilio Alvarez-Gajewsky, Mary Lovit, Sandra Quinn, Kim Regier, David Tracer

**Recording**: Karen Fennell

**Welcome and Introductions**: Sarah Tyson

**Minutes from December**: Sarah Tyson

Approved with no changes.

**Dean’s Updates**: Pam Jansma

*Faculty and Staff Forum:*

* The Spring Faculty and Staff Forum for CLAS will be held on Friday, 2/12.
* We will have an update from Todd Haggerty on the University and CLAS budget.

*Furloughs:*

CU Denver furloughs will end March 1.

UC Boulder and UCCS are determining how they are handling their furloughs and possible related budget cuts.

*Auraria Campus Vaccinations:*

The Auraria campus doesn’t have the vaccine available for distribution yet. We are still following the state guidelines on vaccinating people over the age of 65 and K-12 teachers.

*Fall 2021 Planning:*

* The room capacities will be the same as what they are now. So, for now, the situation will look the same for fall classes and capacities as for this spring.
* There is encouragement for having in person classes on campus, but the room capacities will still be constrained for in person teaching.
* We will not force anyone to come to campus who is concerned about this. We are talking about renting space in DCPA to hold some larger classes.
* There has been discussion in departments about hosting duplicate sections of in person and remote learning classes.
* Classes that will have a lot of international and first-year students are encouraged to be offered in person or hybrid so that if the room capacities expand we can have the class on campus.
* Faculty can use their campus offices as needed for a full day if they wish, they just have to follow the campus safety protocols.

*Facial Recognition Software and Proctoring Exams:*

* In a recent meeting of the campus Deans there was discussion about proctoring exams and how facial recognition is problematic for people of color
* There is interest in doing low stakes assessments for students in place of day exams using facial recognition software.

Open Educational Resources (OER)

It would be helpful to Ronica Rooks if we can find out who is using what types of Open Educational Resources and what alternatives people are interested in using.

We need to know what resources are being used and report this to CDHE by fall 2021.

There is a website with guidance on what is considered OER for the state of Colorado:

<http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CDHE-Guidance-on-HB-18-1331-FINAL.pdf>

The Council will invite Ronica to speak to this group in March about OER.

**Revised Policy on Second Bachelor’s Degree:** Cecilio Alvarez-Gajewsky

* Cecilio is the Assistant Director in CLAS Academic Advising.
* This policy applies to two groups of students: new students intending to complete a second degree and continuing students intending to finish a second degree later.
* Up to now, student have had three semesters to come back to finish a second degree or their student status will lapse and they will have to come back and finish 30 more credit hours.
* Revised language is proposed to address these issues and to bring the language of CLAS policy into alignment with language that exists in other university policies.
* CLAS is revising language on residency that is already part of college and university requirements for graduation.
* We also want to simplify the policy and remove the three semester time limit to finish the second degree and the completion of an additional 30 credit hours. A time limit for finishing the second degree seems out of alignment with our approach.
* Other schools and colleges, with the exception of CAM, do not have a second degree policy.
* We are proposing to adjust the language around the degree requirements.
* EPCC has passed this proposal.
* If there are any changes to the core requirements, a student would have to complete that new requirement to receive the second degree, but otherwise there is no time limit or expiration for the credit hours completed towards the second degree.
* If the first BA is in CLAS and the core courses are in CLAS then the student does not have to apply again to CLAS to complete the second degree.
* The original rationale for the three semester time limit had to do with the student’s status remaining active for three semesters before they would have to reapply to the program.
* Some departments in the sciences do have an expiration date of 10 years on their courses because the knowledge in the field changes over time and the information from the older courses may not be up-to-date so the student would have to retake some specific courses.
* Departments might want to consider if there are any core courses that might have a timeframe on them that students would have to retake the courses after a certain amount of time since the knowledge in the field has been updated.
* Advising does talk with students about connecting with their faculty advisor if they had been away a long time to see if they have to retake any courses and if there are any additional credit hours remaining to complete.
* A motion was made to approve these policy changes. Changes were unanimously approved.

**P+ Grade for Major Requirements**: Dave Albeck, Kim Regier, Mary Lovit, and Sandra Quinn (representatives from the EPCC) and David Tracer

* Dave Albeck shared a PowerPoint presentation which Sarah Tyson will distribute to the group for further reference.
* The issue under discussion whether we should continue offering the P+ grading option into the spring semester and if so, what impact that would have on students in CLAS.
* The question to be addressed is: should there be a continuation of the grading policy from fall 2020 with P/F/P + options and should the P+ should continue to count for requirements for the degree .
* Overall, the University policy was the number of P/F grades was limited to 16 semester hours for the 120 total credit hours and only six hours in any given semester of P/F grading.
* The modified grading policy came into play because of the pandemic and the desire to make things more flexible for our students.
* The EPCC is asking the Council to consider if we should keep the P+ grading option because it could create some unintended consequences for our students if this remains in place with the P+ continuing to count for CLAS core.
* If we count the P+ grade in CLAS it is a concern because other schools and colleges at CU Denver are not honoring the P+ for their core and this could be a problem for our students for courses taken in other colleges and it is hard for our students to understand what grading will be applied to their credit hours.
* The deadline to ask for P/F grades for up to six credit hours in the semester is April 4, which is the 10th week deadline for a student to drop a course.
* Once students opt in for the P/F grade for a course they cannot later revert to getting a grade for the class. In spring 2020, summer 2020 and fall 2020 we had a lot of students opting for the P/F and modified grading option.
* Some students opted for the P/F who otherwise would have earned grades of A and B for their courses.
* Under the fall 2020 format about one third of students would have earned a B or better but opted for the P/F/P+ grading instead.
* Students may be unintentionally creating a negative impact for themselves by opting for P/F grades instead of regular grading for the semester.
* In EPCC discussion, it seemed one of the problems with this policy of P/F/ P+ staying in place is the lack of communication to students as to what the negative impact of the P/F option would be for them.
* Students are not required to talk to an advisor before they make this choice of P/F versus a regular grading option.
* Students also lose the ability to get grade forgiveness later if they take the class P/F.
* It could be the more vulnerable students who might not know how to talk to an advisor to ask for help before they make this P/F choice.
* There is no way to prevent a student from taking more than the 16 credit hour maximum of P/F credits, and this could negatively impact their ability to graduate since they cannot count more than six credits of P/F courses toward the degree.
* Students could also be negatively impacted if they are pursuing additional degrees in other schools and colleges if they take too many courses as P/F.
* The GPA can also be impacted for students seeking university honors by having lots of P/F courses on their record.
* There are also issues with external resources tied to Financial aid and the GPA if students take too many P/F courses as well.
* If a student is going onto a professional or graduate program there may be negative impacts for students depending how the P/F grades are interpreted by other agencies or institutions, particularly if the P/F grades are not considered as fulfilling requirements for acceptance into other programs.
* The degree audit function is also impacted by P/F/ P+. Once a student takes a required course P/F and the audit program does not recognize the course as fulfilling a requirement for the degree, it is dropped by the audit into being an elective. This resulted in having to do a lot of manual manipulation of the audit record of what courses fulfill the degree requirements. It also created a lot of confusion for students and programs as to whether or not a student might have to repeat courses and not knowing if the P/F would count for the degree after all.
* This has created inequities for some students who didn’t know to ask for help or advice as to what courses they should take for a letter grade versus P/F.
* The EPCC was split on the recommendation as to whether or not the P/F option should be continued into spring semester 2021.
* Some questions to consider are if we should extend the P/F/ P+ option past spring 2021 and what the continuing potential negative effects for the students might be if we keep this option in place.
* There are also issues of policies as to how to decide Latin honors for students where the GPA is an important factor in many of these honors decisions.
* There was discussion as to why students are not required to get advising about the P/F option as it has such an important impact. The understanding is that students have the right to take a class P/F and we cannot make them consult an advisor about it to move forward with this option or not. It was seen as a barrier to students if they were not able to submit the application for the P/F grade by the deadline and thus it was a university decision not to make a student talk to an advisor before submitting the request. The request form does say that students are encouraged to seek advising, but it is not required.
* There was also discussion about there being problematic elements of opting in for the P/F that are not tied to a student who is asking for a P+ grade.
* First-generation students might opt for the P/F without understanding the future implications of it.
* What we need to consider here is whether or not to continue the P+ grading option and continue to apply that during times of COVID to required courses or not.
* There are concerns that having the P+ grading option may be making the P/F option seem more attractive to students.
* It isn’t clear if we could or could not amend the situation so that students would have to talk with an advisor before they opt for P/F grading. Students can make these choices in their Portal and this doesn’t block them from making this choice without communicating with an advisor.
* There was a question about which students tend to be choosing the P/F/P+ option and if it is more often the high achieving students who want to preserve their GPA? Some students who have lower GPAs seem to be getting more benefit by choosing P/F instead for the semester.
* There was discussion about why can we not allow students to change from P/F grading back to a letter grade if they ended up doing well in the course after all. This is blocked by the Registrar’s office.
* AMC and university honors do not allow P/F courses to account for CLAS degree requirements. So there are a lot of opinions about whether it is fair to allow the P+ grade option to continue or not in spring 2021.
* The council will be advisory to the Dean as regards making a decision about whether or not to continue the P+ option or not. There are a lot of ramifications for students to be considered.
* There was concern that if CLAS is the only college that would continue the P+ policy we might get pushback from the Registrar. We would also have to continue to do manual degree audits.
* The question was raised if the other schools and colleges are going in the same direction regarding the P + grade. Per David Tracer, other schools and colleges are not allowing the P+ to count for degree requirements.
* The P+ apparently does nothing in the other schools and colleges. If that is the case, David would make an argument to get rid of the P/F/P+ system going forward.
* There was a motion to vote on whether or not to continue the P+ grading option for the spring 2021 semester.
* There was one abstention, but all other members voted **not** to continue P+ grading option for spring 2021.

**CLAS Grad Requirements Cross Listing Inconsistencies with EPCC**: Mary Lovit

This item has been moved to the March meeting for discussion.