

Committee on Academic Policy
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 9th, 2022, 2:00 pm
Meeting #14 AY2021-2022
Meeting held online via Zoom

Attendees: O. Pavlov (Chair; SSPS), B. Calli (Secretary; Robotics), A. C. Heinricher (Provost's Office), A. Hall-Phillips (Business), J. deWinter (Humanities), B. Servat (Math), R. Gyurcsan '24 (Student Representative), S. Miles (Registrar), J. Sabourin (Director-Student Aid & Financial Literacy)

1. Meeting started at 2.00 pm.
2. Jessica Sabourin, the Director-Student Aid & Financial Literacy, was invited to this CAP meeting and gave an overview of the current status and possible future modifications of the policies regarding student financial aid.
 - a. J. Sabourin's office put together a one-page summary of the current student financial aid policies. This summary will be shared with the students and faculty in the near future.
 - b. There are two kinds of aid: WPI financial aid and federal financial aid. WPI has full control on its institutional financial aid policy. WPI does not have any control on the federal financial aid rules themselves but has some flexibility on how they are interpreted and applied.
 - c. WPI financial aid:
 - i. J. Sabourin noted that, in the past two years, the threshold for minimum credits to satisfy in order to maintain institutional student financial aid was changed from 33 credits to 30 credits for mitigating the negative impact of COVID pandemic on students.
 - ii. It is important to note that 30-credit threshold is a higher standard than the credits required to maintain good academic standing, which is 24 credits. This discrepancy sometimes confuses students and cause additional stress. J. Sabourin's office is working on a proposal to lower the financial aid threshold to 24 credits. They are also calculating the financial implications of such a policy change to WPI.
 - iii. Student representatives of CAP agree that aligning the academic standing requirement and the threshold to maintain WPI financial aid would help reduce student stress, and they strongly support this change.
 - d. Federal financial aid:
 - i. Federal financial aid has three requirements for the students to maintain aid:
 1. Student's GPA needs to be higher than 2.00.
 2. Credits earned / credits attempted should be over 66.67%
 3. Maximum length of the study should not exceed 150% of the published program length (for WPI undergraduate program, this means that the students need to graduate in 6 years).
 - ii. These rules cannot be changed by WPI, but they are currently applied stricter than they need to be in WPI. Federal policies require that these conditions are checked once a year, but WPI checks them twice a year (once at the end of B

term and once at the end of D term). J. Sabourin's office is working on a proposal to change this policy to once a year (at the end of D term).

- iii. While WPI system does not officially have the concept of GPA, it is still needed to be calculated and reported to the federal institutions. While doing this, how to consider NR can be a difficult question. However, CAP thinks that rule 1 and rule 2 are complementary to each other; if a student has many NRs, they cannot satisfy rule 2. Therefore, it might be reasonable not to count NRs towards GPA (there is no straightforward way to do so anyway). J. Sabourin's office is working on this issue as well, since WPI is obligated to report records that accurately represent student performance to the federal agencies.
- iv. CAP decided to present a summary of these policies and possible changes in the upcoming faculty meeting. J. Sabourin agreed to attend to the faculty meeting to address follow up questions.

3. Meeting adjourned at 2:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Berk Calli
C-term Secretary