

**RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY  
ACADEMIC REVIEW COMMITTEE (ARC)**

Meeting Minutes of  
Wednesday, February 16, 2005  
11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.  
SAB Sanyo Conference Room (A-224)

ARC Members present: S. Klein (SAB), Chair; S. Kurzmann (LIB); J. Lipkin (CA); R. Mentore (TAS); F. Shapiro-Skrobe (SSHS); I. Spar (AIS)

Excused absence: J. Skrzynski (Office of the Provost, ex-officio member)

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. The minutes of the February 2<sup>nd</sup> and February 9<sup>th</sup> meetings were approved with minor revisions.

Minor revisions were made to the *Course Syllabus Guidelines Checklist*.

Minor revisions were made to *ARC Report #21 to the Faculty Assembly*, February 16, 2005.

**Announcements (S. Klein)**

ARC members discussed an e-mail sent to S. Klein, chair of the ARC, by Acting-Provost Martha Ecker concerning a course approved by the ARC in Fall 2004. The members of the ARC suggested that a formal procedure be implemented in which all approved course requests be submitted to the Provost for consideration. S. Klein will discuss the matter with M. Ecker.

ARC members discussed an e-mail sent to S. Klein, Chair of the ARC, from K. Fowler, Faculty Assembly (FA) President, requesting that members of the ARC consider Study Abroad and Winter Session issues.

- K. Fowler requested that ARC : “ ... look afresh at each study abroad course in terms of how it will fit in with the guidelines and standards appropriate to the new CLA program and give some thought to additional or alternative ways that Study Abroad courses might be offered under CLA including such options as the semester course at Ramapo (in the fall) and linking short-term study abroads as lab/practicum components to follow and coordinate with regular semester-long courses at Ramapo.”

ARC members believe that the development of all new and revised courses based on the CLA initiative is the responsibility of the convening groups and schools. ARC will gladly review new and revised courses when they are submitted to ARC.

- K. Fowler also requested that: “Since winter session was discussed by ARC last year, I am asking that ARC take up this question again and consider the points raised in the [President’s] Cabinet’s memo as well as additional information from Student Affairs, Professional Staff, etc. that would be forwarded to you as part of this process. Student Government has also (I understand) been asked to revisit this question.”

Since the President's Cabinet's document presented no new academic or curricular information for discontinuing the Winter Session, ARC members declined to review the Winter Session, and consider these factors as administrative matters which lie outside of the purview of the ARC.

### **ARC Discussion/Decision Items**

#### **Course Level Guidelines**

ARC members reviewed the course level guidelines and made several revisions. S. Klein will revise and submit for review at the next ARC meeting.

#### **Latin Honors**

I. Spar reported on his review of the guidelines used by four New Jersey State Colleges (William Paterson University, The College of New Jersey, Montclair State University, and The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey) to bestow Latin Honors onto their graduates. The guidelines used by these four colleges are similar to those used by member colleges of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC). The requirements for Latin Honors range from a 3.4 to a 4.0 Grade Point Average. Additionally, the GPA range for Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude and Summa Laude vary from college to college. Richard Stockton College of New Jersey uses percentages of grades rather than GPA to identify their Latin Honors recipients: the top 3% earn Summa Cum Laude, those within the top 3 – 6% earn Magna Cum Laude, and those with the top 6 – 9% earn Cum Laude honors. Members of the ARC will consider all of the guideline that have been reviewed and will formulate a set of recommendations and guidelines to be used for Ramapo College.

#### **Pass/Fail Policy**

F. Shapiro-Skrobe reported on her review of the Pass/Fail policy at the four New Jersey State Colleges mentioned above. The purpose of this option is to encourage students to explore unfamiliar areas of study or to take particularly challenging coursework that extends beyond their general education and major requirements, without concern for the effect on academic standing. All of these colleges permit students to take no more than one course (of three or four credits) with a Pass/Fail or Ungraded Option per semester, with a maximum of four such courses being applied to a baccalaureate degree. Before being allowed to select this option, some colleges require the student to have completed the equivalent of at least 24 credits and be in good academic standing. (Richard Stockton College allows students to request this option once they have completed 12 credits.)

The guidelines used by these four colleges are quite similar to those used by most COPLAC colleges, with minor differences. Although most colleges allow students to take the Pass/Fail or Ungraded Option on only free electives, The College of New Jersey will allow students to use this option also for a challenging course within the major, with the approval of the chair (once the minimum graduation requirements for the major have been met.)

Although most colleges do not allow students to convert this grade option back to a letter grade after submitting the request, (usually within the first two weeks,) Montclair State University permits students to rescind their pass/fail application at any time prior to the ninth week of the spring or fall semester, or its equivalent for short term and summer courses.

Unlike most colleges, which limit this grade option to a student's free electives, William Paterson

University permits students to use the pass-fail option for general education courses as well, with the exception of *Writing Effective Prose*.

Finally, Richard Stockton College permits a maximum of 10% of Stockton credits to be applied toward graduation requirements.

F. Shapiro-Skrobe will present a draft of a proposed revision of Ramapo College's Pass/Fail policy at the next ARC meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Mentore