



School of Education

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Self-Study Report of the School of Education Academic Planning Council
August 4, 2021
Responses to the Review Committee Report

The School of Education Dean's Office would like to thank the Review Committee members who conducted the self-study of the School of Education Academic Planning Council (SoE APC), Gary Diffie, Andrea Harris, and Jim Wollack. Thank you for your time spent on this important component of shared governance in the SoE.

[Faculty Policies and Procedures 3.08](#) (FP&P 3.08) mandates “[a]t intervals which shall not exceed five years, the elected faculty members of each council shall review its structure and functions to assess its effectiveness as a faculty voice and its compliance with Faculty Policies and Procedures 3.08. The self-study report shall be submitted to the dean, the faculty of the school or college, and to the University Committee.” In addition to the FP&P 3.08 charge, Dean Diana Hess requested that the committee review the recommendations from the previous self-study in 2016 and provide additional suggestions for improvement.

The report described current SoE APC functioning and identified various opportunities for improvement. This report responds directly to the Review Committee recommendations and describes how the SoE APC plans to improve procedures.

Recommendations and Responses:

1. Better communication to faculty and staff about the role that the APC plays in SoE governance. In particular, the specific roles and responsibilities of APC, Administrative Council, the Chair's Council, and the Programs Committee should be clearly articulated (possibly developing a chart that describes the interaction between these committees and the types of issues that are discussed with each). For overlapping areas that are addressed by multiple committees, it would be helpful to elaborate on the nature of the contributions expected of each committee, so as to ensure that the committee members and those bringing items to the committee

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understand how to prepare and to contribute to the governance process to best serve the School.

Response:

The Dean's Office has created reference documents that articulate the differences between the SoE APC, Programs Committee, Administrative Council, and Chair's Council. There is also a one-pager outlining the general governance process to distinguish between approval steps. Both documents will be available to faculty and staff in the SoE and will be shared with APC members at the beginning of the academic year to acclimate them to the work of the committee.

Dean Hess will also share information about the various committees within the SoE while attending meetings for Departments, the Committee on Academic Staff Issues (CASI), and the Administrative Forum. This information will also be shared with the new SoE Lumen Users mailing list, comprised of faculty and staff in the SoE who engage in the academic planning process.

The Dean's Office is also working on developing an academic planning webpage that houses resources related to academic planning, Lumen and Guide, and the governance process. The academic programs team in the Dean's Office is targeting a Fall 2021 launch.

2. Better definition and articulation of the role that the APC plays within the program review process. In particular, we believe that all participants would benefit by clarifying the basis for the APC's vote of approval, the nature of the feedback the APC is expected to provide to the Dean and the program, and what responsibility, if any, the department/program has to take action on behalf of the feedback from the APC.

Response:

The Dean's Office proposes a different timeline for the presentation of program review materials to the APC:

1. Dean charges the program review.
2. Department/program conducts a self-study and writes a report to submit to the Dean's Office.
3. Dean's Office works with the Department/program to charge a Review Committee.
4. Review Committee conducts a review and writes a report to submit to the Dean.
5. Department brings the self-study and Review Committee reports to the APC for comment.
6. Department incorporates APC feedback in the departmental response to the Review Committee findings to submit to the Dean's Office.

7. All program review materials, the self-study, Review Committee report, and department response, are listed as a “consent agenda” item for APC to vote to approve or make additional comments.
8. Dean submits program review materials to the Provost and the Dean of the Graduate School (for graduate program reviews).

The timeline above for program review clarifies that the APC role is to provide feedback to the department about how they should respond to the review and allows departments to incorporate APC feedback into the departmental response.

3. Bring into better alignment the APC’s charge and the committee’s operations. There are multiple ways in which this might be accomplished, including (a) eliminating from the charge responsibilities which are adequately addressed elsewhere within the SoE; (b) expanding the APC agendas to allow discussions across the full range of topics currently included in the charge, if it is advantageous for all topics to be addressed by a single body; or (c) some combination of (a) and (b).

Response:

[FP&P 3.08](#) mandates that School/College APCs consider the following when advising the dean:

1. The anticipated responsibilities of the department and of the school or college for teaching, research, and public service of high quality;
2. Existing and potential budgetary commitments in relation to present and anticipated resources of the school or college;
3. The effect of the proposed program decision in strengthening the capacity of the school or college to carry out its mission;
4. The goals of the university’s affirmative action programs;

Additionally, “APC’s shall afford the affected departments an opportunity to present their position during the course of the discussions.”

The SoE APC Policies & Procedures document last updated in Fall 2020 charges the SoE APC to consider an expanded list of items:

1. Program reviews and the development or deletion of academic programs (e.g., majors, certificates, Ph.D. minors, etc.); (FP&P 1)
2. Strategic and long-term planning; (FP&P 1 and 2)
3. Budgetary planning and resource allocation; (FP&P 1 and 2)
4. Programmatic decisions likely to affect promotion and tenure or the non-renewal of faculty; (FP&P 1, 2, 3)
5. The impact of programmatic decisions on diversity; (FP&P 4)
6. Provide feedback about academic proposals from other Schools/Colleges or UW System institutions; and (FP&P 3)
7. University or School policies or other factors that affect the School’s ability to fulfill its

academic mission. (FP&P 3)

The Dean's Office will create an annual calendar to communicate when APC will review the specific agenda items mandated by FP&P. This structure will focus discussions and ensure that the APC is guiding SoE decision-making in key areas.

The Dean's Office also proposes a new process for providing feedback on academic proposals from other Schools/Colleges or UW System institutions. After the Dean's Office receives a request for a letter of support, staff will bring this information before the APC for discussion. The APC will vote on a recommendation to the Dean.

4. Formalize the process of election of APC representatives to ensure that departments and APC members are aware of their role as a voice for faculty and staff in the School. Although the process of APC elections was articulated in the APC Policies and Procedures document approved in October 2020, there is still wide variability between departments in how their APC representatives are selected. It should be made clear that the department should formally decide if they want to have the department chair serve as their department representative, and if not, the department should elect an APC representative from their department rather than having this individual be appointed by the chair. This would provide departments a regular opportunity to discuss the role of the APC in the School.

Response:

Beginning in 2021, each December, the Dean's Office will send a memo to department chairs and APC representatives to outline the election policy and procedure and set a deadline for departments to elect APC representation by May 1st of the following calendar year.

5. Work with the Committee on Academic Staff Issues (CASI) to implement (with modifications, if necessary) a process by which eligible academic staff representatives to the APC are elected by the entire SoE academic staff, rather than being appointed from CASI members. The 2020 Policies and Procedures articulates one such policy. We recognize that no two people can truly be representative of all SoE academic staff; however, we further recommend that the policy include a mechanism to ensure that, over time, the academic staff committee members represent the diversity of academic staff roles and responsibilities and disciplinary knowledge.

Response:

The Dean's Office will share the memo described in the response to recommendation 4 with CASI to inform the committee of their responsibility to consider all academic staff members for APC representation, regardless of CASI membership. The memo will notify CASI of the election policy and procedure and set a deadline to elect APC representation by May 1st.

Conclusion:

The recommendations shared by the Review Committee are thoughtful and will improve the overall functioning of the SoE APC. The Dean's Office is eager to implement the above responses in order to improve communication in the SoE and create a space supportive of faculty/staff voice in the School. The Dean's Office is grateful for the work of the review committee in reviewing the compliance and effectiveness of the SoE APC and welcomes the opportunities for improvement.