

**Minutes**  
**Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee**  
**April 2nd, 2020**  
**Members in Attendance via Zoom:**

**Call to Order:** R. Wood called the meeting to order at 9:00am via Zoom.

Agenda Items: Opt in pass low/pass/no pass grading for student Spring 2020 semester only (New Pass/Low Pass/No Pass Grading Scale).

This meeting was recorded. These minutes were transcribed from the recording as close to word-for-word as possible. The sentences reflect the transcribed statements made by individual UAAC members in attendance.

Dr. Wood: There is a little anxiety in some of these students he has heard from regarding grades. We need to communicate to them and relay we are with them and facing the same challenges with them. This could calm some of their anxiety a little bit. I know everyone is doing this and the more we can do this for them the better they will be. A lot of challenges.

In response to a student petition and being consistent with what has happened at all other institutions around the country, there has been a move toward allowing an option for students to do a pass/no pass this semester, sort of in light to a rapid transition to an on line learning and disruptions that took place. The Deans and a group of individuals have been discussing this weekly. We have a proposal in place (attached) for an opt in pass/no pass for some sub sets of students.

Also, there are groups of students that this is not for, such as nursing which might opt out of this. Accreditation/licensure-certification requirements in select Doisy College of Health Sciences (DCHS) mandate letter grades for all courses in the degree program. The programs exempt from the spring 2020 grade policy are Nuclear Medicine Technology (NMT), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Radiation Therapy (XRT), and all undergraduate courses in the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program. Also, while there was a petition to consider this, we were hit with a lot of emails that we were moving to this and some came out opposing it for letter grades. This is in opt in process.

This policy is in the hand of all our bosses, so as you read this and began to think about how this impacts your students in your unit and the clarity, the appropriate people to communicate items to is your Deans. We are trying to wrap it up soon. Try and look through this quickly and get it to your Deans. This is up to your individual college if you decide to take the low/pass. You could opt out of it, but believe that there are problems with that. If you have issues, please communicate to your Deans.

Students can change their mind as many times as they want up until May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

One of the issues that came up, students should know where they stand going into the final and that is good practice. The pass/fail is also a done deal and we are working out the last-minute details. The students will have an option to go in the agency to make a choice, it is official.

We will hear stuff from the students, but the important thing for all of us is to be able to filter out that background noise and look for the signals for the real stress that you are hearing.

There are a few things that are supposed to happen, the Deans are going to provide us with (still Rob needs to talk to Steve about this):

1. College by College, FAQ, so that students can see (ex: Doisy) and if you are from Nutrition and Dietetics we are advising you not to choose, pass/no pass, stay in for the letter grade. The notion is that disciplinary specific things that the Deans could address this at a higher level (at least raising the potential issues) or concerns for students would be if they choose this option versus the other option (college by college basis).
2. A script is being developed for the advisors. The advisors are not to be the final consultant on this, because this is not fair to the advisors. The students' needs to own this and we are setting this up so that the student is the one that is choosing their own option and that this is their own choice, not anyone else choice as to what they decide to do.

Jay wanted to know if Michelle wanted an asterisk on the low pass thing, that was the whole point of the meeting, the asterisks is indicating an exemption for Parks, the asterisk was to indicate to read below at the detail text to check with your colleges or school for their specific requirements. Someone is to draft that. Some of those items did not get in there, and getting rid of the exemptions. Others wanted to have some classes to say exempt, some other discussion on this. The matrix at the bottom visual helps explain the grades (draft policy attached).

Jay did not like the idea of exceptions at all, but this semester we have been asked to be flexible and to be blunt, this is disingenuous to offer this and then exclude individual courses. That is a little bit extreme and Rob's comment about FAQ from a department if it is in the best interest of the student, not to do that then. We should advise so, but we should not take this out of the individual student's hands and by excluding entire programs or individual courses it is not in the best interest of the students and this is not the intention of what this is doing and any type of asterisk feels funny to me.

It was noted that even if an accreditor requires the student to have a certain letter grade or sit for licensure, that would not exempt the policy from a college or course, it just means that the student do it. We should get clarity that those are 2 different things and some of that has muddy this whole process. The unification of what accreditors expect or what is required to sit for a license exam and there are all sorts of reasons why students should not pursue this.

