

Community
College
of Philadelphia

MEETING MINUTES

Work Group:	Academic Support Subcommittee
Meeting Date:	Thursday, October 24, 2013
Meeting Time:	3:30 PM – 5:00 PM
Attendees:	Osvil Acosta-Morales, Joan Bush, Tarsha Walton, Bonnie Harrington, Kelly Connelly, Cyndy Walls, Carlos Diaz, Todd Jones, Ron Jackson, Katiria Garcia, Pedro Martinez
Facilitators:	Osvil Acosta-Morales & Joan Bush
Location:	BG-07G
Topic:	Various Topics

Discussion Points

Review of Minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and approved with minor revision – adding the full names of the policies/procedures being discussed in place of simply listing their numbers.

Completion of Registration

Discussion of possible concerns regarding Policy & Procedure #13 (Completion of Registration) began with a review of the research gathered by David Thomas and Kelly Connelly.

Within the context of the local schools that were taken into account, the available evidence shows that 4-year institutions have a longer drop/add period than community colleges. All of the schools for which data was collected had a period at the start of the term during which dropping or adding courses could be done relatively easily, without requiring many signatures. The length of time for the drop/add period does vary even among the local community colleges.

It was mentioned that if it is unusual for a Department Head or Dean to deny a student late admission into a class after the instructor agrees, then perhaps only instructor signatures should be necessary. Other schools have a policy like this, and it could potentially improve the process. However, there is evidence that some faculty are not properly informed about registration policies. For example, each semester there are Drop/Add forms signed by faculty members requesting the addition of a student to a class that has already reached its maximum capacity. Part of this particular difficulty and others like it may have to do with confusion among faculty about how to best handle requests from multiple students that wish to enter a class with only one seat left.

Some of the options discussed included allowing students a period of time after the start of term (perhaps as much as one week, or as little as one day) during which new courses may be added by the student without needing any signatures at all. Other colleges have this “self-serve” period. This approach may include implications for the way courses are billed that need to be addressed. In addition, there is the concern that without requiring at least a faculty signature the instructor will not have the opportunity to directly communicate with a student about the consequences of joining the class late.

Another issue, particularly if the period of adding classes is extended, is that some students may be attending a course for some time without actually being registered, and perhaps without even the intention of registering.

Some of the discussion led to general questions about the College policy on taking attendance and whether it should be required in all cases.

Significant time was spent considering the appropriate length of time for the period during which students may add courses after the start of the term. This included considerations about how the time should be measured – according to calendar days, class meetings, or contact hours. Factors like different term lengths and different class session lengths were discussed.

It was determined that getting feedback from other groups --- deans, department heads, and students --- would be needed before continuing the discussion on this matter.

Policy on Transfer Credit & Credit by Examination

Joan Bush presented a proposal for a revision to P&P #7 (Credit by Examination) and P&P #12 (Transfer Credit). The proposed revision is aimed at aligning the two policies in a way that avoids inconsistencies, and to clarify the key points that credit by examination does count toward the College residency requirement, but testing through outside groups does not.

The discussion gave rise to questions about why credit by examination was even mentioned on the transfer credit policy. Several suggestions were offered that would involve deleting and/or modifying portions of both policies in a way that is different from the proposed revision, so Joan indicated that she would take the suggestions back to the deans for feedback and return next meeting with more ideas about how to proceed with this issue.

Next Meeting

Thursday, November 21, 2013 at 3:30 PM in room BG-07G.