

ACADEMIC COUNCIL
Friday, March 27, 2020, 1:00 p.m.
Via Zoom Meeting, University of Notre Dame

MINUTES

Members present: Scott Appleby, Ann Astell, James Bathon, Bob Bernhard, Kasey Buckles, Tom Burish, Laura Carlson, Patricia Champion, Patricia Clark, Martijn Cremers, Colleen Cross, Shannon Cullinan, Michael Desch, Patrick Flynn, Thomas Fuja, Anne Garcia-Romero, Ben Heller, Michael Hildreth, Erin Hoffmann Harding, John Jenkins CSC, Dan Johnson, Christopher Kolda, Parker Ladwig, Michael Lykoudis, Khachatur Manukyan, Chris Maziar, Paul McGinn, Margaret Meserve, Nancy Michael, Connie Mick, Connor Mullen, Clive Neal, Glen Niebur, Hugh Page, Michael Pippenger, Ramachandran Ramanan, Maura Ryan, Maria Salerno, Mark Schurr, Jason Springs, Thomas Stober, Joe Urbany, Elliott Visconsi, Diane Parr Walker, Molly Walsh

Members excused or absent: Marcus Cole, Mary Galvin, Patrick Griffin, Dan Groody CSC, Michel Hockx, Lionel Jensen, Sarah Mustillo, Bryan Ritchie, Carter Snead, Katherine Wallace, Shawn Wu, Samir Younes

Observers present: Earl Carter, Brian Flaherty, Chuck Hurley, Matt Lahey, Jim Leady, Mark Prokopius

1. **Opening Prayer** – Fr. Jenkins invited James Bathon to offer the opening prayer.
2. **Approval of the Minutes of the meeting of January 21, 2020** - Fr. Jenkins invited a motion to approve the minutes of January 21, which were sent via email. The minutes were approved by a unanimous voice vote.
3. **Discuss and vote on the proposed changes to the Undergraduate Academic Code** – Fr. Jenkins invited Chris Kolda to introduce the proposal on behalf of the Undergraduate Studies Committee. Kolda indicated that the proposal was discussed by the Undergraduate Studies Committee and received unanimous consent. Kolda then invited Hugh Page to present the proposal. Page gave a broad overview of the motivations for the changes, and the breadth of involvement by the group who developed the proposals.

A question was asked about the process for those students who elected Pass/Fail as the grading mode at the start of the semester. Page clarified that those students made that election prior to the impacts of the COVID-19 virus, and that their decisions would stand. The exception would be that any students who did not pass would have their grade automatically converted to “No Credit” for the course.

The policy indicates that students who elect the leave of absence must return by the start of the fall 2020 semester. A question was raised regarding what the approach would be if the university is not able to offer courses on campus in the fall. Page acknowledged that the group was aware of the possibility, but elected to continue under the assumption that classes would resume, recognizing that this might require reevaluation if that is not possible. Chuck Hurley also shared that federal regulations limit leaves of absence to 180 days, after which they must be reported as a withdrawal. That time limit was another factor for the timeline in the policy.

It was noted that other schools are electing to use grade modes such as “emergency pass” or “emergency satisfactory” this semester. Page was asked what this might mean for students pursuing graduate school or competitive fellowships, where grades are a part of admissions and selection processes. Page indicated that many schools are taking approaches similar to what is being proposed at Notre Dame, and that it is likely that admissions and selection committees will need to include flexibility into their processes. Page also shared that undergraduate advising is going to be even more critical in these cases. Students need to be aware of their options, and of the implications of their choices. Undergraduate advising offices will need to play an important part in this process.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Fr. Jenkins invited a motion to approve the proposal. The proposal was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

4. **Discuss and vote on the proposed changes to the Academic Code of the Graduate School** – Fr. Jenkins invited Mark Schurr to introduce the proposal on behalf of the Advanced Studies Committee. Schurr shared that the proposal was reviewed by the Advanced Studies Committee via email, and was supported by a vote of 14-1. The one vote against the proposal was by a member who thought the students should be asked to make the election before seeing their grade and not after. Schurr then invited Laura Carlson to present the proposal. Carlson shared that the proposal was written to mimic the proposal at the undergraduate level, with the exception of the grade mapping. Per the Academic Code of the Graduate School, a grade of C or better is required to pass a course. Therefore, grades of C or better would be considered a pass, and grades below a C would be converted to no credit, if that grade mode is elected.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Fr. Jenkins invited a motion to approve the proposal. The proposal was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

5. **Adjournment** – With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:20 pm.
6. **Changes to the Academic Codes of the School of Architecture and Mendoza College of Business** – On March 30, 2020, the Executive Committee approved the proposals from the School of Architecture and the Mendoza College of Business to allow their graduate students the option to elect a grade mode of pass / no credit for the spring term.