

APSC Minutes 11/7/19

Attendees: Agnieszka Szarecka (AS), chair, Robert Beasecker (RB), Jae Basiliere Brooks (JBB), Karl Brakora (KB), Nagnon Diarrassouba (ND), Paul Fishback (PF), Lori Koste (LK), Kay Losey (KL), Dianne Slager (DS), Mikhila Wildey (MW). Late arrivals: Raymond Higbea (RH) and Beth Maccauley (BM, substitute for Kristen Vu).

Guests: Chris Plouff (CP)

For clarity, AF = Academic Forgiveness Policy

I. Review of the minutes from October 17, 2019 meeting. Several changes and corrections were suggested. After the changes, PF made a motion to approve, MW seconded. Motion passed: 7-0-1.

AS – should we leave referenced diagram in minutes? Fine to leave included.

II. Discussion of the rationale and objectives of AF.

AS – can perhaps present AF to ECS in January. LK – would allow for inclusion of Fall 2019 data for pilot participants.

AS – charge is to draft AF pilot and policy. Perhaps we should focus on two tracks for AF: 1st track groups 1-3, 2nd track group 4. Refer to spreadsheet regarding rationale for AF, for discussion.

RB – original charge was student retention. We have gone far beyond that original charge.

MW – changed to agree (see spreadsheet for rationale discussion). Group 4 is problematic, so APSC should focus on groups 1-3. Easier to craft cleaner policy if we focus on groups 1-3.

KL – retention policy was the intent. Reference prior year-end reports and initial offering of idea by Suzanne Benet on Sept. 14, 2017. All were about retention. Pilot Phase I goal was student retention. End of year report 2018-2019 indicates similar goal.

ND – some students struggling to stay in school, AF policy could help retain them.

LK – retention, focus on groups 1-3 as initially intended.

PF – including group 4 helps students with secondary admits.

AS – her recollection is that Suzanne brought other student examples, including students in good standing that are having to pay to retake courses they don't need.

PF – some students take courses they don't need to just to increase GPA.

AS – students she examined in pilot phases show a pattern – that retaking courses doesn't lead to improved grades.

LK – that does not hold across all students in pilot phases. Some retook courses and grades improved by several grade letters.

AS – her recollection of initial discussion, and Suzeanne's selling approach for ECS, was Suzeanne's conversations with students about needing to retake courses to improve GPA.

LK - But to Kay's point – the initial discussion was with respect to approximately 300 students that fall into groups 1-3. It was initially driven by that very small proportion of our student population. Further, our peer institution research does not support Suzeanne's claim that GVSU needs an AF policy to compete. Therefore, we should be very cautious about an AF policy.

KL – substantial research was conducted, and there were no comparable policies found. Some universities had policies with respect to group 1, but absolutely NO AF policies were found for currently enrolled students.

JBB – disagrees that retention is goal of AF. Would like to see intervention before students tank to the point of dismissal.

CP – AF sends message of caring for students, GVSU could lead in this area. AF seems to have morphed from retention focus.

AS and KL – charges from ECS w.r.t. AF are very vague. AS – was hoping for feedback from ECS following 2018-2019 end of year report, but given the lack of feedback, she has concerns that it was even read.

AS – perhaps two tracks of AF would prompt feedback from ECS or UAS.

RH arrives.

AS – Kristin Vu, by email, disagrees. KV, via proxy, thinks we should look at student success more broadly. AS – advisors would like the AF policy to be three times as generous. Advisors think current version is too restrictive.

DS – agrees it should be retention. Has changed her response on rationale spreadsheet to reflect that. We should consider our original mandate. Also noted that people in the College of Nursing are not supportive of AF policy. Expects battles to move a policy forward.

KB – agrees with student retention, but that group 4 should be helped as well.

DS – there are lots of ways we help students. Sometimes students don't take advantage of those options.

KL – w.r.t peer institution vs. no peer institution discussion. Notes there are many ways to help students that do not involve changing transcripts. Changing a transcript is a big deal for a University. Perhaps changing it years after grades have been finalized. We should take that step very gingerly. Intervention earlier would be better than a post hoc fixing of the transcript.

RH – doesn't teach Undergraduate students, but sees Graduate students who chose wrong major as an Undergrad. This would help some of those students that may be kept out of graduate school due to wrong choice of major. It has to be a package approach though, not a single item fix. Counseling, post AF, etc.

LK – graduate schools can make that choice without us adjusting undergraduate transcripts.

LK – perhaps better advising for transfer students to help with fit, or tell transfer students to take one class in major first, to assess fit with a potential major or program. Also recognizes, though, that advising is overwhelmed in terms of # students to # staff ratio.

RH – they look at last 2 years for graduate school. But a student coming in with a 2.0 GPA would not make it through the admission process. Doesn't want to remove an option for a student to go forward. Trying to make AF address all options, but can't make it perfect.

JBB – she reached out to students she analyzed, to get them enrolled for upcoming semester. Charge from ECS in Shore is "comprehensive AF policy". Comprehensive may indicate it should go beyond dismissed students.

ND – additional options for students is helpful, but focus on intervention, instead of after the fact. But we, as faculty and staff, can't know of problems if students don't come to us.

CP – there are tools and resources to try to help students earlier. Increased contact with students is great idea, but the onus is on students to follow-up with AF.

