COMMITTEE: Admissions & Retention Policies

MEETING DATE: 03 April 2017

PERSON PRESIDING: Jay Newhard

REGULAR MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jay Newhard, Daniel Shouse, Amy Frank, Beth Thompson, Gregory Lapicki, Johannes Hattingh

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: John Fletcher, Jayne Geissler, Amber Thomas, Troy Nance (rep. of student body)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

ACTIONS OF MEETING
Minutes of 13 March 2017 approved unanimously (1 abstention)
Newhard noted Permission to Take Courses Elsewhere Policy was approved 8-0 via email.

Agenda Item: Faculty manual update for independent study courses
Discussion: Newhard summarized rationale for additions and changes to the Faculty Manual. The proposed revisions to the Faculty Manual distinguish standard courses (which require a syllabus) from “non-standard” courses (which require a learning contract). The learning contract needs to be flexible enough to accommodate different types of independent study courses. The current course catalog description of independent study courses is vague, but this is likely intentional, so as to accommodate the different uses of independent study courses. Newhard recommended leaving any further revisions of characterization or discussion of independent study in the course catalog to other committees working more closely with those issues and types of courses.

Action Taken: Thomas moved to accept the changes to the faculty manual. Shouse seconded the motion. Motion unanimously approved.

Agenda Item: Zero cost textbook course designation
Discussion: Newhard reviewed the argument by Joseph Thomas presented at the 3/13/17 meeting to designate courses that have zero textbook costs in the catalog. One question is where to list this information (if the policy is adopted). Banner is not a good option because oversight in Banner is not great. Newhard also raised the possibility that such a policy could potentially violate academic freedom of professors, if chairs or administrators pressure faculty to run their courses with zero textbook costs. The pressure to do so would be kind particularly acute if courses with high textbook costs do not fill, or where some sections of a certain course have high textbook costs (e.g. Spanish) while others have zero textbook costs. Newhard has conversed with university attorneys via e-mail about this issue, who pointed out that the policy in itself does not violate academic freedom, but the concern is that it may be conducive to violations of academic freedom under certain circumstances.

Action Taken: Issue was tabled pending further evaluation of potential impacts on academic freedom.

Agenda Item: Review of Disciplinary Information Disclosed on Student Admission Applications PRR
Discussion: All of the suggested revisions to this PRR were minor. There was no meeting time left to discuss those revisions. It was agreed that a draft with those minor revisions would be voted on via e-mail.

Action Taken: There will be an e-mail vote on the proposed revisions to the PRR. ~ A motion to approve revisions to the PRR was approved by e-mail 6-0.