

To: Executive Committee, Faculty Senate

From: Andrea Nelson, 2015-16 Chair, Academic Requirements Committee (ARC)

Date: July 27, 2016

Re: Annual Report for 2015-16 (with data from 2014-2015)

The ARC met biweekly summer 2015 term and weekly during the academic year. Meetings during the academic year generally lasted less than the two hours set aside except for the traditionally heavy weeks after the 7<sup>th</sup> week withdraw date when the committee met until we completed the docket, but not often longer than two hours. Summer meetings often did not require the full two-hour period.

**Total Petitions – 843 in 2015-2016 (up from 811 in 2014-2015, a 3.95% increase)**

Approved – 484 or 57% (down from 509 or 62.76% of total in 2014-2015, 9.18% decrease)

Denied – 345 or 41% (up from 285 or 35.14% of total in 2014-2015, 16.68% increase)

Deferred – 16 or 2% (no change from 16 or 2% of total in 2014-2015, 0% increase/decrease)

Corvallis Campus – 666 or 79% (up from 584 or 72.01% of total in 2014-2015)

E-Campus – 158 or 18.74% (down from 209 or 25.77% of total in 2014-2015)

Cascades Campus – 20 or 2.37% (from 18 or 2.22% of total in 2014-2015)

International student petitions – 114 or 13.52% (down from 138 or 17.8% of total in 2014-2015)

Late Course Withdrawals – 227 or 26.93% of total

(down from 282 or 34.77% of total in 2014-15, 19.5% decrease)

Approved – 137 or 60.35% (165 or

Denied – 87 or 38.33% (110 or

Deferred – 3 or 1.32% (7 or

Late Course Drops – 448 or 53.14% of total

(up from 233 or 28.73% of total in 2014-15, 92.27% increase)

Approved – 263 or 58.71% (126 or 54.08%)

Denied – 178 or 39.73% (104 or 44.64%)

Deferred – 7 or 1.56% (2 or .86%)

Late Course Adds – 4 or .47% of total

(down from 21 or 2.59% of total in 2014-15, 80.95% decrease)

Approved – 1 or 25% (20 or 95.24%)

Denied – 3 or 75% (1 or 4.76%)

Deferred – 0 or 0% (0 or 0%)

Late Change of grading basis – 67 or 7.95% of total 843

(down from 63 or 7.77% in 2014-15, 6.35% increase)

Approved – 18 or 26.87% (18 or 28.57%)

Denied – 31 or 46.27% (40 or 63.49%)

Deferred – 2 or 2.99% (4 or 6.35%)

Late Withdrawals from the university/term – 88 or 10.44%

(down from 200 or 24.66% in 2014-15, 56% decrease)

Approved – 61 or 69.32% (178 or 89%)

Denied – 23 or 26.14% (22 or 11%)

Deferred – 4 or 4.55% (3 or 1.5%)

Misc petitions – 9 or 1.07% (down from 11 or 1.36% in 2014-15)

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### **Discussion.**

Late Course Drop petitions (448), Late Course Withdraw petitions (227), and Late Withdrawal from the University /Term (88) were again the most common actions requested. Note the following trends:

- Late Course Drop petitions jumped from 233 in 2014-2015 to 448 in 2015-2016. This is a dramatic 92.27% increase. What caused it? One reason could be the shift in the deadlines for registration transactions that took effect fall term 2015. Starting fall term 2015, the deadlines specifically changed around adding and dropping classes. Course Drops in particular were affected. The deadline to drop a course shifted from the Sunday after the Second full week of classes to the Sunday after the first full week of classes. Despite the Registrar broadcasting and communicating this change wide and far, students still reported in petitions that the shift in deadline impacted them. It either caught them by surprise or was not conducive to making a reasoned decision on whether or not to stay in a course. The snow/ice day of the first day of winter term 2016 exacerbated this issue.
- Late Course Add petitions decreased notably from last year from 21 in 2014-2015 to 4 in 2015-2016. While the raw numbers are modest this is an 80.95% decrease. This decrease likely reflects ongoing efforts between the Registrar and the ARC to work together on streamlining and updating the Pre-Approved ARC Petition Chart. This Chart gives the Registrar discretion with the ARC's blessing to pre-approve certain types of student petitions thus saving valuable administrative time and resources. One significant change to the Chart pertains to Late Course Add Petitions. Details are below under Accomplishments.

