Committee on Special Academic Programs

Total Meetings: 3  
Meeting frequency: As Needed  
Average hours of committee work each week: Varies

Total Issues Reviewed: 4  
Total of reviewed issues deferred from the previous year: 0  
Total issues deferred to the coming academic year: 0

Listing of bylaw changes proposed:  
None

Listing of committee policies established or revised:  
None

Issues considered by the committee:  
Schedule for review of the special academic programs on campus  
Academic Senate Chair request regarding SAP course review  
First-Year Seminars Program Review  
University Honors Program Review

Recommended procedural or policy changes for the coming year:  
None

Committee’s narrative:

This committee on Special Academic Programs is a subcommittee of the Undergraduate Council. The committee is charged to oversee all special undergraduate academic programs on the UC Davis campus and to advise faculty and the administration on the establishment and operation of newly initiated programs. The committee is also charged to review periodically all programmatic functions of the special academic programs, including but not limited to the publications of material defining/describing the program, the recruitment, orientation and advising of students in each program, guidance in the selection of mentors for such students, coordination of special activities, oversight of the general welfare of said students, and the effectiveness of the programs in meeting their stated educational objectives.

The committee’s priorities for 2015-16 were to review the First-Year Seminars Program and the University Honors Program. These programs were notified of their reviews in June 2015 and were sent the self-study template containing the list of questions to be answered and returned by October 1, 2016.
The Davis Honors Challenge (DHC) and the Integrated Studies Honors Program (ISHP) were folded into a significantly new University Honors Program (UHP), and 2014-2015 was the first year of the merged and reorganized UHP; therefore, considering the recent reorganization, the SAP agreed to the program completing a truncated review this year with another review again in 2017-18 when the program has had more time to become fully established.

The committee also reviewed the First-Year Seminars Program (FYS), and after reviewing the report, SAP members determined that they would like to look more closely at specific seminars that were taught in spring 2015. Each committee member chose two of the seminars and then requested and reviewed the syllabus and student evaluations from those chosen seminars and reported their findings back to the committee.

When the self-study reports for UHP and FYS were received, the committee had several questions so invited UHP Director and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education Dave Furlow to the November meeting where he gave a presentation and then answered questions from committee members. Final reports for both UHP and FYS were written and finalized by the committee and presented to Undergraduate Council in April 2016.

The committee also reviewed and revised the SAP review schedule. It was discovered that the Humanities Program, which meets the criteria for a Special Academic Program, has not been reviewed in the past, so that program was added to the 2016-17 schedule. The Internship and Career Center was moved to the 2016-17 academic year, and the Study Abroad Program was added to the schedule for the 2017-18 year. The revised review schedule will be posted on the Academic Senate Special Academic Programs’ webpage.

Respectfully submitted,

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Raul Aranovich
Joshua Hihath
Mark Rashid
Robert Taylor
Robert Randolph, Academic Federation Representative
Debbie Stacionis, Analyst