I. Membership and meetings of the Academic Standards Committee:

Faculty members of the 2014-2015 Academic Standards Committee included Kenneth Clark, Karl Fields, James Jasinski, Kristin Johnson, Adam Smith, Johanna Crane, Jan Leuchtenberger, Martins Linauts, Gary McCall, Don Share, Keith Ward, and Ann Wilson. Student representatives on the ASC were Drew Anderson for the full year, Daniel Laesch in the fall, and Elizabeth King in the spring. Ex-Officio members included Sarah Shives, Lori Ricigliano, Sunil Kukreja, Brad Tomhave, Kelli Delaney and Landon Wade.

Jim Jasinski chaired the ASC during Fall 2014, and Jan Leuchtenberger chaired the committee during Spring 2015.

The ASC petitions subcommittee normally met every week and the ASC policy subcommittee normally met every other week.

II. Summary of Work on the Formal Charges from the Faculty Senate to the ASC:

1. Continue consideration of options for revisions of the framework for course schedules with the goals of 1) meeting the preferences of faculty (for example, rethinking the balance of scheduling courses for two, three, or four days per week), 2) using available campus spaces more efficiently, 3) maintaining some commitment to curricular and co-curricular program offerings between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m., and 4) locating a common hour.

Before the ASC addressed this issue in the spring, it was approached by its Senate liaison and asked if it would prefer to deal with it in the ASC, or whether it would like to ask the Senate to appoint an ad-hoc committee to pursue the charge. The ASC discussed this request at its meeting of February 16, 2015. The conclusion of the Committee was that there were so many stakeholders in this issue that it would be more productive for the Senate to assemble an ad-hoc committee that best represented all of those constituencies. The Committee formally voted to request that the Senate form such a committee. Jan Leuchtenberger then forwarded to our Senate Liaison all of the research that had been compiled by the ASC when it began considering this issue several years ago (at that time deliberation of the issue was put on hold because of the implementation of PeopleSoft).
2. Review the revisions made by the Offices of the Registrar and Admissions of the published materials made available to prospective students regarding the University's transfer of Running Start credit policy.

The ASC addressed this charge at its meeting of May 4, 2015. Brad Tomhave reported that the Running Start program is changing and will soon include a new program called Running Start in the High School. Because we cannot revise our admission materials until we know how the new program will take shape, the ASC determined that this charge should be postponed until next fall.

The ASC recommends that the Senate once again include this item in its charges to the Committee next year.

3. Consider revising University policies related to accepting transfer credits either from incoming students or from students already matriculated at Puget Sound (including transfer credits from community college beyond the current “junior status” of 16 units or inclusion of exam scores from the Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education in the grouping with current AP and IB transfer credits).

The ASC considered this charge at its meetings of October 3, 2014 and October 24, 2014. Members of the committee noted that the policy that prohibits students from transferring credits from community colleges after their sophomore year seemed to be a contradictory one, as students on campus are allowed to take 100- or 200-level courses in their junior or senior years. Some members noted that the policy had been put in place a long time ago, when Puget Sound was more of a commuter school, but that it no longer was necessary to maintain the integrity of the four-year college experience. The Committee voted to remove the passage from the Academic Handbook that states, “once a student has earned 16.00 units total, that student is no longer eligible to transfer credit from a community college.”

On the question of whether or not to include the Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education in the grouping with current AP and IB transfer credits, Brad Tomhave reported that there is the possibility of statewide action among public and private institutions regarding these certificates, so it would be better to wait and see what positions other institutions take.

4. Consider adopting a medical withdrawal policy in study away or study abroad that involves organizations other than the University of Puget Sound.

The Committee addressed this issue at its meetings of March 23, 2015 and April 20, 2015. The issue came up when a Puget Sound student withdrew
from a study abroad program early in the semester and then sought to return to campus and resume classes at Puget Sound that same semester. There is no current policy governing this situation. In that case the Petitions Committee asked for some minimal medical documentation so as to ascertain that the student was fit to resume classes at Puget Sound, but since the student hadn’t withdrawn according to our on-campus protocol, there was no process or policy relating to reinstatement.

After some discussion the committee decided that it would be wise to amend the existing medical withdrawal policy to state that students taking a medical withdrawal from another institution must go through the University’s process governing reinstatement after a medical withdrawal. This will provide the Petitions Subcommittee with the type of documentation that will allow it to better assure that the student is healthy enough to return to classes. New language for the medical withdrawal policy and for the study abroad section of the Handbook was approved by the Committee at the meeting of April 20, 2015.

5. Clarify and consider revising the Incomplete Grade Policy.

This issue was addressed at the meetings of December 5, 2014, February 16, March 2, March 23, April 20 and May 4, 2015. Over that time, the Committee discussed several aspects of the Incomplete Grade Policy, including the circumstances under which Incompletes may be given, time to completion of Incompletes, statistics on how many Incompletes are given each year, and how many result in passing and failing grades.

Ultimately, the ASC determined that the portion of the policy that needed revision was the deadline for submitting work, which was originally midterm of the following semester. Not only was the time students had to finish much greater between the spring and fall semesters than it was between the fall and spring semesters, there was concern that students tend to wait until the last minute and they would be less likely to successfully convert the Incomplete when they were fully engaged with classes in the next semester.