### **Accomplishments.**

- The Late Change of Registration petition form was revised and streamlined last year. It now includes page numbers and a student signature area at the end of the petition instead of in two different places. It also now includes an area for International Student Advisors to mark when an International Student petition was initially started. This change was made due to the fact that, at times, there have been delays in processing students' petitions which have often been beyond the students' control. These include delays due wait times associated with obtaining permission from home countries or embassies for different requests such as Reduced Credit Load (RCL). The change made allows ISAS advisors to date petition requests. This in turn provides the ARC with timelines that help its members make more reasoned judgements on petitions.
- Several changes were made to the Pre-Approved ARC Chart. This document gives the Registrar discretion to pre-approve certain types of student petitions without ARC consideration or approval. This helps to manage the flow of ARC Petitions and saves the university valuable administrative time and resources. Examples of pre-approvable petitions include Changes in Course Credit, Course Level Changes (400 to 500), Extension of Incomplete beyond one year and other actions. The most obvious change to the Pre-Approved ARC Chart last year was including pre-approval of petitions pertaining to AR 11 or Late Course Adds/Drops. It came to the attention of the ARC that some students mistakenly dropped all classes by taking the Withdraw Survey online without consulting with anyone or any OSU campus unit and were then in the position of having to petition to add their classes back. In such cases, the ARC proposed, and the

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Faculty Senate Executive Committee approved, that students who wished to add all classes back should be able to do so without ARC consideration provided that all classes not just a subset were added back and that the student had sufficient documentation and approval from all parties (instructors, advisors, colleges). Late Course Drops for students who never attended classes were similar situations. At times students forgot or were unaware that they were registered for a course or courses. Petitions for late drops in this type of case are pre-approved by the Registrar. Please see attached for a complete and updated Pre-Approved ARC Chart.

- Improving communication with students regarding the outcome of petitions was a top priority last year. This became apparent after a denied petition was reconsidered several times without approval. OSU Counsel met with the ARC in fall 2015 to discuss improving communication around and language of messaging to students around ARC decisions. As a result, the Registrar now reaches out proactively on behalf of the ARC to all students who petition with the ARC's decision (in the past it was the student who needed to contact the Registrar). Second, the ARC now provides better guidance on language and specifically reasoning around its decisions to the Registrar. This is particularly important for student petitions that are deferred or denied. Students deserve a clear explanation of what is needed and next steps. The Registrar has always had a presence in the ARC and has assisted the ARC with compiling documents and taking notes. There is a notes page that is essential to the process. In the past it has worked very well as a communication tool whereby the ARC members can communicate a decision and the reasoning behind a decision. If further documentation would assist, there is space to indicate this. However, it became apparent that the ARC could be clearer, not about specific member's decisions, but about the committee decision as a whole. Thus, last year the ARC began compiling a "reasoning" list and continues to work on this list. It helps with note-taking and crafting individual emails to students on the outcome of their petitions.

### **Next Year.**

Possible ARC/ASC joint work. The ARC was approached by the ASC last year to propose a joint process for a particular student population. This is a small population of students who move from Academic Probation to Academic Suspension but might not have been placed on Academic Suspension if they had been aware of or had access to the ARC to petition courses that affect their academic standing. Currently the Academic Regulations disallow any student on Academic Suspension from accessing any institutional resources. Instead, a student who has been placed on Academic Suspension and wishing to petition for automatic reinstatement would need to go through the entire process of petitioning for reinstatement with the ASC. The ASC proposal is that this small group of students be allowed access to the ARC after being placed on Academic Suspension. This would affect this small group of students in two significant ways. First, if they are able to access the ARC and if their petitions are approved, they might in certain cases have the Academic Suspension overturned and avoid the transcript notation of Suspension – Reinstatement. In addition, they would be able to avoid the arduous process of petitioning the ASC. The ASC and the university thus save resources. More work needs to be done on whether or not this would be feasible or even desirable given the small amount of students per year who fall into this situation. However, it was clear from meetings last year that members of the ASC felt strongly about supporting this small group of students affected.

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Membership Recruitment and Retention. ARC had a full slate of members last year. One exception was the graduate student representative slot. In the future it would be beneficial to have a graduate student representative on the ARC. In addition, it would be helpful to have an official role for a DAS representative whether voting or non-voting. There was discussion of creating a permanent position. The ARC found that representation from the DAS was extremely helpful in providing background to certain petitions.

Working with the Faculty Senate. The ARC membership will continue to work with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee ARC Liaison Dr. Janine Trempy. Dr. Trempy has asked for feedback from ARC members that speaks to its high functionality.

Attendance/Engagement Note. The ARC would like to report that it has benefitted its work from the new faculty policy to mark Last Day of Attendance (LDA) for students who earn a grade of "F" in a course. One of the main criterion for granting Late Course Drops, Late Course Withdraws, and Late Term Withdraws, is LDA. Having documented evidence of LDA assures that all students are being treated fairly and consistently.

**2015-2016 Academic Requirements Committee Members**

Andrea Nelson, Chair	College of Public Health and Human Sciences, Academic Advising
Jayne Anderson	College of Business, Academic Advising
Stefanie Buck	Valley Library, Ecampus and Instructional Design
Kathy Fultz	College of Liberal Arts, Academic Advising
Janell Johnson	College of Agriculture, Department of Animal and Rangeland Sciences
Urmila Mali	Educational Opportunities Program
Jeff Walker	College of Science, Department of Chemistry
Maysa Shakibnia-Shirazi	College of Public Health and Human Sciences, Undergraduate Student Representative

Ex-Officio Registrar's Office Representatives: Tom Watts, George Olden, Charlie Carr, Autumn Landis, and Jennifer Ketterman

Executive Committee Liaison: Janine Trempy