The Faculty Senate Agenda Committee charged the Academic Policy Committee (APC) during 2012-2013 with two charges:

1) Review the University’s policies on academic dishonesty as described by the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) and make any recommendations to modify such policies, and
2) Review best practices and University safeguards for course offerings to ensure excellence in teaching with special emphasis on identifying and using specific expertise where it is found within the University.

Charge 2: Findings

The APC discussed the second charge and the motivations of units to teach courses within their units versus seeking expertise elsewhere in the University so as to retain revenues within their unit.

1. The Committee understands the importance of utilizing resources throughout the University to avoid inappropriate or unnecessary and inefficient duplication of different units teaching similar content areas.

2. The APC also recognizes genuine areas of difficulty with respect to what constitutes curricular overlap. For example, statistics may be taught in several units throughout the University but the topic may be uniquely taught to students in a particular major. Statistics taught in the pharmaceutical sciences may be distinct enough from that needed by engineering students to require two separate courses taught with specific applications in the pharmaceutical sciences and engineering.

3. Despite the academic challenges of deciding where overlap and synergy exists, the APC agrees that curricular processes should be in place to facilitate discussions of overlap and synergies and to identify potential inefficiencies in courses taught across units at the University. There are currently processes in place at Northeastern whereby department chairs and associate deans of units review course proposals and identify units within and outside their College that might be affected and explore the potential for duplication. There seems to be no consistent mechanism, other than good faith, across units to ensure that such review is done and such an approach may differ in thoroughness across units. While such a review is expected and required in paperwork accompanying new program proposals, it is unclear to what extent units require a check off that a specific course doesn’t conflict with another course offered elsewhere outside of the unit.

4. The Committee contacted two peer institutions with RCM budgetary models to explore what these institutions were doing to safeguard against the duplication of expertise across units within the University. At Syracuse University, a Senate Curricular Committee (SCC) reviews all course proposals approved at the College level. The SCC is made up of 17 members across the different Colleges across the
University who are familiar with the curricula in their colleges. In addition, course proposals are accompanied by a routing form that has a section asking which other units potentially affected by the course were consulted and how they responded.

At the University of Southern California, the University Committee on Curriculum uses an online form that asks whether the proposal affects any other academic units and, if so, whether they have signed off on the proposal. In cases where there is possible infringement on academic areas and the other areas concerned have not signed off, the University committee delays the assessment of the proposal and recommends resolution of the conflict between the deans of the conflicting units, and the case is brought before the Provost.

5. The APC supports the development of an online system to make new course proposals transparent to all those affected, to inform the curriculum committees of affected units of the new proposal, and give affected units the opportunity to respond with any concerns. Ideally, the online system would allow interested and potentially affected faculty to bring forward any concerns prior to subsequent approvals at the level of the College or University.

**Charge 2: Resolutions**

Be it resolved that:

1. The Senate endorses the creation of an online course proposal system to track new proposals, route them efficiently to the concerned units and committees, and collect feedback

2. All course proposal forms at the unit, College, and/or University level should require the proposing unit to indicate which other units might be affected by the course proposal; who was contacted within those units regarding the course proposal; and the response of the affected units. Curriculum committees and/or faculty of the affected unit(s) are expected to express any concerns about the course proposal within a designated time period prior to consideration at the next level of approval.

Respectfully submitted,

2012-2013 Academic Policy Committee:
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Professor Nathan Felde, CAMD-Art + Design
Vice Provost Mary Loeffelholz, Provost’s Office
Professor Coleen Pantalone, CBA-Associate Dean, Undergraduate Program
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