

Annual Report, Curriculum and Instruction Committee of the Academic Senate, 2022-2023

The Curriculum and Instruction Committee worked on the following issues during the 2022-2023 academic year:

Changes to the WSU syllabus template. CIC has composed a memo in response to requests to revisit the syllabus template at WSU. To summarize what is contained in the memo: CIC recommends that the syllabus template be separated from university policy documents, and that university policy be access via links so that the content can be regularly updated. CIC also recommends that a working group with representatives from around the university be convened to determine the purpose and scope of the syllabus template, the best ways of communicating the information that belongs in a syllabus, etc.

Supporting student mental health. Fernando Charro shared a program that he and Amar Basu have developed to support student mental health. CIC encourages the growth of such initiatives.

Policy regarding release to transcripts to students with tuition debt. CIC composed a letter addressed to the Provost urging the revision of our current policy to withhold transcripts when a student owes tuition, and this letter was also circulated to Faculty Affairs and Student Affairs committees.

Changes to Board of Governors policy on academic probation. CIC reviewed suggested changes to the policy on academic probation, which were subsequently approved by the Board of Governors.

Proposed BA in law. CIC met with faculty, staff and administrators from across the university to learn about a proposed BA in law, and in response offered cautions about this program, especially regarding student expectations of a path to law school, curricular rigor, administrative readiness, etc.

Standards for online courses and programs. CIC has been asked to consider the development of standards for online courses and programs. In response, CIC has asked about standards for face-to-face courses and programs, and will be participating with the Office of Teaching and Learning in their initiative to develop standards for online programs.

Academic freedom. CIC was asked to consider a statement that was eventually taken to the full Academic Senate regarding academic freedom.

Academic integrity, and AI eg ChatGPT. CIC heard updates from Richard Pineau about his committee's work on academic integrity and on AI in the university.

Wayne Experience one-credit course. CIC was asked to consider the suspension of the Wayne Experience requirement, which CIC ultimately supported.

Committee composition: It was especially productive to have our student representative, Hayden Johnson, this year. In general, CIC members were unusually active, diverse, and collaborative, with representation from across the university in terms of both academic discipline and occupational role. The committee thanks Linda Beale and other Policy members for the composition of the committee.

Other Notes and Questions for Policy and CIC only:

- CIC is willing to work on reinstating the Wayne Experience, but not sure if that is being handled by another group.
- CIC suggests that the student code of conduct be revisited in the coming year.
- Members noted that the university processes seem slow and it's often hard to know what becomes of work that committees do. Members noted that no one has the bandwidth to do the work that would be required for faster results and more follow-through.
- Members found it useful to work on documents during meetings using digital tools such as Google Docs.
- Members wondered if we should expand the tools we use for communication and document sharing, such as WhatsApp.
- Members had suggestions for further work on the academic probation policy, to pass along to Darin Ellis and Kelly Dormer: questions about the probation hold after semester 1; the use of Wayne REACT; the use of the term "probation;" where the communications should come from about probation.