

- **Policy/Procedure 300-GG: Independent Study**

Issue: The modified Procedure now allows students on academic probation or academic warning to take Independent Study courses with the Dean’s permission.

Meeting Notes: Provost’s Council members voted unanimously to approve the modified Procedure.

Policies/Procedures to be Revisited/Clarified:

- **Policy/Procedure 300-KK Integrity of Degree Programs**

Issue: Although the current Procedure states that a Minor “...should not exceed 20 credits (including all non-general education prerequisites),” a list of minors currently offered at the College that was shared with Provost’s Council members revealed that 13 out of 50 minors presently offered at Ramapo require more than 20 credits (i.e., 22 to 24 credits).

Meeting Notes: Suggested edits to the policy (i.e., “...a Minor must include between 16 and 24 credits (including all non-general education prerequisites).”) were discussed. Provost’s Council members noted the value of stipulating a minimum number of credits and also explained, in response to a question of whether we should encourage requiring exactly 20 credits, how allowing up to 24 credits makes it easier for minors to meet the Procedure requirement “courses fulfilling the requirements for the primary or secondary major may count toward the requirements of the minor but may not exceed one-half of the credits required in the minor.” Since no further edits were suggested, the modified Policy will be brought to vote at the next Provost’s Council meeting (i.e., November 26, 2019).

New Policies/Procedures to be Considered/Developed:

- **Policy/Procedure 317 Academic Freedom**

Issue: This Policy has not been reviewed since June 1995 and, thus, may need to be updated.

Meeting Minutes: Although this Policy has not been reviewed in nearly 25 years, a comparison between the wording of this Policy and that of Article V Academic Freedom in the *2015-19 Full Time-PT AFT Agreement* revealed an almost 100% match. Therefore,

Provost's Council members felt it was not necessary to update the Policy until, perhaps, after a new Collective Bargaining Agreement is approved and implemented. S Becker shared that the Board of Trustees Mission Fulfillment Committee is discussing this topic along with Freedom of Speech and Civility on campus, and outcomes of these discussions may guide future modifications in the Policy/Procedure. S Gaulden noted that the 14.0 Statement Concerning Conduct, Responsibilities, and Due Process, Freedom of Speech and Assembly section of the Faculty Handbook should be referred to as well to inform any campus-wide discussions.

- **Policy/Procedure 300-E Repeat Course**

Issue: The Provost's Council may want to compare the Ramapo "grade forgiveness" policy and associated procedure with those of other colleges and universities to determine whether our existing policy and associated procedure are "competitive" with those of other colleges/universities and the best fit for our students.

Meeting Minutes: S Gaulden shared a comprehensive research report that illustrates a variety of ways other colleges and universities allow students to repeat courses and include grades earned in repeated courses in the calculation of a student's grade point average. She asked Provost's Council members to carefully review the shared research report and conduct their own research, as warranted, so that we could further discuss any necessary modifications to our policy/procedure at the next Provost's Council meeting (i.e., on November 26, 2019).

During the robust discussion that occurred, the following points were made:

- ✓ At present, when a course is completed the second time at Ramapo, both grades are used in determining the cumulative GPA and the GPA in the major except when the student successfully repeats a failed course and applies for the RF option. (NOTE: the RF option can only be used once per course, is only available twice during an undergraduate student's academic career at the College, is not available in a course in which an academic integrity violation occurred and a sanction was imposed, and is not available if a student repeats a failed independent study course.)
- ✓ The major GPA is currently calculated in an inconsistent manner at the College, which must be corrected. Specifically, uAchieve counts only the last grade received in each course required for the major, which does not follow our policy. In addition, CAPP incorrectly counts all courses with the discipline-specific subject code (e.g., all PSYC courses – even those used to satisfy gen ed requirements – for psychology majors). A decision must be made soon to align current practice and policy/procedure and implement what is best for our students.

- ✓ The current allowance that provides students with two RF options puts science majors at a disadvantage, as using an RF for a 1- or 2-credit lab course rather than a typical 4-credit course would only minimally improve their GPAs. Furthermore, since students can only request an RF in order to repeat a course they fail (i.e., earn an F), students who earn D grades suffer and often ask to be failed instead. This policy/procedure and related practices have been discussed nearly every year at Provost's Council without taking decisive action.
- ✓ Many professional schools are aware of generous "grade forgiveness" policies/practices and recalculate GPAs, which include all grades earned, and/or exclude first-year seminar-type courses, courses transferred in from county colleges, etc. to "level the playing field" for applicants.

Additional Meeting Notes:

R Doster shared that the Canvas contract has been signed and faculty can adopt the new LMS for winter term and Spring semester courses. Moodle will remain available through the end of Spring 2020, at which time it will be discontinued and Canvas will be the only LMS used/supported at the College.

S Gaulden stated that she would share all approved modified policies/procedures with Cabinet for their feedback/concerns. If none are communicated, updated **Policy/Procedure 300-B Academic Integrity** and updated **Policy/Procedure 300-GG Independent Study** will be posted on the Provost's webpage on November 1, 2019.