

August 16, 2021

To: Academic Affairs Committee

Re: Proposal to reconstitute the University Requirements Petitions Committee as a sub-committee of Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Senate

All current members of the University Requirements Petitions Committee propose to move the committee under the purview of Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Senate.

The University Requirements Petitions Committee originated in the Office of the Provost in 2009, and its primary function was to review petitions for substitutions or exceptions to graduation requirements, including substitutions for GER/UCORE and writing proficiency requirements and exceptions concerning minimum credit, upper division credit, and minimum GPA. Historically, its membership has ranged from as little as two faculty-administrators to its current iteration of six faculty-administrators-staff.

Because of the direct impact that the committee's decisions have on students, we feel strongly that it ought to report directly to the internal governing body for academic policy and curriculum matters: AAC and Faculty Senate.

Review of petitions remains the committee's main function. However, its role has expanded to include recommending changes to academic rules and regulations that arise from petitions cases. Occasionally, a series of petitions may prompt action regarding UCORE courses (e.g., recommending UCORE designation for courses that are frequently petitioned as such). Petition cases also inform the committee's ongoing research and recommendations regarding transfer articulation inside and outside of the state of Washington. In short, the committee is directly responsive to petitions from students, but also leverages those petitions for potential broader action.

We propose that Petitions sub-committee decisions regarding individual student petitions be reported internally to the Petitions sub-committee and to AAC as aggregated information items upon request. AAC need not debate or approve individual petition cases. However, the Petitions sub-committee would present any matters regarding academic policy, rules, or curricular changes that arise from petitions cases to AAC as proposed action items.

The page that follows this cover memo describes the sub-committee's proposed function, composition and tenure, and any additional notes regarding the sub-committee, akin to other committees and sub-committees of the Faculty Senate.

We hope that this proposed reconstitution will become effective immediately upon Faculty Senate's approval.

Respectfully,

Bill Davis, Vice Provost, Division of Academic Engagement and Student Achievement

Blaine Golden, Assistant Registrar

Terese King, Director, University Advising; Interim Assistant Vice Provost, DAESA

Waylon Safranski, Director, Transfer Center

Clif Stratton, Director, University Common Requirements

Karen Weathermon, Director, First-Year Programs

Function

- Reviews, debates, and subsequently approves or denies student petitions concerning university graduation requirements, including minimum credit, upper division credit, minimum GPA, UCORE requirements, and writing proficiency. The sub-committee reports these decisions directly to the Office of the Registrar for immediate action, and to Academic Affairs Committee as information items (admit type, originating campus, nature of petition, outcome, potential – if any – implications for policies and procedures) upon request.
- Makes recommendations to Academic Affairs Committee regarding academic rules and regulations that arise from petition cases.
- Maintains a web-based resource for students and advisors to submit petitions and to inquire about petition matters.

Composition and tenure

Individual Members

- Two faculty currently serving on Academic Affairs committee. Faculty serve one-year appointments. At least one campus in addition to Pullman represented. (F)

Representatives of particular committees or offices

- Registrar or designee
- Director of University Advising (F) or designee
- Director of University Common Requirements (F) or designee
- Director of Transfer Center or designee, who will serve as Secretary
- Vice Provost, DAESA, or designee

Additional notes

- Reports to: Faculty Senate, through the Academic Affairs Committee, and to the university President, through the Provost.
- The chair is elected by the committee, is a faculty representative, and serves a two-year term. Chairs may have their position renewed for a second term.
- Much of the sub-committee's work involves review of petitions for course credit substitution, including transfer credit, former students returning credit, study abroad credit, Honors to UCORE transition credit, and other related graduate requirements.
- The sub-committee does not review petitions concerning college or specific major requirements.
- Support: The committee will receive webpage design and maintenance support provided by Division of Academic Engagement and Student Achievement.