From a student's perspective, Jordan has received several emails from students for both, begging for a pass/fail option for the semester and for a letter grade. So, as you mentioned, there is that balance going on. There are several students sitting in classes with Professors who have not yet administered an on-line course before and they are worried about how it will turn out for them in the end. Because of the abrupt change in the middle of the semester, the students are worried about their GPA and they just want (some of the graduating seniors) to keep a certain GPA (Latin Honors) and they want just to be able to see a pass and not worry about that letter. There are also a lot of students who are scared about seeing a "D" on their transcript and they do not know what they want to do for the future. Jordan said the conversations that we have had in that work group is that is not a good option on the transcript and students are not sure what they are going to do. It is not a good option for your future if you have graduate school in the balance, so the idea of communicating this very clearly and even perhaps getting individual emails from the Dean's office (from your school) immediately following the announcement of this is going to help students with this issues. We have talked about many mechanisms for students to make this decision (not lightly) because it could have an impact on their future. It is important that the option is a least available to them because there are students who feel that they are put in a tough spot this semester.

Jordan wanted to know if it possible to have that box vary by department or school? There are issues of students not knowing their final grade and some courses are curbed and some students are saying that Professors are saying that their courses will be curbed at the end depending on how students do in this on-line format. Jordan sent an email to Matt Davis who is leading that and the Provost is against that the student being able to see their final grade before they choose pass/fail. This is a point of equity depending on the courses you take by department or certain individuals. More support behind it if it is going to happen.

Jay pointed out Beth's earlier comment about accrediting body and there are already several petitions in the pipeline to the accrediting bodies to accept pass grades this semester only. And the fact, that we already have almost all the Law Schools throughout the country already switched, the ABA has been strict on things and this semester they have changed. There are NYU doctors and med students graduated early, there is another accredited body that has switched this semester.

Jay also commented that by the time we get through this, the accrediting bodies might come back and say it is okay and all the institutions have switched to pass/fail. It is okay we are going to accept pass grades and it is a good thing that we are taking our time. The accrediting bodies are behind the gun and we are getting pressured because the whole country now has done it and obviously that pressure is going to be on the accredited bodies, as well.

Jay also commented that he is not speaking for them but at some point, the accredited bodies will relent a little, but we cannot predict that. This is the hard part from a student prospective and back to Dr. Sleet's comment about advising a student into this situation and how to do that when they do not even know what is going to happen by the end of the semester. The deadline is good to let it go, if possible, to figure out what is best for the students.

March 5<sup>th</sup> UAAC Meeting Minutes there are 2 items that need amended and meeting minutes will then be approved from March 5<sup>th</sup>. Those are as follows:

**Addendum: RE: Policy on Articulation of Transfer Courses: - PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

An additional issue on the above policy is how do we handle the 14-day processing timeline when a transcript goes to one department and should be forwarded to another? Is the expectation that if the first department takes 13-days to realize they need to transfer to someone else, does that mean that the other department only gets 1-day because it has be fulfilled in the original 14-day or does the 2<sup>nd</sup> department get their own 14-day period?

Jay stated that he has not gotten back to all those minutes yet from the last UAAC meeting minutes to update that document and Jay stated that when things settle down a little bit, he can get back to that and incorporate those 14-days to spread out and to extend it especially in those situations.

**Addendum:** From the minutes of March 5<sup>th</sup>, it was not stated that this policy was approved. It was approved and in the minutes of April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 (see below). The Sub-committee approved **Proposal – Cannabis Science & Operations**

Unanimously approved by the UAAC voting members.

**Open Discussion:**

Elizabeth had the following 2 questions:

1. One of the items that was mentioned in our leadership huddle was the notion of the faculty being thrown into doing on-line teaching for this semester and over the summer and they have never done this before. We do not know when CCTL is going to do the next round of training and will there be any support we can offer doing tis on the fly in terms of HLC rules?
2. In terms of HLC rules, do they have to be trained and then can we get around this because of the situation?

Steve commented that HLC approach is tied-in (this case to the US Department of ED's governing). They do have some strict guidelines regarding distance education and they expect those to be monitored and implemented by the accrediting bodies. This is one of these areas where HLC is sort of a sub-contractor for the US Department of ED's instead of being its own entity. The US Department of ED's has given the accreditors leeway to relax their expectations regarding institutions ability to offer distance education and relatively institution requirements and expectations for training of distance ED faculty. Basically 90% or more the faculty of all the faculty who were teaching on the ground a month ago are not doing it now and not everybody was able to get it off the ground, and we all know that. The US Department ED's relaxation of expectation on the accreditor that filters down to us, that is currently enacted for programs

related to a financial aid years (because this all tied to US financial aid) and the date are programs that start before June 20<sup>th</sup>. The short version for now is that we are clear.

Gina Merys commented that they are putting together additional things, so to address this middle ground between, we have been planning to do a true distance education course this summer or semester. You would have gone through a peer-review process and the reality of it, hey you did not plan on this and here you are with only maybe a month to plan. So, we do have the traditional 4-week intensive introduction to on-line teaching that starts on May 26<sup>th</sup> and that is the one that we have been offering for over a year and this is the full 4-week session that goes over the rubric and gets everyone ready for the peer-review in the future. We are also putting together some introduction to some remote teaching, which is a little bit different then we would think of a full-blown distance education and those will be 2-week sessions and the first one starts on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April. We will be offering at least 3 of those in quick successions, so those that are teaching this summer can get that development opportunity when they need to. We are listening to you, so whatever you need reach out to us.