The ASC approved a revised Incomplete Grade Policy that requires work to be submitted by the end of the second week of the following semester, with grades due from the instructor within three working days of the submission of the work. New language for the Academic Handbook was approved, though because the Academic Calendar has already been completed, the new policy will not be applied until the 2016-17 academic year.

6. Looking back over the work of the committee during the 2014-15 academic year, indicate in your end of year report whether the size of the committee was appropriate and identify any committee work that seemed superfluous.
The ASC addressed this charge at the meeting of April 20, 2015. The Committee determined that the size seems appropriate. Though it is one of the larger standing committees, it divides into two subcommittees (petitions and policy). In addition, the range of views available from this number of faculty and staff representing departments and offices from across campus are beneficial to the work of the Committee.

Similarly, the Committee felt that the work assigned the Committee is appropriate in quantity and scope.

Additional Charges

7. Consider revising the sanction policy in the Academic Handbook to take into consideration the role of summer courses in determining a student’s academic status.

This issue was deliberated by the ASC in its meetings of October 3, 2014 and October 24, 2014. Currently, the Handbook policy states that a student placed on Academic Warning who, in the next semester, is again subject to Academic Warning may be suspended by the Academic Standards Committee. Because the language specifies semesters, it was unclear whether or not poor performance in the summer term could trigger a suspension. The ASC approved new policy language that specifically states that the ASC may consider the summer session as a “semester” for purposes of suspending a student. Because this new policy language affected probation and dismissal policies, those policies were similarly revised and that new language was approved at the meeting of November 14, 2014.

8. Consider developing a Parental Leave Policy or revising the Leave of Absence policy to include specific provisions for partners of pregnant women to allow them to care for the mother and/or child.

A Parental Leave Subcommittee (Ann Wilson, chair, Sunil Kukreja, Landon Wade, Johanna Crane and Drew Anderson) was formed at the beginning of the fall semester and presented a report to the Policy Subcommittee at the meeting of November 14, 2014. Based on that report, the ASC voted to revise the language of the current Leave of Absence policy on page 28 of the Academic Handbook to be more inclusive of mothers who had recently given birth or adopted a child or partners who need time away to care for the mother and/or child. The new language reads:
Students may request leaves for health or financial reasons, uncertainty about academic or career goals, personal considerations such as health related conditions within families, other significant changes within family circumstances or educational opportunities not available at the university.

9. Consider revising the way that the Registrar’s office applies language transfer credit to satisfy the Foreign Language Graduation Requirement.

In the past students who took Language 101 in a quarter system and then came here to take 102 with a semester system ended the year with less than 2 full units, thus not satisfying the language requirement. As a result, they have had to take 201 as well to make that up or they have petitioned. Traditionally, those petitions have been denied because they have the option of taking the proficiency test. However, the tests cost the university money and many students in this position have not been able to pass them.

Most language professors feel that finishing 101 (Q) and 101 (S) satisfies the spirit of the language requirement. The issue came up in the Curriculum Committee (CC) last year and language profs in the room asked for something to be done. CC has a working group looking into the issue, but is concerned that it is also an ASC policy issue.

The ASC considered and approved new guiding language for the Registrar’s office that would allow them to substitute a single transferred first or second quarter of a 100 college level foreign language course for the 101 level semester provided that the students successfully completes a semester of that foreign language at the 102 college level.

III. ASC Recommendations for Charges to the 2015-16 Academic Standards Committee

1. Review and approve the University’s Running Start credit transfer policy as articulated by the Offices of the Registrar and Admissions.

IV. Summary of Petitions and Hearing Boards

Petitions

At the September 5, 2014, meeting of the Academic Standards Committee, the Registrar was delegated the authority to convene a Petition Preview Team of Associate Dean Sunil Kukreja and Academic Advising Director Landon Wade to review and possibly approve petitions submitted by students. The authority to
approve is extended to the Preview Team based on previous approval actions of the Sub-Committee in similar circumstances. Delegating this authority relieves the Petitions Sub-Committee of work on ordinary issues for which the Sub-Committee has a history of approval.

The year-end petitions report for 2013-14 included petitions acted upon from September 6, 2013, to April 2, 2014. Petitions activity for the year continued during the period of April 3 to September 4, 2014. During this time, 92 petitions were acted upon with 83 approved and 9 denied.

To complete the report for 2013-14, covering the period of September 6, 2013, to September 4, 2014, 286 total petitions were acted upon with 260 approved and 26 denied. Of these 286 petitions, almost three quarters involved the following 5 actions:

- 73 Late Registrations
- 44 Readmissions or Reinstatements from Dismissal or Suspension
- 38 Medical Withdrawals
- 30 Reinstatements from a Medical Withdrawal
- 28 Registrations with a Schedule Conflict

213 Total (74%)

The year-end petitions report for 2014-15 covers the period from September 5, 2014, to April 30, 2015. During this time, 223 petitions were acted upon with 204 approved and 19 denied. Of these 223 petitions, almost three quarters involved the following 5 actions:

- 52 Registrations with a Schedule Conflict
- 35 Medical Withdrawals
- 30 Late Registrations
- 29 Readmissions or Reinstatements from Dismissal or Suspension
- 17 Acceptance of Transfer Credit during the Senior Year

163 Total (73%)

**Hearing Boards**

On behalf of the ASC, Sunil Kukreja convened Hearing Boards during the period between June 2014-April 2014 to review 3 cases related to academics. These included two cases of plagiarism and one grade dispute.