

## Academic and Scholastic Standards Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes: March 3, 2021

**Call to Order:** Beth Dunn called the regular meeting of the Academic and Scholastic Standards Committee (ASSC) to order on March 3 at 2pm. The meeting was held virtually on Zoom.

**Present:** **David Anderson, David Bowen, Sandra Bowling,** Jennifer Davidson, Beth Dunn, Joyce Fritz, Pamela Harmon, Nicole Kowalik, Dorota Krzykowska, Jennifer Linderman, Victor McCullum, Kent Randall, Ric Segovia, Derek Salinas-Lazariski, Ken Smith, Tracy Wright. Guest: Michael Garrity.

Updates/Discussion Points:

### Discussion with AVP of Information Systems Michael Garrity

- **Automated Petition Process:** The committee presented our ideas of an automated petition process. AVP Garrity explained the different levels of automation available and the cost involved. First was an Ellucian product that was cost prohibitive (~\$60,000). The college uses Docu-sign for some documents that must go through different channels but that can also be expensive (~\$3 per form). A third option is an editable PDF document. In order for it to work properly the user would have to download it, save it to their computer, then edit it and save it again. It could then be attached to an email and sent through the channels in the same manner. The fourth option is an online form. The problem with the online form is that it isn't easily sent through the necessary channels (for example: Student → chair → dean → records). The committee agreed that an editable PDF seemed the easiest, cheapest and most useful option. AVP Garrity seemed to think his team could create such a document. ASSC will present the recommendation to Senate.
- **Pop-ups:** Next, the ASSC presented the idea of having pop-up "warnings" appear when a student is attempting to withdraw from a course. The warnings would include potential academic and financial implications. AVP Garrity explained that there is a note at the bottom of the page where students withdraw from a course on the portal. The note states "Thinking of dropping? Have you talked with a counselor, a financial aid representative and/or your instructor?" He explained that this was discussed in 2018 and that is when they added the message. It can be in the header or footer. They decided the footer was better. Tracy Wright commented that the sentence is wrong. That advisors should be contacted not counselors. Members of ASSC asked if the message could include a hyperlink to a website or to a video. Mike indicated that links were possible.

**Housekeeping:** The February 2021 meeting minutes were approved.

#### **Updates from Advising and Financial Aid**

- Academic Consequences of a W Provided by Dorota Krzykowska

#### CATALOG INFORMATION (summarized)

Standards of Academic Progress (SOAP) are reviewed every 12 hours; students who have a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 and/or completion of less than 50% of credit hours attempted are below the minimum standard. SOAP is progressive, as outlined below.

In all cases, a PERC hold is placed on the student's account, which prevents the student from self-registration through their portal.

**Academic warning** — up to 12 semester hours attempted.

**Academic probation** — 13-24 semester hours attempted. Students on probation may not enroll in more than 12 credits and are required to take COL102 Embracing the College Experience.

**Academic suspension** — 25-36 semester hours attempted. Students will not be allowed to enroll any classes during 1 semester (fall or spring). Students will need to petition in order to return to Triton College.

**Academic dismissal** — More than 36 semester hours attempted. Students will not be allowed to register for one year (fall and spring). Students will need to petition in order to return to Triton College.

#### THE POLICY IN ACTION

We are in the process of revising the model of addressing SOAP concerns and sharing the responsibility between Advisors and Counselors. Here is how the process looks in practice (from an Advising perspective):

**Warning-** Advisors work with students and review SOAP. Depending on the situation, the advisor may refer the student to Counseling.

**Probation-** The student may be recommended to see a counselor in addition to working with an advisor.

**Suspension-** The student will be required to meet with a counselor in order to return. The student will then meet with an advisor to create an academic plan and register for classes.

**Dismissal-** The student will be required to meet with a counselor in order to return. The student will then meet with an advisor to create an academic plan and register for classes.

At all levels of SOAP, advisors address the following while working with the student:

- Explain SOAP and the factors that are considered for calculation: withdrawals, failed courses, low grades. Oftentimes, students think that a “W” is a better option and not realize that a habit of withdrawing from classes will have an effect on the overall progress.
- Circumstances that led to the student not meeting standards- refer to resources such as Counseling, Academic Support Center, CAAS (only if the student voluntarily disclosed a disability) and recommend solutions.
- Discuss the course load for the following semester, i.e. recommend fewer courses if the student’s circumstances have not changed, suggest a different course format (in-person vs. online), recommend courses that are easier and more enjoyable for the student, search for courses that are a better schedule fit for the student, etc.
- Advise the student to retake previously failed courses as soon as possible, if GPA is the issue
- As Tracy mentioned in the meeting, discuss implications for future transfer. Universities consider patterns and tendencies while reviewing applications. Students who consistently withdraw from or have to repeat courses may be viewed less favorably, even if their GPA is high.
- Financial Implications of W Provided by Jennifer Linderman  
The financial aid implication of withdrawing from a class is that it affects the student’s Standards of Academic Progress calculation. Standards are run at the end of each term, once grades have been submitted. To meet the Standards of Academic Progress, a student needs to have a cumulative completion rate of at least 67%, maintain a 2.0 GPA (except 1<sup>st</sup> term is 1.0 GPA), and complete their program within 150% of the credit hours needed for the program. Withdrawals affect the completion rate because they are attempted but not completed. Many student fall below the 67% completion rate and they are allowed to submit an appeal explaining why they did not meet the standards and may get their financial aid reinstated.

#### **Updates on Conversation with Kurian and Research from IR**

Kurian cautioned ASSC on how they interpret the research related to what happens to a student after an F or after a W. The research shows correlation but not necessarily causation. There is a correlation between W’s and students leaving Triton, but the W’s don’t necessarily cause them to leave. Beth asked if Triton loses money because of the

withdrawals. Specifically is funding withheld because of the number of W's. No one knew the answer – Beth will ask Kevin or Kurian. Jennifer pointed out that a W is a hit on a student's completion rate, an F is a hit on the GPA and completion rate

### **Instructor assigned W's**

The committee again discussed the possibility of not allowing instructors to assign W's as a final grade. Currently, instructors can assign a W up until the midterm verification and then only as a final grade. It was discussed that the last day an instructor could assign a W would be the same as the student's last day to withdrawal and that a W could be assigned after that only with a petition and because of extenuating circumstances. David Anderson expressed that the college was more focused on making money and had less interest in the students' best interests. Victor McCullum stated that it was important that we educate both students AND faculty about the Withdrawal process. Derek stated that when the deans presented the Withdrawal presentation to The Arts and Sciences adjuncts (at Spring Faculty Workshop) they all indicated none of the other schools where they work allow them to withdraw students. Victor suggested we survey the faculty.

### **Next Steps**

- Beth will write up a recommendation on behalf of ASSC for an automated General Petition in the form of an editable PDF.
- Beth will send a survey question to the ASSC members about changing the last day an instructor can withdraw a student. Depending on the response from ASSC we may/may not survey the faculty.

**Next Meeting: April 7 at 2pm**

**CLICK THIS LINK TO JOIN MEETING:**

<https://zoom.us/j/98819739211?pwd=eTNJcFVVMtdZbE5WWjcwS2FFMEjdz09>