

Faculty Senate

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Academic Requirements Committee

2010-2011 Annual Report

To: Jack Higginbotham, President, Faculty Senate
From: Kelly Kneece, 2010-2011 Chair, Academic Requirements Committee and Advisor, College of Science-Biology/Zoology
Re: Annual Report for 2010-2011

Data

The Academic Requirements Committee (ARC) met biweekly during the summer term, 2010, and weekly during the academic year. The committee considered 775 petitions, which is a 21% increase over the previous year. Meetings during the academic year generally lasted less than the two hours set aside, except typically during weeks eight, nine, and ten of each term. Occasionally they went beyond the two-hour time frame during these weeks. Summer meetings generally lasted less than two hours.

Late Course Withdrawals (291) and Late Course Drops (262) were the most common actions requested, but the committee was also asked to consider 97 late course adds and 56 requests to "late change the grading basis" from A/F to S/U or vice versa. The ARC also considered 34 withdrawals from the university and a few petitions dealing with potential waivers of graduation requirements and exceeding 24 credits. We also saw for the first time a few petitions requesting an exception to Academic Regulation (AR) 25i: Application for Degree (discussed below.)

We approved late course withdrawals at a 30% rate, late course drops at a 48% rate with an additional 30% being approved as late withdrawals, and late course adds at an 85% rate. Late course withdrawals tend to be less clear-cut and require more documentation, thus the lower approval rate. The continued low approval rate on late changes of grading basis, 11%, reflects the fact that there are not many circumstances that justify approving these requests.

The number of petitions which resulted in deferrals, typically for clarifying information, documentation and/or appropriate/required signatures, dropped slightly from 5% in 2009-2010 to 3% in 2010-2011. The document "[Form to Provide Feedback to Students](#)" created last year works well and has probably reduced the workload for the Registrar's Office in their follow-up communication with students on the decision of their petition.

Application for Degree by Students with Junior Standing

A new challenge this year was petitions from students with junior standing trying to apply for early graduation. These petitions for exception to AR 25i would allow the student to apply for graduation as a junior and walk in commencement. These new petitions were most likely a result of Registrar rule changes allowing students planning to complete required course work during the next fall term to walk in the graduation ceremony during spring term. This new policy allowed many more seniors to walk in the commencement ceremony.

However, AR 25i states that, "To become a candidate for a degree, a student must have achieved senior standing and must make formal application for degree.... the student's deadline to file an application with the Registrar is the end of the second week of the term in which he or she expects to complete requirements for a degree." Juniors would not achieve senior standing by the deadline to apply for graduation and would not be able to sign up for commencement.

The Registrar's Office and ARC considered allowing an automatic approval for these petitions from juniors if they outlined a reasonably attainable plan (approved by their academic advisor) to complete degree requirements during spring, summer, and fall terms. However, this idea was rejected by the Registrar who wanted the ARC to review the individual petitions. The ARC denied all such petitions and upheld AR 25i. It

was the consensus of the committee that commencement should remain a privilege of students who reach senior standing. It was the agreement of the group that allowing juniors to petition to apply for early graduation could potentially cause an increase in juniors overloading course schedules and petitioning so they can walk in commencement. The guidelines on this issue may need to be revisited again this next year if faculty and advisors are concerned about the denial of these petitions.

Distance Students

There still seems to be a high number of petitions coming from distance students, particularly students who sign up for the first time, never log on to Blackboard or check their ONID email account, and assume they have been dropped. We may want to talk to the Registrar's Office about tracking these numbers in the future. We can then make recommendations for better communication if the numbers bear this out.

2010-2011 Academic Requirements Membership

Kelly Kneece '13, Chair	Biology
Joy Jorgensen '11	Enrollment Management
Tjodie Richardson '11	Agricultural and Resource Economics
Andrea Wirth '11	Library
Richard Halse '12	Botany & Plant Pathology
Maureen Childers (v. Alexander) '12	Disability Access Services
TBA '13	

Ex-Officio Registrar's Office Representatives: Tom Watts and Amy Flint
Executive Committee Liaison: Kevin Gable

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Faculty Senate, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97331-6203 · 541.737.4344

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