The University of Akron

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The University of Akron Faculty Senate Chronicle

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Faculty Senate Chronicle October 5, 2023

Heather Loughney

the university of akron

Chronicle

a report to the faculty of
the university of akron

October 5, 2023

15 pages

SENATE ACTIONS

1. Approved a resolution brought by the Executive Committee to revise the process for
    Graduation List approval (Appendix A).

2. Approved a resolution brought by the Academic Policies Committee to amend the
    Portfolio-based Prior Learning Assessment policy (Appendix B).

3. Approved the list of courses and programs brought by the Curriculum Review
    Committee (Appendix D).

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MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE MEETING OF

October 5, 2023

The meeting of the Faculty Senate took place Thursday, October 5, 2023, in Law School Room 180 and in Teams. Senate Chair Kate Budd called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm.

Of the current roster of 43 senators, 37 attended the meeting. Senators Buldum and Hreno were absent with notice. Senators Cole, Gong, Srinivasan and Yi were absent without notice.

I. Adoption of Agenda

Chair Budd noted one change to the agenda: the removal of the remarks by President Miller. The agenda was adopted as amended.

II. Adoption of minutes of September 7, 2023 meeting

The minutes were adopted by unanimous consent.

III. Remarks of the Chair

Welcome to the October meeting of the senate. A quick reminder that our meetings are conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order and that senators who wish to be recognized should hold up their name card. Be sure to hold it facing me and above the head of the person sitting in front of you. Use the mics on the tables when you speak, you will need to press the button to turn on the mic and then press the button again to shut the mic off when you are finished speaking. Those attending virtually should type "request" into the chat window and wait to be recognized. When we vote, I'll ask those present to say "aye" and those online to raise their "hands" to be counted. Don't forget to sign in on one of the attendance sheets circulating the room before you leave. If I mispronounce your name, let me know the correct pronunciation so I can do better next time.

Please be aware that both senate meetings and minutes are part of the public record, and members of the media are in attendance.

I welcome Luke Smith, with us today from the Board of Trustees.

Today, the Academic Policies Committee brings a resolution to clarify and increase the scope of the portfolio-based prior learning policy. The impetus for the proposed changes are data showing the significant number of adults in this region who left university to enter the workforce before completing the necessary credits to earn a degree. The policy has been adjusted to include prospective students, including those who are not currently enrolled. Offering these individuals the chance to have faculty evaluate on the job training or experience as part of their remaining credits may be the nudge they need to return to complete their degree. As the rationale states, this is a way to link university with community by demonstrating that we value on the job training and experience and have the expertise to translate such experience into curricular content. Currently, many online institutions offer opportunities for credit through prior learning assessment, but they don't offer the rich and supportive university experience that UA does. As the proposal states, the academic department or school determines whether an applicant's prior learning corresponds to course outcomes and demonstrates appropriate academic rigor, keeping oversight for this process with the faculty. Our willingness to evaluate experience for credit will give us a recruiting advantage over other Ohio universities who haven't yet adopted similar strategies.

Senate Bill 83 is still an active bill under consideration by the Ohio House Higher Education Committee and has a hearing this Wednesday. It has been revised multiple times, but in the words of Sara Kilpatrick, Executive Director of the Ohio Conference of AAUP, "SB 83 remains a sweeping piece of legislation that proposes an unprecedented level of political interference and micromanagement into the affairs of Ohio's public colleges and universities."

The most recent version of SB 83 includes not only a ban on the right to strike, but also prohibits faculty from bargaining over subjects like tenure, retrenchment, workload and course evaluations. It's clear that the bill seeks to remove any power the faculty have to advocate for fair working conditions. At UA, the faculty and administration have worked through the years to create a contract that may not be perfect, but that we can agree on and that meets our particular needs. We've also worked hard to improve shared governance, and while that isn't perfect either, we've made huge strides. Whatever your feelings about unions, we've come too far and accomplished too much as an institution to have that careful work replaced by a one size fits all mandate. Please know that your voice makes a difference, and use it to keep telling our legislators that not only is this bill unnecessary, it will make it harder for us to retain and attract the quality faculty we need to advance this institution. I emailed you

all a few minutes ago with links to some quick and easy ways to communicate with legislators respectfully and professionally. We know that faculty voices are making a difference, or the bill would have already been implemented. Keep pushing back, keep stating your opposition.

I'm pleased to report that Provost Wiencek has enthusiastically agreed to form a joint senate/administration working group to look holistically at improving conditions for the PT faculty. The working group is currently being formed and will likely begin its work in late fall. I hope that together we can create procedures and policies that are fair and transparent, and that will help us keep the talented and hard-working part-time faculty who do so much for our students and this University.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, President Miller can't join us today, but he did ask me to let you know that he is giving his State of the University Address next Tuesday, October 10 in the Student Union Ballrooms. Doors will open at 3:45 p.m., and the speech will begin promptly at 4:15 p.m.

This concludes the remarks of the chair.

IV. Special Announcements

Kenneth Eugene Mast passed away August 17, 2023, at the age of 92. Remembered by former colleagues as "a driving force for good", Ken had a long career teaching Marketing at the University of Akron and served as Associate Dean of the College of Business.

V. Report of the Executive Committee

This past month, the work of the Senate Executive Committee included the following three items.

First, to improve the part-time faculty experience, the office of the provost and the senate EC will establish a working group. This group will be tasked with considering the part-time faculty experience from a holistic perspective to identify creative ways to support and reward their service to UA.

Second, the EC discussed the changes to graduate assistantships and expressed the need for increased communication and clarity around future changes with a focus on the timeline and impacts on faculty.

Finally, the Senate-EC brings the following item for approval: Graduation list approval resolution (Appendix A).

Chair Budd called for debate on the motion; none ensued. The resolution passed unanimously.

For more information on these discussions, please contact Angela Hartsock.

XII. Committee Reports

Academic Policies Committee – Senator Klein

Senator Klein introduced the proposed revisions to the portfolio-based prior learning assessment proposal (Appendix B).

Chair Budd called for debate on the motion. Senator Triece enquired about guidelines for departments being asked to assess portfolios.

Senator Klein shared that the process is still being established but would be similar to transfer credit assessment. Dr. Cerrone pointed to rubrics created by the state of Ohio, the availability of examples, and the need to be clear about learning outcomes. Dr. Howley noted the team working on credit for prior learning intends develop templates to guide departments, while also relying on departments to establish their criteria for evidence. Dr. Howley also noted examples from the state.

Senator Pellegrino asked about the additional work expected of faculty. Dr. Howley shared that the process is envisioned as a concierge-style service where the student would be guided through the process with much of the work done before coming to faculty for approval. Initially, credit for prior learning (CPL) will rely heavily on faculty as we develop guidelines and examples of what is acceptable for credit (previously assessed experiences can act as future guides). The CPL group is also looking at how faculty will be compensated for portfolio reviews.

Senator Triece asked where evidence of prior learning will be housed and for clarification on what is meant by the "state" having examples.

Dr. Howley indicated that Brightspace will be used to house portfolios for review and that students who take advantage of CPL will be tracked for future performance in subsequent coursework. Dr. Howley also clarified that the "state" refers to the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the associated "PLA with a Purpose" program that provides resources and information on prior learning assessment.

Chair Budd called for further debate; none ensued.

The motion passed.

Computing and Communications Technology – Senator Randby

See written report (Appendix C).

Curriculum Review – Linda Saliga

Chair Budd brought forward the motion to approve seven program proposals and twenty course proposals (Appendix D).

With no debate, the motion passed unanimously.

XIV. Akron AAUP Report – Senator Bisconti

Senator Schulze delivered a written statement on behalf of Senator Bisconti. The Akron-AAUP extended thanks to the Board of Trustees and President Miller for the 2% raise which will be reflected in October paychecks. Special election ballots were sent via email. Members should anticipate a Zoom invite from Senator Bisconti for a chapter meeting. Akron-AAUP is hosting a day in the life of a faculty member with Trustee Carter visiting campus; contact Senator Bisconti if you would like to participate. Upcoming events include a liaison meeting, a full chapter meeting, and the day in the life of faculty member.

IX. GSG – Senator Currie

GSG is working on filling executive board and senator positions and is working with the graduate school to plan professional development events.

X. USG – Senator Baig

USG is busy planning events for the semester including the first-year speaker series, a workshop with the speaker, the student leader summit, UAPD meet and greet, and an internal USG retreat

focused on team building. USG continues to focus on recruiting students to committees. More information can be found on Instagram or email Senator Baig at USGPresident@uakron.edu.

XV. Report of University Council Representative – Senator Evans

Senator Lee delivered the following report on behalf of Senator Evans.

