



September 13, 2024

Meeting Minutes

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- I. CALL TO ORDER – Nicholas Rhew, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.
- II. ROLL CALL – Nicholas Rhew called the roll.
 - a. Faculty Senators Present: Amie McKibban (At-Large), Peter Whiting (At-Large), Nancy Kovanic (Romain College of Business), Jiaying Liu (Romain College of Business), Nicholas Rhew (Romain College of Business), Todd Schroer (College of Liberal Arts), McManus Woodend (College of Liberal Arts), Brett Anderson (College of Liberal Arts), Jessica Mason (College of Nursing and Health Professions), Jenna Thacker (College of Nursing and Health Professions), Zachary Ward (College of Nursing and Health Professions), Guoyuan Huang (Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education), and Kyle Mara (Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education)
 - b. Alternates: Cody Strom (Alternate for Susan Ely, Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education), Kirsten Williams (Alternate for Kate Sherrill, Rice Library)
 - c. Faculty Senators Absent without Alternate: None
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Minutes from August 15, 2024, meeting were approved by unanimous consent.
- IV. PRESIDENT, PROVOST, AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS
 - a. Interim President Bridges provided updates on meetings with state officials, the September 5th Board of Trustees meeting, presidential search, College of Nursing and Health Professions naming, and continued meetings and events with faculty and the local community, as well as answered questioned about the provost search and Stone Center parking.
 - b. Interim Provost Blunt provided updates on pay policies regarding the presidential search committee and consultants' visit to campus, the FYE New Harmony experience, and the instructor promotion path, Career Services, retention results, and Slate training and addressed senators' questions.
 - c. Interim Assistant Provost Hardgrave demonstrated the SEA 202 complaint form and provided a Watermark update.
- V. FACULTY SENATE CHAIR REPORT



- a. Nichols Rhew discussed updates about pay policies and faculty travel, per diem rates, presidential search listening sessions, and rules of order.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS – NONE

VII. OLD BUSINESS – NONE

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Kyle Mara, in response to Charge 2024_06_Incomplete_Grade_Policy (attached), moved to change the incomplete grade policy ([found here](#)) to read:

“The designation IN (incomplete) may be used in special circumstances. An incomplete grade (IN) may be given only at the end of a term to a student whose work is passing, but who has left unfinished a small amount of work, for example, a final examination, a paper, or a term project which may be completed without further class attendance. The student must ~~act to remove the IN grade within one calendar year. If action is not taken~~ **complete the requirements of the course by a reasonable date determined by the instructor, which should not exceed 365 days from the submission of final grades for the term in which the student received the IN grade. If the course requirements are not completed by that date,** the IN grade will revert to an F. In the event the instructor from whom a student receives an incomplete is not available, the disposition of a case involving an incomplete grade resides with the appropriate dean.”

Brett Anderson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER

- a. Todd Schroer raised concerns about the difficulty of scheduling events for student organizations.

X. ADJOURNMENT – With no further business, Nicholas Rhew adjourned the meeting at 4:189m.

CHARGE TO THE USI FACULTY SENATE

Formal Request for USI Faculty Senate Action

Name: Rich Bennett (Optional)

Date of Submission: 08/23/2024

Name of Faculty Senate Representative:

1. Kyle Mara
2. Guoyuan Huang
3. Susan Ely

Complete the following items and submit this form to either your Faculty Senate Representative or to the Faculty Senate Chair for consideration by the Faculty Senate.

1. Charge Title:

Clarification of Incomplete Grade Designation Policy (Registrar)

2. Background:

Provide an explanation of the background and context for the proposed charge. What problem, issue, or experience prompts the proposal of the charge?

In the fall 2023 semester, I gave a student (Student A) an incomplete (IN) grade for BIOL334.001. On 8/15/24, I received an email from the registrar saying that the student's grade needed to be update by 11/22/24 or it would revert to an F. I replied that the policy states that the student has a year to complete the requirements of the course and that the deadline to convert the IN to a grade should be sometime in the middle of December 2024. I asked if I was misinterpreting something. The registrar replied back saying that the 11/22/24 date was "arbitrarily selected" and then over the course of a few email exchanges clarified that "Incomplete grades must be finalized prior to the end of term (12/13/2024) because of GPA calculations, Course Repeats, Academic Standing, Dean's List, and Latin Honors, all of which impact many other downstream processes." However, I struggle to understand why this is only required for IN grades. After all, all grades issued affect those things mentioned, but they aren't due by 11/22/24. Additionally, if IN grades need to be resolved by the end of the semester, why not make the deadline...in this instance...12/13/2024? Why three weeks earlier? Are there so many IN grades pending that it requires 3 weeks to process them all? Maybe there's something I don't understand.

Additionally, I submitted an IN for another student (Student B) for the fall 2021 semester. On 8/26/22 I received an email from the registrar stating that I had until 12/5/22 to submit a grade

for her. So, even though 12/5/22 is later in the semester than 11/22/24, it shows that the deadlines are not being established according to policy and neither are they being established consistently. I should have had until like 12/20/22 to submit Student B's grade.

