Florida Institute of Technology  
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee  
September 12, 2014  
8:00 a.m.  
F.W. Olin Physical Sciences Building  
Second-floor Conference Room  
MINUTES

The meeting began at 8:00am.

The Chair welcomed the Committee and thanked everyone for attending this special meeting. It was briefly explained that the Registrar’s Office had requested this meeting to discuss policy and procedure changes related to the implementation of program changes that the Committee approves. The Chair yielded the floor to Ms. Young (University Registrar) and Dr. Baloga (Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness).

Discussion:

1. Implementation of Catalog Changes (see attached memo)

Ms. Young explained that, for compliance with SACSCOC, the University needed to start implementing approved changes only once per catalog cycle. Students enter the University under a given catalog year, and while they can always upgrade to a later catalog year, the catalog years must be well-defined, and mid-year program changes make this very difficult. Furthermore, changes made to courses mid-year interfere with program implementation. She noted that while exceptions for new, market-driven programs could be made on a case-by-case basis with approval from Dr. McCay (Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer), from now on, changes would only become effective with the new catalog cycle.

It was asked if the differences between the print catalog, BANNER catalog, and online catalog could be clarified. Dr. Baloga replied that there is no substantial difference between the catalogs, but that we must always defer to the print-version and it is this that SACS will look at. She noted that it is not good for accreditation if changes to the catalog are made throughout the year.

Dr. Baloga also commented that the print-version of the catalog “holds us back” in the sense that we have to have such an early deadline for making changes to it, which typically occurs at the end of August each year. The University is investigating software that will permit the use of an electronic catalog as the official catalog for academic policies, and this would move the deadline for changes later into the fall semester, providing the academic units more flexibility. She explained that the University has to have not only policies, but that it must follow them, and in developing the SACS report, she discovered that in some instances, this may not have been the case. She also noted that these policies must be consistent with the best practices at other institutions. Making the changes being discussed today is intended to show that the University is making progress in this area.

It was noted that, currently, there is up to a two-year wait for changes to appear in the print catalog, and it was explained in response that the move to the electronic catalog will reduce that time.

It was pointed out that for many years students have always had the right to “upgrade” to a later version of the catalog than the one they entered the University under (for purposes of satisfying graduation requirements), and it was asked if this would still be the case, to which the response was “yes,” bolstering the argument that there should be no need (in most cases) to make changes that require immediate implementation.
It was asked if accommodations would be made for new programs. New programs typically need time and flexibility to work out issues that arise in their development to make them function as intended. Dr. Baloga indicated “no,” that no such accommodations would be made. Picking up on this, it was further noted that market-driven forces can cause a new program to be rushed, and it was asked if the changes being discussed would do something to slow this down. Dr. Baloga indicated “yes,” that for example, SACS approval of new programs would take some time, slowing the implementation of new programs. An additional question was asked about mistakes in the program; could these be corrected immediately? The response was that it would depend upon the extent of the change needed to correct the error and whether it were a true error when the program was developed and approved.

Ms. Young also described that there were some course restrictions in BANNER that were not being enforced, and that this will change. The academic units will be required to review their course restrictions and update them, and effective with the 2016-2017 catalog, restrictions in BANNER will be enforced as they appear in the catalog. This generated a discussion on the academic necessity of overriding some course restrictions, such as transfer credit not being recognized by BANNER as satisfying a particular requirement. Ms. Young indicated that exceptions will always be made for legitimate purposes, and that new practices were being developed to reduce the need for exceptions.

A question was asked when these changes in procedure would become effective. The Committee is scheduled to meet again in two week for regular business, and it was asked whether any approved changes would now have to wait until next fall for implementation, to which Dr. Baloga responded that we should be getting into the habit immediately to show SACS that the University is serious about making these changes. This raised several new questions. For instance, how can new courses be offered? The current deadline for the print-edition of the catalog has already passed, suggesting that new courses cannot be offered before the following catalog (2016-2017) is released, delaying new courses until Fall 2016, two years away. It was suggested that each program already has a 4000-level “Selected Topics” course that could be used as the vehicle for offering a new course at the 3000- or 4000-level until the new course (with a unique title and number) could be implemented at the beginning of the next catalog cycle, and that each program could introduce a 2000-level “Selected Topics” course that would be an appropriate vehicle for introducing 1000- and 2000-level courses. In this way, new courses could still be offered in the following semester without having to wait until the next catalog cycle, and then substituted as needed to satisfy degree requirements. It was asked if SACS would have a problem with 2000-level “Selected Topics” courses, to which Dr. Baloga answered “no.” There were some objections made to having 2000-level “Selected Topics” courses, believing that any course could be implemented without UGCC approval and that, even though this is already done with the 4000-level “Selected Topics” courses, it would be inappropriate to do this at the 2000-level in part due to concerns about student maturity. It was then suggested that perhaps the solution would be to have the UGCC approve any 2000-level “Selected Topics” topics (i.e. review the proposed syllabi) prior to offering them. It was not immediately clear how this would be enforced, and no decision was made.

It was also explained that new faculty often introduce new courses related to their expertise, and how would this practice be continued? Again, the use of the “Selected Topics” courses was suggested as a vehicle for this purpose. It was also questioned as to why new faculty needed to immediately introduce and teach a new course. The point was debated.

Another related question was raised about the scenario when one program makes a change that impacts other programs. Can the impacted program not make mid-year adjustments to accommodate the original change? It was emphasized that more planning should be done earlier, not only with the original change but once it is known
that a change is coming, the impacted programs should be thinking about how to accommodate the change. It was also suggested that it is not within the UGCC’s purview to worry about the non-academic impacts on other programs (i.e. the need to offer additional sections of other courses, hiring new faculty, etc.). Both points were vigorously debated, but no resolution was reached.

It was asked if new programs, which would not have an impact on other programs, could be introduced past the catalog cycle deadline, to be offered in the next academic year, to which the response was “no.”

It was pointed out that the time for the meeting had nearly expired, and another group needed the room. As such, further discussion was suspended.

Due to time constraints, the following item was not discussed.
2. Procedure for Reactivating a Course or Program (Time permitting)

Our next regular meeting is Fri., Sept. 26 at 8:00 a.m. in the Physical Sciences conference room. Agenda items are due Fri., Sept. 19.

The Chair again thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Archambault – Chair
To fully comply with SACSCOC standards and to ensure the catalog, both in print and in Banner, reflects the most accurate information, we request that the full Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Council oversee all modifications to course and program offerings to include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course discipline/subject</th>
<th>General education designation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course number</td>
<td>Registration restriction (field of study, level, campus, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Registration permission (consent of instructor, dept head, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit hours</td>
<td>New course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Reactivation of course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prerequisite</td>
<td>Deactivation of course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corequisite</td>
<td>New program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-listing</td>
<td>Deactivation of program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading system</td>
<td>Changes to program requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeatability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The official record of course offerings, program requirements and policies is the University Catalog. As such, and in accordance with best practices at other institutions, changes to these requirements need to be made per catalog cycle/year. Mid-year changes to course, degree and policy requirements threaten our compliance with SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.4.5, and therefore should be discontinued.

Beginning with the 2016-17 University Catalog, all course restrictions and program requirements will be enforced in Banner as they appear in the catalog. Colleges will have a full year’s curricular cycle to review their catalog information for accuracy and to submit adjustments as needed. The Registrar’s Office will provide reports of all course restriction information currently in Banner and will be available to counsel departments individually on the best ways to adequately restrict their courses in Banner to meet enrollment demands.

Faculty members who wish to adopt a new course between catalog cycles are encouraged to teach it under a Special Topics placeholder course until the course proposal’s fall implementation. Interim program adjustments may be handled by moving an affected student’s catalog year to the newer curriculum in the upcoming catalog or by submitting course substitutions on the student’s behalf for the current catalog. Proposed new majors and minors (and any new courses to support them) with market-driven time constraints may be implemented outside of the fall term in exceptional circumstances only on a case-by-case basis as approved by Dr. McCay.
The *University Catalog* is accessed by thousands of constituents both on and off campus each year, so we must make every effort to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the information contained within it. We appreciate your assistance in this matter and welcome any questions you may have about the transition.

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1 CR 2.7.4 "...institution demonstrates that it controls all aspects of its educational program."
CS 3.4.1 "...each educational program for which academic credit is awarded is approved by the faculty and the administration."
CS 3.4.5 "...publishes academic policies that adhere to principles of good educational practice...are disseminated to students, faculty, and other interested parties through publications that accurately represent the programs and services of the institution."
CS 3.4.10 "The institution places primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum with its faculty."
CS 3.5.3 "The institution publishes requirements for its undergraduate programs...these requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs."

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ii Institutions that implement all curricular changes once per catalog cycle/year, typically in the fall term.

**Registrar Listserv Respondents**
- Meredith College
- Allegheny College
- Bradley University*
- Finlandia University
- Marietta College*
- Union University
- Suffolk University

**Web Search Respondents**
- University of Florida
- University of South Florida
- Brigham Young University
- George Mason University
- University of Michigan
- Texas A&M University
- Duke University
- University of Tennessee
- California State University
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas

**Peer Institution Respondents**
- Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Milwaukee School of Engineering
- Polytechnic University
- South Dakota School of Mines and Technology
- Missouri University of Science and Technology
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- University of North Carolina, Greensboro
- California Polytechnic State University
- Illinois State University
- College of Southern Idaho
- University of North Texas
- Leeward Community College, Hawaii
- University of Central Oklahoma
- University of Northern Iowa
- Broward College
- Rhode Island College

*Allow new courses to be implemented mid-year but no other changes