University Council meeting agendas are similar to those of faculty senate in that we hear reports from the chair of UC, the president of the university, the provost of the university and the standing committees. We also get brief reports from the groups that are represented on UC (CPAC, SEAC, FS, Chairs, Deans, USG, GSG). The UCEC is actively involved in the strategic planning process. At the last meeting we elected the Vice Chair, got an update on the strategic plan document being developed by faculty fellows, and heard from Dr. Sangganjanavanich about student mental health. At October's meeting next week all UC committee members are invited to attend to be welcomed to UC.

XIV. *New Business*

None.

XV. Good of the Order

Senator Schulze stated that she is encouraged by the formation of the part-time faculty work group. In reference to ways of rewarding part-time faculty, Senator Schulze emphasized the primary way to reward work is pay and she finds fair pay to be far overdue, with any additional methods of reward to be secondary to that objective.

Chair Budd concurred and noted that over the past 9 years, the senate has made multiple recommendations to improve pay. She is encouraged that the provost is enthusiastic about this but acknowledges barriers to increasing pay.

Senator Stoynoff sought to clarify the makeup of the committee and if there will be solicitations to serve.

Chair Budd indicated the group would stay small and that in discussion with Senior VP Price the plan was for two part-time faculty and one faculty senate representative. The makeup is up for negotiation and noted Senator Stoynoff's interest in serving.

XVI. Adjournment

Chair Budd adjourned the meeting at 4:08 pm.

—Angela Hartsock, Secretary.

Questions and comments about the minutes can be emailed to ahartsock1@uakron.edu.

APPENDIX A

Senate Executive Committee Graduation List Approval Resolution

Whereas the Office of the University Registrar has need of additional time to compile the degree candidate lists and accompanying reports, and

Whereas the degree candidate lists must be approved prior to the December and May meetings of faculty senate to allow time for approval by the Board of Trustees; therefore be it

Resolved that the senate authorizes the executive committee to approve the degree candidate lists in its stead for the fall semester of 2023 and the spring semester of 2024. The approvals will be reported to senate for ratification at the December and May senate meetings, respectively.

APPENDIX B

Report of the Academic Policies Committee to Faculty Senate
October 2023

Proposed revisions to the portfolio-based prior learning assessment that was passed May 2022

Currently enrolled or prospective UA undergraduate students may compile a portfolio that documents prior learning (typically through career or military experience) for evaluation by an academic department or school and approval by the appropriate dean's office. Credit hours for specific credit-bearing UA course(s) or General Education credit may be awarded with a grade of TCR when prior learning corresponds to course outcomes and demonstrates appropriate academic rigor. The evaluation of the portfolio and the task of assigning appropriate credentials resides with the department or school that offers the course. The process would be similar to that of the transfer credit evaluation.

Portfolio-based prior learning assessment may be also applied at the graduate level after a more thorough consideration of the proposal by the Grad Council and Faculty Senate.

History: In 2022 APC reviewed this proposal upon the request of certain programs for whom the option is particularly relevant. APC found that the opportunity to have some of their real-world experience count for UA credit might encourage some non-traditional students to enroll in a UA program. Some peer institutions offer portfolio-based prior learning assessment as well. Senate passed this resolution in May 2022. Since then, further revisions have been proposed:

Rationale for proposed changes:
The rationale for these changes are as follows:
1. Including the phrase **"or prospective"** recognizes the preliminary work that will need to occur prior to matriculation.
2. The designation for credits earned through PLA portfolio review will use the designation of TCR. PLA credit is more similar to transfer credit and should be different from CR/NCR, which denotes other types of activities.
3. The opt. out language has been removed.

The removal of the opt. out language is the most significant change request. There are several reasons why this change is necessary from our team's perspective.

All of UA's degrees include a fairly significant portion of credits outside of one's discipline. Even if the courses within a major would not be well suited for portfolio assessment, other courses outside the major would be. Yet prospective students are typically not aware of these structural distinctions. One goal of a portfolio review is to give a student options for degree completion. Although the number of credits earned through PLA may influence their choice of major, dissuading them prior to consultation limits our ability to recruit the student to any major.

This PLA initiative is intended to position UA as a leader in recognizing the reciprocal relationship between our curriculum and our community. We want to send a message that UA understands how one's work history, military training, and entrepreneurial experiences can develop comparable learning outcomes to courses within a curriculum. Based on an analysis of the educational

marketplace, there is an opportunity for UA to excel and stand out from other Ohio universities, which have very narrow approaches, and large online institutions, which have very robust PLA opportunities but do not offer the services, support, face-to-face interaction, or academic quality.

These requested revisions will maximize the potential application of PLA without compromising the integrity of the evaluation itself.

APPENDIX C

Computing & Communications Technologies Committee Report

The CCTC met on Friday, September 15, 2023.