RH – currently has a student with required check-ins to assess progress, or try to prevent issues.

PF – EAB (Educational Advisory Board) resources are coming. Perhaps departments could have meetings to discuss advising, be more proactive, likes AS' two options idea for AF.

JBB – is an administrative hold possible in Banner for AF recipients? RH thinks no, AS can check with Registrar.

KB – perhaps we are overestimating the impact of advising. Students may not listen. Sometimes students have to fail. LK – but isn't that inconsistent with AF? KB – failure to get them into right major where they can succeed.

MW – let's go back to JOD (Jeopardy of Dismissal) students to try to craft a policy that has a chance of passing UAS. Efforts w.r.t group 4 may bog us down so long that there is never a policy for groups 1-3. KL agrees -> focus on groups 1-3 for now.

RH – we should move forward. Omit group 4 if contentious.

AS – wants feedback from UAS over two options. May be cleaner to move forward with groups 1-3. Track 1 – goal is to improve retention, target Dismissed, Jeopardy of Dismissal, Probation students. There is a spreadsheet on bb with the pilot participants split into Denied, Approved Group 4, and Approved Group 1-3.

BM, substitute representative for CHP, arrives.

LK – take the data analysis spreadsheet and sort it by groups as AS discussed above. Approved group 1-3, approved group 4, denied. Make discussion of data 1st agenda item for next meeting, so there is sufficient time for discussion.

MW – perhaps going back to ECS for further insight re: groups 1-2 vs. group 4, without policy specifics?

AS – ECS would ask for specifics, so not a useful effort. LK – better to go to ECS with data analysis, # of students retained, not retained, etc. If go to ECS next semester, would have data from Fall 2019 for pilot participants. AS – that data would help.

AS – can rearrange large spreadsheet of data into those groups: Denied, Approved group 4, and Approved groups 1-3. There were a number of denials, so AF is not an automatic stamp of approval. There are on-going issues with advising not providing proper information for informed decision re: AF. Small fraction of pilot students granted AF were in good standing. Also, can update with missing analysis from committee members. They need to email that data to AS for inclusion in the spreadsheet.

LK – from last meeting, student that appealed because GPA was too high? Can we expect more of those? AS – that student was denied. Appeal was denied also.

AS – any problems finding info. for spreadsheet?

PF – noted that he included current GPA in data mining spreadsheet.

AS – can add new column for current GPA in data mining spreadsheet.

MW – suggests looking for semester with last AF course forgiven for GPA post AF information.

KB – student rank based on hours: 0-24 freshman, 25-54 sophomore, 55-84 junior, 85 + senior.

ND – what info. goes in Academic History column? MW – any additional info. AS – to help her understand path of students she analyzed.

ND – some students that received AF are not following their academic plan or have changed major again.

AS – need to understand if students that received AF have switched majors yet again. Add that info. to spreadsheet. AF plans themselves are not consistent from advisors.

KL – transfer students vs. FTIAC..... need to examine in more detail. Advising for transfer students may be a concern.

MW – the pilot AF students she analyzed didn't transfer many credits.

ND – some of the pilot AF students he analyzed transferred 60-71 credits, and struggled at GVSU.

KL – some of the pilot AF students she analyzed failed immediately upon arrival at GVSU.

KB – there were no patterns in the pilot AF students he analyzed which have not already been noted by others.

CP – about one quarter (1/4) of our students are transfers compared to FTIACs.

JBB – transfers dove into upper level courses, and there was no cushion.

AS – are students transferring pre-reqs and crashing? Is it an issue of preparedness vs. choice of major?

AS – let's discuss Track 1 AF policy vs. Track 2 AF policy for drafting purposes.

Track I:

- 1) target population – dismissed, jeopardy of dismissal, probation
- 2) retention, prevent dropping out
- 3) abandoned major must be declared
- 4) max grade: should it stay at C-?
 - LK – proposes D or F only
 - KB – keep C-
 - AS – so there is a question on max grade allowed with AF
- 5) How many courses – 2 courses

Track II:

- 1) Just group 4 – students in good standing
 - PF – suggests minimum of one course, so in essence, no minimum

AS – we need discussion on what the parameters should be. Currently, max GPA is 2.7 -> problematic. Currently, max credits is 30 remaining to be earned (including those in process) -> problematic. Currently, two courses minimum. Max grade currently C-.

MW – Track I criteria should be less restrictive than Track II. Max grade should be the same for both Tracks.

AS – rationale for Track II?

PF – money savings for student, prevent students from retaking courses from a resource standpoint.

JBB – negative impact on faculty if student enrolled in a course just to try to wipe an F.

AS – secondary admit, graduate school admissions?

AS – as a wrap up to the meeting, asks that

- 1) committee members please provide requested feedback to a new google spreadsheet
- 2) AS will forward information from financial aid regarding student pilot participants if received
- 3) there is a new AF application to review
- 4) AS needs to make appointment with Kathleen VanderVeen re: inclusion and equity. LK suggests visit should be for second part of meeting since first part will focus on data analysis discussion.

5) AS made motion to adjourn. 2nd by RH. Motion passed: 12-0-0.

III. Continued data “mining” of pilot I and II.

Per previous discussion, this will be the first agenda item for the next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 10:50 am.

Minutes submitted by Lori Koste.