

Provost's Council Minutes

November 26, 2019

In Attendance: S Becker, J Braun, P Campbell, J Connell, R Doster, D Echols Tobe, S Gaulden, S Hangen, A Hofstra, L Keller, G Khaneja, T Kwak, T Landers, P Laprey, A LePore, A Lorenz, D Nast, E Petkus, C Romano, E Saiff, H Sheehy, N Varma, and Y Xu

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Approval of Minutes:

Council approved minutes from the October 24, 2019 Provost's Council meeting.

Report from the Provost:

S Becker informed the council to expect to see more academic policy reviews and changes in the coming year. For example, the 3+1 partnerships being worked out at present will mandate changes to policy/procedure for transferring in credits. In addition, there is a larger plan for initiatives called *Ramapo 2030* (currently in draft form), which will present a real long-term vision and plan for the next decade in order to insure the viability of Ramapo in the next decade.

Policies/Procedures to be Voted On/Approved:

Modification to Policy/Procedure 300-KK: Integrity of Degree Programs was discussed at the October 24, 2019 Provost's Council meeting. All suggestions provided during the discussion were incorporated into a final version of the policy/procedure, which was then moved into the "In Review" folder on the Provost's webpage. This action was announced in the Daily Digest, and no further input was received. The revised version of the policy/procedure was brought to vote at the November 26, 2019 Provost's Council meeting.

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

Issue: At present, several academic minors offered at Ramapo exceed 20 credits. The suggested revision to the policy/procedure is to replace "...a minor should not exceed 20 credits (including all non-general education prerequisites)" with "... a minor must include between 16 and 24 credits (including all non-general education prerequisites)."

Meeting Notes: E Saiff expressed a concern that minors requiring credit-bearing lab science courses might exceed the maximum 24 credits dictated by the revised policy/procedure. S Gaulden suggested modifying the suggested revision to “...*a minor must include between 16 and 24 credits (including all non-general education prerequisites and excluding all lab science course credits).*” A motion to approve this change was accepted, and Provost’s Council members voted unanimously to approve the modified procedure.

Information Items: Policies/Procedures Recently Modified:

S Gaulden shared that the versions of Policy/Procedure 300-B: Academic Integrity and Policy/Procedure 300-GG: Independent Study that were approved at the October 24, 2019 Provost’s Council meeting have been posted to the website (i.e., see <https://www.ramapo.edu/provost/policy/academic-integrity/> and <https://www.ramapo.edu/provost/policy/independent-study/>). Furthermore, changes made to Policy/ Procedure 300-OO: Grading System that were approved by Graduate Council are now reflected in the version posted on the website (i.e., see <https://www.ramapo.edu/provost/policy/grading-system/>).

New Policies/Procedures to be Revisited /Clarified:

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

Issue: The Provost’s Council may want to compare the Ramapo “grade forgiveness” policy and associated procedures 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 Notes: Discussion occurred. A summary of points made by Provost’s Council members is given below.

- ✓ S Gaulden recapped that although the policy/procedure specifies that “when a course is completed the second time, both grades are used in determining the cumulative grade point average and the grade point average in the major except when the student successfully repeats a failed course and applies for the RF option,” this is not what is happening in practice. U Achieve calculates the major GPA by counting the last grade received in each course, and CAPP includes *all* grades in calculating the major GPA regardless of how many times the course was

taken. Since practice should obviously follow policy/procedure, it is important to revise the policy/procedure or change the practice. The majority of the Provost's Council members present supported using the best grade in the major GPA calculation.

- ✓ S Gaulden shared all Repeat Course-policy/procedure-related comments that were posted on the Provost's Council Discussion Board. Most posts recommended using the best course grade to calculate the major GPA, and this was also supported by other Council members during discussion.
- ✓ C Romano presented a summary of the EMSA proposal, which includes the following recommendations: the RF option and repeat courses be merged into one policy/procedure, which would allow Ramapo students to repeat up to 5 courses (i.e., *one repeat only* as permitted by financial aid regulations for up to 5 courses; student could choose to repeat the course once regardless of grade earned); students who wish to repeat a course more than once could do so with Dean's or Convener's permission; use the best grade in the major GPA calculation *and* in the cumulative GPA calculation; and add the option for students to take developmental courses as pass/fail.
- ✓ Other points made during discussion included the following: do not allow unlimited retakes; expanding the number of repeats would help students who started off poorly at Ramapo; allow up to a certain number of credits rather than courses to be repeated (would require educating students a bit); and allowing the pass/fail option for developmental courses would remove these courses from GPA calculation altogether (this may not work for the EOF summer bridge program).
- ✓ S Gaulden determined that more time needs to be allotted in order for Provost's Council members to request from their Units input on the Repeat Course policy/procedure, which should then be posted on the Provost's Council Discussion Board for all to review prior to the January 23, 2020 meeting. It is hoped that discussion can reach consensus at the January meeting so that a formal vote to modify the Repeat Course policy/procedure can occur at the February 26, 2020 meeting.

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

Issue: There are some straightforward updates/corrections that need to be made to the policy/procedure language. In addition, there is a need for review and clarification of "concentration" and "track," as it seems that some degree programs may be using these words incorrectly.

Meeting Notes: This agenda item was tabled, since F Papalia, who conducted a review of the concentration/track offerings at Ramapo, was not present. This policy/procedure will be added to the agenda of the January 23, 2020 Provost's Council meeting.

Additional Meeting Notes:

A LePore would like the Provost's Council to weigh in on whether a policy is needed to cover issues faced by international students. For example, it is presently policy to require *all* students to leave campus during winter break, which may cause significant hardship for international students. Ann is requesting that the Council consider proposing and creating written policy/procedure that could offer guidance and clarification/clear communication to international students so they do not experience any surprises once they are at Ramapo. S Gaulden commented that this may be a non-academic policy/procedure, which should be brought forth by a body other than the Provost's Council. She will follow up with B Levy/the Roukema Center for their input. Several other Council members shared progress that has been made over the past 3 years toward providing more detailed, clear information to international students early on, but the solutions that have been implemented seem to be ad hoc rather than formal. A suggestion was made to create a handbook for international students rather than a formal policy, and another recommendation was to research what other colleges do for their international students.

R Doster shared that the Canvas learning management system implementation is going very well, and single sign-on has been set up. Faculty are encouraged to use Canvas for the winter term and Spring semester, as Moodle is being phased out and will no longer be available for use after August 2020. All courses created/used recently in Moodle are being migrated to Canvas, but if an older course needs to be moved to Canvas, faculty should contact R Fallon in IDC for assistance.

J Connell requested that Provost's Council review Policy/Procedure Student Military Leave. At present, students who leave for "extended" military service must follow the re-admit process when they return to Ramapo, which may not be the best option.

S Gaulden stated that she would share the approved modified Policy/Procedure Integrity of Degree Programs with Cabinet for their feedback/concerns. If none are communicated, updated **Policy/Procedure 300-KK Integrity of Degree Programs** will be posted on the Provost's webpage on December 1, 2019.