

BFA Academic Affairs Committee

Annual Report for AY 2023/24

May 15, 2024

I took over as chair of this committee in December (the chair position had been vacant before that), so my notes are a bit fuller for spring semester than fall. Regardless, I should be able to give an accurate description of our agenda items and accomplishments from this AY. We met nine times as a committee, five times in fall and four times in spring.

I'll begin by listing our primary agenda items, along with a brief summary of the most significant feedback from our discussions.

- We provided feedback to the Provost's office and the Office of the Registrar (RO) on the proposed **reform of the academic calendar**. Our discussions mirrored other discussions on campus to a large extent, and in particular there was some concern from the natural sciences about the impact of the proposed calendar change. Overall, however, our committee was supportive of the proposed changes to the academic calendar, especially moving exams from weekends. The final version of the calendar reform was announced by Chancellor DiStefano in December 2023 and will be implemented beginning in AY 2025/26.
- We provided feedback to the Provost's office and the RO on the initial draft of the policy on **credit for prior learning**. In general, we thought the proposed policy did an excellent job of giving departments an appropriate amount of flexibility in determining how the policy will be implemented. The BFA resolution in support of this policy was voted on and approved at its December meeting.
- We provided feedback to OIEC on likely future updates to the campus policy on **religious accommodations for students** in light of recent legal developments. Per Katherine, the next steps here would likely involve OIEC specifying more concretely what a proposed policy would ideally achieve, with our committee and the provost's office trying to fill in some concrete ways of meeting those goals. We haven't heard back from OIEC on this, so the policy revision is still in the early stages. Llen Pomeroy and Megan Clark were the OIEC representatives in this meeting. I anticipate this will be an agenda item for our committee next AY.
- We provided feedback to the Provost's office on the draft of a policy establishing the **CCAC (Campus Curricular Advisory Committee)**. We supported the basic idea behind the creation of this committee and suggested several revisions that would clarify the charge of the CCAC and the scope of its responsibility. We haven't received an amended draft back yet; I believe Katherine is working on this, and I would anticipate our committee revisiting the draft next AY.
- We provided feedback to the RO on the proposed updates to the policy on **program discontinuance**. This policy was subject to review by both our committee and the BFA Faculty Affairs Committee; our committee looked only at the updates concerning the

(currently) very brief section for “students affected by discontinuance.” In general, we supported the additions and revisions, although we suggested modifying the proposed six-year window to track time-to-degree expectations (allowing students to complete a discontinued program within, say, 150% of the expected time to degree in a given program). Once the BFA FAC weighs in, our committee should see an updated draft next AY.

- We provided feedback to the Provost’s office and RO on the draft of a new policy on **micro-credentials and digital badges**. Noah Geisel, program manager for micro-credentials in the RO, was very helpful in orienting our committee to the topic. We suggested a modest (already implemented) change to the way academic (as opposed to non-academic) credentials are represented, as well as several modifications to the language of the proposed policy draft to make it clearer that all micro-credentials originating in academic units are subject to standard curricular review. Noah and I introduced this topic to the BFA Executive Committee this spring, and I expect we will discuss this new policy at a full BFA meeting next fall. Shelly will determine whether an associated BFA resolution is appropriate.
- We provided feedback to the RO on proposed modifications to the **policy on incompletes**. We were supportive of the proposed changes; Shelly will determine what additional level of BFA review is appropriate.

Regularly participating members this AY included Emily Harrington, Shivakant Mishra, Nabilah Carlon, Alec Kroll, Jennifer Bone, Novella Keeling, Nathalie Vriend, and David Quigley, as well as (joining near the end of spring semester) Michael Ferguson, Bobby Benim, and Catherine Kunc. Thanks to everyone on the committee for their time this year. Additional thanks to Katherine Eggert, Erika Swain, Kristi Wold-McCormick, and Noah Geisel, who all contributed lots of their own time to our committee. Finally, thanks, of course, to Shelly and Lynne!

Garrett Zantow Bredeson, BFA AAC Chair

Appendix: Committee Meeting Dates & Agenda Items

10/12/23: academic calendar reform
10/17/23: academic calendar reform
11/14/23: credit for prior learning
11/16/23: religious accommodations
11/30/23: common curriculum / CCAC
2/8/24: program discontinuance
2/22/24: micro-credentials
3/21/24: micro-credentials
4/25/24: incomplete policy