Debbie stated that the overall feedback it is honestly all over the board. At our Business School, Executive Meeting we discussed communication for the students. Debbie has put together an email for students to help them to try and understand why faculty may choose what they choose.

This group might benefit from the extension of spring expiring incompletes and a lot of those will be dealing with it.

Gary discussed with the group that that he had 3 different policy/questions that he was asked from his chairs. He would like to be able to give them some answers. Gary said that by him bringing these up, these are not recommendations that the University do it. If anyone in this group think it is worthwhile then it might have to elevate it and bring it up on the agenda at the next Provost/Dean's meeting.

1. Has there been any discussion as to extension of when final grades will be due. The rationality is that some faculty have had to change the mode of how they are evaluating at the end and it has been more time sensitive.

Jay said the grading period has been extended, maybe it was not announced, so that is the problem. Nobody is aware of grades being extended. If this has been approved, we need to get communication out on this.

2. Should exams still happen during the exam period? Or is it okay to have during the final week of classes?

Steve answered and said the final exam policy is nebulous and the whole question as to whether the exam must be given or not, because we know of plenty of programs that do not give exams, an exam is not appropriate as a last accumulative educational experience or assessment. So, the notion that there might not be something during that last week, or that

something during that week would not be an exam is a perineal issue and I am not exactly sure if the current circumstance change the problems that we already have with the lack of clarity and direction on that. No need for further elevation.

It was noted, with the exception if faculty are holding a final exam during the final exam week it needs to be during the final exam week. We did make that very clear, that is something that cannot change and is a deal breaker. You cannot choose another time within the final exam week to have that final class exam.

3. The group might benefit hearing about the extensions of spring expiring incompletes.

Jay stated that the Provost and Deans agreed to the blanket extensions of incompletes that were finishing this spring, so these are primarily incompletes from last semester or the semesters before that were scheduled to turn to "F" s this May, those will all be extended 30-days across the board. The students or the instructors will not have to do anything. If the student does their work early great, get the grade in, no harm, no fowl. But those they all will be default, get extended 30-days. This will be announced shortly.

Gary did say and comment that his only nuance to that would be that it is not just May, it should be from the time that the policy is announced, so that could be April as well, if that was the deadline was given. Gary is using this verbiage: Spring expiring, incompletes. Because there may have been a deadline that might not been at end of the term.

If a student incomplete was to be done my April 10<sup>th</sup> that would qualify to get the extra 30 days on that and it would not automatically flip.

Gary wanted to clarify it, it is extended to the 30-day limit and not the 30-days from that date on the day it was indicated for the incomplete? That was the question that the advisors had because rather or not it goes 30-days from the date? Does everybody who was going to expire in spring, do they all now all expire at the end of June? Or if you had an April 10<sup>th</sup> date, do you expire now on May 10<sup>th</sup>?

That was the intent that we talked about Jay, that is was not 30-days from the date that was on the form it was that all expiring incompletes in the spring would move to this June date. This might be easier to implement. Jay will start doing that and notifying students. Jay is doing a lot of work behind the scenes to get ready for this, so that when it is announced it will be done.

If we could coordinate the communication that comes out regarding policy changes. Could we have the Provost Office have its own set of announcements that is specifically academically focused, and then also have separately Presidential messages? Rob will speak to Matt about those concerns.

Debbie raised a question about incompletes for this semester, not extending the ones that are already out there. She asked if there had been any talk about using a default to say if anyone needs an incomplete, the default could say they have until August 31<sup>st</sup>, without having to

negotiate certain contracts then upload it to the registrar. That is a lot of leg work. Will there be a template or will we stick with the same process?

Rob stated that we have not discussed that centrally yet and my inclination is that I do not want to invent another HVAC because we have so many going already.

Gary agrees with Debbie and he has had some of these same questions raised regarding implemented a blanket incomplete, or an easily implemented incompletes. Gary still has concerns about the no contract thing it does not serve the students to not have in writing what they must do to finish the course and I struggle if that is in their best interest. Some agree with Gary that we still need to know if the student is going to complete the class.

Jay is in some agreement because even though the situation is different, we all still need to know how the student intends to complete the class.

Jay stated that this might be the first document in DocuSign to speed up the process and that is processed, so that it is not a “wet” signature, because it is just the student and the instructor signing. Debbie is glad to help Jay on the DocuSign.

End of Meeting Minutes