Scott Randby was elected as chair for the 2023–2024 academic year.

The first topics the committee will discuss this year are the recent changes to local administrator privileges and software installation procedures on university-owned Windows computers used by faculty.

The next meeting of the CCTC will be on Friday, October 13.

Scott Randby
CCTC Chair

APPENDIX D

CRC Report

October 2023

CRC brings forth seven program proposals and twenty course proposals for the Senate's approval.

Programs: Change
480001BS Biomedical Engineering
650110BS Sport Business
650111BS Sport Analytics

Program: Inactivation
298104C Surveying Technology
460006C Motion and Control Specialization
460007C Mechanical Engineering – Polymer Engineering Specialization
460008C Mechanical Engineering – Polymer Engineering Specialization Co-Op

Course: Change
BAHA402 Quality Management in Healthcare
BMED300 Biomaterials
BMEDN362 Transport Fundamentals for Biomedical Engineers
BMEN450 Tissue Engineering
CPEN402 Senior Design Project II Computer Engineering
ELEN402 Senior Design Project II Electrical Engineering
MKTG375 Marketing and Sales Analytics
MKTG385 Data Visualization
NUTR415 Advanced Regulatory Affairs
NUTR228 Introduction to Medical Nutrition Therapy
NUTR474 Cultural Dimensions of Food

Course: New
RADUS101 Adult Echocardiography I
RADUS101L Adult Echocardiography Lab 1
RADUS102 US Physics and Instrumentation I
RADUS103 Clinical Externship I
RADUS201 Adult Echocardiography II
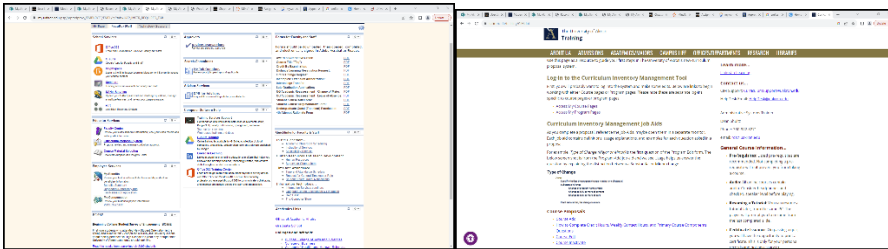RADUS201L Adult Echocardiography Lab II
RADUS203 Clinical Externship II
RADUS301 Adult Echocardiography III
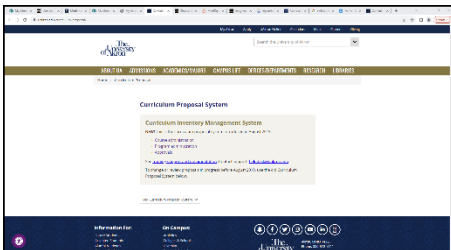RADUS303 Clinical Externship III

APPENDIX E

1. When logging into the curriculum system (CIM) you can do this in two different ways.
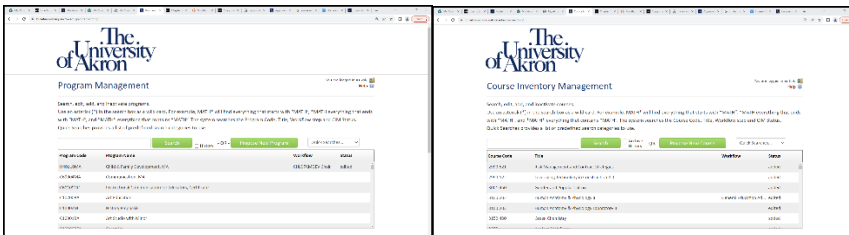
The first way is through Faculty Center and then Clicking on the Curriculum Proposal System.
The Second way is through the university website and locating the Curriculum Proposal System
Training site and clicking on the either course or program.

2. Once you have clicked on the curriculum proposal system, you will see the webpage below appear.

3. You will need to choose either Course Administration or Program Administration depending on the kind of proposal you are reviewing.

4. When searching for either a program or course proposal, you can do this by simply copy and pasting the proposal number into the search field.
5. You can also use the course or program name or general search.
    a. Course Number - ENGL:111, MATH:245, etc
    b. Program Number - C10200BA, C6004MA, etc
    c. Course Name –
    d. Program Name – Art Education, Communication, MA
    e. General Search
         i. *ENGL*
        ii. *Communication*
       iii. *111*
        iv. *2760*
            By placing a "*" in front and behind your search criteria allows for you to obtain any course or program with your search criteria