Regardless, during my email exchanges with the registrar, I rechecked the actual policy and found that it's more confusing than what I thought. The policy states, regarding completion time for an IN grade, "The student must act to remove the IN grade within one calendar year. If action is not taken, the IN grade will revert to an F." The use of the phrase "calendar year" is what is now causing increased confusion for me. The phrase "calendar year" is meant to represent the span of time that has a specific start date of January 1 of one year and a specific end date of December 31 of that same year from what I understand. So, in the scenario of Student A, she had/has until either December 31, 2023 or December 31, 2024 to complete the course, since the specific calendar year to be referenced is not identified in the policy. This could cause further confusion if a student receives an IN for the spring semester. If we apply the term "calendar year" to a spring semester situation, then does that mean they have until December 31 of that same year or December 31 of the following year to complete the class? I think the assumption is neither and that the student would have until the end of the following spring semester to complete the course, but the use of the phrase "calendar year," I think, confounds that assumption.

My suspicion, and I think the one that most, if not all, faculty that have given an IN have operated by, is that the spirit of the policy is to give a student a year (i.e. 365 days from the submission of the IN grade) to complete the course. However, I believe that words mean things, and the use of the phrases "calendar year" and "act to remove the grade" are confusing and could be a place where a student could challenge the reception of an F if they were under the impression that they had longer to complete the course...and rightfully so. And maybe that's not a big deal. Maybe a simple change of grade form would remedy those situations. However, with a policy like this, I think it's important to be crystal clear how much time a student has to complete the requirements to convert an IN to an actual grade. After all, as the registrar alluded to, some students have scholarships; they might be vying for a spot in a competitive program; they might be an athlete; they might be up for an award; they could be an international student on a government program that requires a standard of performance; they might be participating in a reimbursement program with an employer, etc. Thus, it is possible the consequences of having

an unclear and inconsistently applied policy could be farther reaching than just recording a grade on a transcript.

Additionally, the phrase "The student must act to remove the IN grade..." doesn't really describe what the student needs to do to complete the work. Students don't "remove" the grade. They complete the work and then the faculty member submits a form to convert the grade from an IN to a letter grade. This might be a little bit of splitting hairs, but if we decide to change it, we might as well make things a little more clear.

Lastly, what grades are acceptable for an IN grade? Are withdrawals (W) acceptable. If a student realizes that they are not going to be able to finish the class, could they...I guess, retroactively...withdraw from the course? That would actually benefit Student A. She has changed majors to one that does not require BIOL334. And it would have definitely benefitted Student B, because she did not complete the course for health reasons. Issuing that F was one of the hardest things I've had to do, and I still feel guilty about it. Anyway, what about P/NP options? I don't know if these questions are addressed in another policy. If it is, I think it should either be repeated in the IN grade policy or at least referenced in the policy.

3. Action Requested and Desired Result:

Specifically state what action you would like the Senate to take and the desired outcome that you would like to see.

Request 1:

I would like the policy to be written to clearly identify how much time a student has to complete the course when given an IN grade so that it can be converted to an earned grade.

Request 2:

I would like the policy to be rewritten to better reflect the student's role in getting the IN grade converted to an earned grade. As I mentioned, students do not "act to remove the grade." They complete the requirements of the course.

Request 3:

I think the policy should clarify which grades are allowable to submit for converting an IN to a grade. If that policy already exists, simply repeating that policy or referencing it in this policy will suffice. If not, I would like for a policy to be written that clarifies which grades can be used to replace an IN grade.

Whatever the language ends up being, I think it should reflect that...

1. ...students have a year (i.e. 365/366 days) to complete their work from the date the IN was submitted by the faculty member (i.e. last day/time faculty can submit grades), and
2. ...that the student's responsibility in getting the grade changed from IN to a letter grade is identified as completing the remaining coursework, and
3. ...which grades are allowed to be issued to convert the IN to a grade.

Below are some suggestions I have regarding Requests 1 and 2. I don't have enough information to make a suggestion for Request 3.

1. "The student must complete the requirements of the course no later than 1 year after the IN grade was submitted. If the requirements are not completed by that time, the grade will automatically revert to an F."
2. "The student must complete the requirements of the course no later than the end of the same, subsequent semester in which the IN was received. If the requirements are not completed by that time, the grade will automatically revert to an F." - Note: I'm trying to say that if they receive the IN in a fall semester, they have until the end of the next fall semester to finish the requirements. If they receive the IN in a spring or summer semester/term, then they have until end the next spring or summer semester/term a year later, respectively, to finish the requirements. I'm not sure if this is the way to say that.
3. "The student must complete the requirements of the course no later than the the same semester a year later from the semester the IN was received. If the requirements are not completed by that time, the grade will automatically revert to an F." - Note: This is just another version of version 2 above...version 2.2.0 if you will.
4. "The student must complete the requirements of the course no later than 365 days after receiving the IN grade. If the requirements are not completed by that time, the grade will revert to an F." Note: The issue with this is that 365 days could put the deadline a few days before or after the deadline to turn in grades for a given semester. However, I think that is trivial.
5. "The student must complete the requirements of the course by the end of the semester not later than 1 year after the date the IN was reported to the registrar's office. If the requirements are not completed by that time, the grade will automatically revert to an F."

4. Potential Resources:

Provide any information that can help Faculty Senate fully address the charge. Attach additional documents if necessary.

Attachment 1: Current policy on IN grades (see highlighted text)

Attachment 2: Email string between Rich Bennett and William Pool (Registrar's Office) regarding Student A.

Attachment 3: Email string between Rich Bennett and William Pool (Registrar's Office) regarding Student B

Items 5-7 are to be completed by Senate Chair or Secretary:

5. Senate Comments:

6. Action Taken by the Faculty Senate:

7. Action Taken by the Administration: