Provost’s Council Minutes
March 25, 2021


Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the February 25, 2021 Provost’s Council meeting were approved.

Report from the Provost:

S Gaulden provided updates related to the approval process of several policy/procedures including the following: 1) Policy/Procedure 300-H Assessment of Prior Learning for Academic Credit was endorsed by Cabinet; 2) Policy/Procedure 300-XX Used Name was endorsed by Cabinet. Both of these policies will be included in next year’s catalog, and components of the Used Name Policy will be implemented beginning immediately (e.g., the used name can appear on diplomas issued to June and August 2021 graduates).

The Provost also reminded everyone that Fall 2021 registration opens to continuing students on April 12th.

Policies/Procedures to be Voted On/Approved

Provost’s Council Subgroup: Student Expectations for Virtual Learning

Issue: It would be helpful if the College adopted and promoted written, clear expectations for students who are engaged in virtual learning.

Meeting Notes: A revised version of the subgroup-drafted document titled Student “Code of Conduct” for Virtual Courses, which incorporated feedback shared at the February 2021 Provost’s Council meeting and which was retitled Expectations of Students Taking Virtual Courses, was reviewed. D Nast brought up a concern related to the part about audio recordings, noting that OSS-affiliated students need not request permission from faculty to audio record class sessions. A few additional questions were posed. N Choudhury suggested separating how audio recording requests/permissions should proceed for OSS-affiliated students from the procedure for students
not affiliated with OSS. S Gaulden will make these changes and present an updated version at the April meeting.

**Policies/Procedures to be Revised/Clariﬁed**

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

**Issue:** Clarification is needed on the meanings of “concentration” and “track” and more, as well on the maximum number of credits required for a major plus the school core. A draft of a revised Policy/Procedure created by Deans Hangen, Campbell, and Saiff has been shared and reviewed.

**Meeting Notes:** The most recent version of the revised Policy/Procedure was discussed. Additional changes to the Procedure that were suggested include the following: 1) For students with first and second majors, all writing-intensive courses required for both majors must be completed. 2) The major requirements, inclusive of any concentration requirements, plus the school core requirements must be at least 40 credits. S Gaulden will update the last version, and the final revised Policy/Procedure will be brought to vote at the April 2021 Provost’s Council meeting.

**Policy/Procedure 300T Online Courses Policy**

**Issue:** Given the pandemic-caused remote delivery of many courses, it is important to review this policy and perhaps expand it to include “virtual courses” and “hyflex courses.” This policy references the Online Course Manual rather than a Procedure, which should be updated as well. Particular attention should be paid to the content in the Manual on recording classes, which has FERPA implications as well.

**Meeting Notes:** A LePore presented an update that included CA faculty feedback about online and remotely delivered courses. It may be best to not include the student piece in this document but rather move this piece to the *Expectations of Students Taking Virtual Courses* document. IDC may need to be mentioned in the manual in order for this document to serve as the place which houses all information related to remote teaching/remote delivery of courses. Some faculty are concerned about the language included in the revised manual about remote learning and, specifically, about the reasons for switching a course to a remote delivery mode. N Varma shared that he had received some input from ASB faculty, and one key concern regarded requiring faculty to maintain gradebooks in Canvas. The same language that is included in the *Expectations of Students Taking Virtual Courses* document related to audio recording should be used in the manual, as well. S Gaulden asked that any additional faculty feedback be sent to her prior to the April 2021 Provost’s Council meeting, as she will try to incorporate it into an updated version of the manual.
Policy/Procedure 300-R Credit Hours

**Issue:** There is no policy that contains language which would spell out the exact expectations related to virtual contact time when, for example, the College closes for inclement weather or when faculty schedule virtual meetings with their students in lieu of administering a final exam in week 15 of the semester. There is also a need to define the required amount of asynchronous work that should be assigned in virtual courses that are delivered through a combination of synchronous class meetings and asynchronous learning experiences.

**Meeting Notes:** S Gaulden noted that it does not seem necessary to change this policy or procedure. What is needed, however, is a real educational campaign so that faculty and students are all aware of the expectations of course workload both in learning course content and in studying and completing assigned coursework (i.e., homework) to reinforce course content. It was suggested that faculty should use the tool developed by N Varma, which estimates the number of minutes per week of course work, and should spend some class time discussing expectations with students. P Campbell suggested a two-pronged approach, which includes a statement on the Provost’s webpage and a discussion in ARC to determine whether this information should be included on course syllabi. P Miyashiro shared his experiences as a student at Ramapo. N Choudhury agreed in essence but would caution against being too prescriptive (i.e., do not promote a literal interpretation of the required minimum number of minutes per week). E Petkus agreed and stated that the purpose of this discussion should be to provide guidelines or a framework for expectations.

**New Business /Additional Announcements**

Policy/Procedure 300-V Certification Programs (https://www.ramapo.edu/provost/policy/certificate-programs) must be updated, as it still references CIPL. There are other Academic Policies that need to be reviewed and updated, as well. F Papalia and A Lorenz volunteered to create a spreadsheet that shows the “last updated” dates of all Academic Policies/Procedures.

R Doster will draft a minimum technology policy.

S Gaulden reminded all that the Council should still review the Provost’s Council Bylaws and asked everyone to read them prior to the April 2021 meeting.

S Gaulden also shared preliminary plans for this year’s Academic Achievement Ceremony, as well as the Nursing Pinning and Rites of Passage Ceremony. These events will be held on campus this year (May 12th – raindate May 14th) with the option to livestream available for those who cannot attend in person.