Graduate Council
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DATE: May 6, 2010

TO: Harry Berman, Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
   Terry Bodenhorn, Chair, CAPTF and Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

FROM: Sharron LaFollette, Chair, Graduate Council

RE: Curriculum Approval and Procedures Task Force – draft (6) governance table

The Graduate Council met Monday, April 19, 2010, and April 26, 2010, to review the April 15, 2010, draft of the revised governance table. GC appreciates the enormous time and effort the Curriculum Approval and Procedures Taskforce (CAPTF) exerted to amend the governance table so that it effectively informs the campus about the procedures through which curricula are reviewed and executed through the program, department, college, university, and IBHE levels. We agree with CAPTF that oversight of the process including both review and implementation is important, and we underscore the significance of clarifying and streamlining the governance table and the roles of each of the constituents within it. As new and complex configurations of curricula and administrative units have emerged over the past decade at UIS, the balance of the amount of review and the need for efficient implementation has sometimes been uneven, delaying new courses and curricula or absenting necessary oversight. The current draft shared with GC goes a long way towards streamlining and making more transparent the process of governance.

GC remains committed to the idea that the initiation, planning, and review of curricula must occur at the program or department level. Many changes to programs need little or no oversight beyond the department level unless the proposed change requires resources or coordination beyond the department. GC perceives its role in the governance process to focus on the academic viability of proposals, including the need, quality, assessment, and, under certain circumstances, delivery processes (see below). Logically, then, resource management may also be a component of the review process at the Council level.

From the perspective of the Graduate Council, the governance table draft seems reasonable for the most part. We would, however, like to suggest a few amendments that we believe will strengthen the draft before it is shared more widely with the rest of the campus and before it is implemented.

- No Course-level activity should require external review beyond the level of the department, except where college or campus curriculum is impacted, or where changes affect the number of credit hours a student needs to graduate.
- Because the role of curriculum committees across the university is not standardized, we suggest a directed attempt by colleges to clarify the role of these committees. Currently, the curriculum committees, whether ad hoc or standing, tend to review academic viability of proposals. Because that is also the charge of the Graduate Council if the proposal would impact the
campus, we suggest removing such redundancy in the process as much as possible. After the college curriculum committee has completed its review, the dean should review the proposal for feasibility. If not feasible, the proposal should not move beyond the dean's office. Programs and departments should note that although we do not believe that all proposals must come to GC, the Council is happy to review proposals and offer feedback if our schedules allow after review of the proposal for feasibility.) Time and effort would be saved in reviewing the content of the proposal, allowing the Graduate Council to focus on feasible proposals and thereby streamlining the process for all. To that end, we suggest amending the campus senate bylaw regarding the curriculum review process, particularly as it regards the role of college curriculum committees (Article VI., Section 2(P)9: Procedures for Curricular Reviews, Rev. 9/11/2009).

- Changes to university admissions criteria at the undergraduate level (page 2 – row 1) should not start at the department level. Such changes should begin at the appropriate Campus Senate subcommittee or administrative office.

- Changes in number of hours to graduate and closure (page 2) should first be reviewed by the College Curriculum Committee before coming to GC. This level of review has been omitted in the current table.

- Additional clarification of the table is needed in order to discriminate between delivery changes within the boundaries of the program/college and those needing to move on to the campus-level review. Delivery mode changes do not merit review by GC unless such changes involve campus-wide delivery of the curricula (page 2 – online). Review by the College Curriculum Committee is sufficient to ensure pedagogical soundness. GC believes UIS should continue to maintain on-ground presence of curricula delivery. Where programs continue to deliver the on-ground program, adding online delivery of the program does not need GC review unless the delivery relies on cross-campus resources. Interdisciplinary programs are most affected by this review process.

- Program consolidation, deletion and suspension (page 2) should continue to be initiated through the faculty involved and reviewed as outlined in Campus Senate Resolution 28-6 and detailed in Campus Senate Resolution 38-7. Accordingly, Graduate and Undergraduate Councils and Campus Senate must be involved in this process. The draft chart should be amended to reflect this additional level of review.

- Changes in course level between the 400 and 500 level do not require Graduate Council review (page 1). Both 400- and 500-level courses are considered graduate level unless otherwise indicated in the catalog (Senate Resolution 39-19). The draft chart should be amended to remove GC review from such changes.

We agree that the current draft is a viable alternative to the original, now outdated, table. With a few amendments and a clarification of the role of college curriculum committees, we support the draft.

cc. Lynn Pardie, Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Education and Research. 
Harsh Bapat, Chair Undergraduate Council
Ronald McNeil, Dean College of Business and Management
Larry Stonecipher, Dean College of Education and Human Services
James Ermatinger, Dean College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
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