Members Present: Ricardo Alfaro, Sy Banerjee, Aviva Dorfman, Jan Furman, Doug Knerr, Marilyn McFarland, Jie Song, Dan Lair (Chair), and Rie Suzuki

Guests: Karen Arnould, Registrar
Nick Gaspar, Information Technology Advisor/Office of Extended Learning

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Dan Lair.

Grade Management Audit Report ► Registrar Arnould explained that University Audits conducted a grade management audit approximately a year ago. Audits noted problems in the areas of: grade changes, student petitions, course withdrawals, FERPA training, and record retention and provided recommendations and management plans in order to be in compliance. Karen has proceeded to develop action plans to address deficiencies noted in the audit.

Some of the issues/concerns that were discussed are as follows:

- Sometimes the action of the Academic Standard Committees (ASCs) puts the university in liability when changes are sought after the fact; when petitions are submitted with insufficient information/reasons; when petitions are submitted without taking into consideration the impact that the said petition might have on the student in terms of Financial Aid, tuition, transcripts, etc.; and when requests or petitions are made outside of the current university policy.

- Petitions are submitted with no reason given, lack of support documentation, inappropriate signatures, not following policy timelines, etc.

- The Audit is requiring that all units have a Handbook; to date only one unit has one.

- Audit is also requiring that an automated system be implemented to document petition information so that reports can be developed.

- Karen is working with ITS to find an automated grade change system whereby the workflow for authorized signatures will be followed.

- The “Confidential Hold” was discussed and how faculty should be handling student information and/or emails in this regard.

- Basically, the main problem is that our current policies are not being followed.
Karen indicated that one of the recommendations was to implement a university committee to review petitions for late drops and/or withdrawals rather than the ASCs which would then allow ASCs to concentrate and have more time to spend on other issues. The potential university committee would include members from across campus that can make holistic decisions regarding student requests that are in line with current policies and also that would benefit the student.

Karen will continue to work with units to provide suggested policy in the way of record retention. Each unit needs to develop their own policy and make sure that their faculty is made aware and is following it.

The Deans have agreed to include FERPA training as an annual requirement tied to faculty evaluation. Faculty and staff will be required to take an online training yearly; the software will have the capacity of verifying who has taken the training each year. In addition, training will be provided to new employees upon hire.

Much discussion and many questions ensued. Karen closed by inviting faculty to call her if they had any questions and/or concerns.

Provost Knerr indicated that Karen has also met with the deans and they are on board in preparation of the changes and need for following our current policy. He said that meetings will be scheduled with the ASCs to garner their perspectives. Doug emphasized that not following current policies places our institution at risk in areas such as Financial Aid, HLC, and compromises the integrity of the university. He said that he will no longer entertain any variances to our policies and is not approving any variances going forward. Doug reported that we have an aggressive set of action plans and we will also be required to provide a report to the auditors in a year regarding remedies/adjustments that have been made.

Approval of Minutes – March 9, 2017 ▶ A motion was made and supported to approve the Minutes of March 9 as written.

Student Government Syllabus Availability ▶ Following receipt of Student Government’s initial proposal regarding syllabus availability, AAAC representatives sought input from colleagues in their respective units in this regard. Representatives noted that there was not consensus from their units to provide syllabi in advance of the first day of class as previously discussed; however, there was a willingness to try to be responsive to the students and find an alternative for them.

In response to the request by Student Government to make Blackboard accessible to students at least two weeks prior to the first day of class, Chair Lair invited Nick Gaspar, Information Technology Manager, from the Office of Extended Learning, to discuss the possibility with AAAC. Nick indicated that opening Blackboard two weeks early is technically easy; however, he noted the following problems with adding syllabi and making it available to students at that time:

- There would be no maintenance window, so Blackboard would have to be interrupted for maintenance and during that time students would not be able to view anything.
- Course combines could be an issue, as any previous student work would be gone.
- Previous policy has prevented us from opening early because the Registrar’s Office did not want to create an unfair advantage for students who cannot register early.
- In response to faculty suggesting that syllabi could be inputted into the SIS system, Nick indicated that the current format is not user friendly in that each syllabus would have to be inputted rather than uploaded. He has reached out to ITS to inquire about the possibility of uploading syllabus files, but has not heard back.
Nick said that the main issue is with the technical problems of Blackboard needing to interact with Banner. Also, if Blackboard was opened sooner, it could potentially impact Financial Aid in terms of the length of the instructional period if students were to begin class interactions.

In addition to the above, the standardized interaction window is the key problem/issue. Many questions were made and technical options discussed. The question came back of creating an alternate web portal for loading syllabi ahead of the first day of class.

The committee decided that, based on feedback from the units and the various technical challenges involved, they could not forward the student proposal as is to Faculty Council. Chair Lair indicated that he would report back to Student Government that there are a multitude of technical problems with fulfilling their request; however, we want to be responsive to them. He will discuss with them what their needs are and report back.

**Executive and Administrative Search Committee Composition**

Chair Lair indicated that because of the upcoming search for the Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management, we have a pressing need to finalize the proposed Guidelines for Administrative Appointments. Ricardo is the only faculty member appointed to that search committee; he requested that another faculty member be included but has not received a response. He noted that the Chancellor has a much different idea of what the responsibility of a search committee is than faculty. Discussion ensued.

The consensus of the committee was that members will review the Guidelines and provide any suggestions to Dan in advance of the next meeting, where the committee will shape a final version to submit to Faculty Council for their review/approval. The final step will be seeking approval from the Provost and then the Chancellor to implement the Guidelines.

In an effort to have Hiba Wehbe-Alamah provide an update to AAAC regarding the Strategic Planning process, a special AAAC Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 13, at 3:00 p.m., in the Graduate Programs Conference Room.

As an FYI, Provost Knerr disseminated the Educational Advisory Board’s Academic Policy Audit, a compilation of policy best practice in a number of areas such as Degree Planning, Accelerating Degree Progress, Registration and Course Scheduling, etc.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.