Curriculum Management

and **THE ROLE OF THE REGISTRAR**

American Association of Collegiate
Registrars and Admissions Officers
One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 520
Washington, DC 20036–1135

Tel: (202) 293–9161 | Fax: (202) 872–8857 | www.aacrao.org

For a complete listing of AACRAO publications, visit bookstore.aacrao.org.

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, founded in 1910, is a nonprofit, voluntary, professional association of more than 11,000 higher education administrators who represent more than 2,600 institutions and agencies in the United States and in forty countries around the world. The mission of the Association is to provide leadership in policy initiation, interpretation, and implementation in the global educational community. This is accomplished through the identification and promotion of standards and best practices in enrollment management, information technology, instructional management, and student services.

© Copyright 2016 American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from AACRAO.

AACRAO adheres to the principles of non-discrimination without regard to age, color, handicap or disability, ethnic or national origin, race, religion, gender (including discrimination taking the form of sexual harassment), marital, parental or veteran status, or sexual orientation.

**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA**

Names: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, author.

Title: Curriculum management and the role of the registrar / American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

Description: Washington, DC : American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, [2016] | Includes bibliographical references.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016016472 | ISBN 9781578581146 (pbk.)

Subjects: LCSH: Curriculum planning—United States. | Education, Higher—Curricula—United States. | College registrars—United States.

Classification: LCC LB2806.15 .A44 2016 | DDC 375/.001—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2016016472

Contents

About the Authors i
Introduction v

CHAPTER **1**

Defining the Role of the Registrar in Curriculum Management 1

by Rebecca Mathern

Institution Type and Its Influence on the Registrar's Role 2
Shared Governance History 4
Shared Governance Models 4
Fully Collaborative Decision-Making Model 5
Distributed Decision-Making Model 5
Consultative Decision-Making Model 5
Blended Models 6
Committee Membership and Involvement 6

CHAPTER **2**

The Importance of Relationships and How to Build Them 9

by Rebecca Mathern and Julia Pomerenk

Contributing the Registrar's Cache of Curriculum Knowledge 10
Considering Shared Governance Models 11
Partnering in Any Model 11
Registrar as a Voting Member of Curriculum Committees 12
Registrar as an Ex-Officio Member of Curriculum Committees 12
Registrar as the Secretary for Curriculum Committees 12
Registrar as a Resource for Curriculum Committees 12
Assessing the Institutional Reputation of the Registrar's Office 13
Building Relationships and Contributing to Curriculum Management Work 13
Invite Oneself to the Table 13
Act as a Resource and Be Seen as a Resource 14
Increase Innovation 15
Steer Clear of Unintended Consequences 16
Avoid Saying No 16
Other Alternatives to No 16
Find Ways to Say Yes 17
Make it Happen 17

CHAPTER **3**

Accreditation and Assessment Considerations 19

by Reid Kisling

Standards 19
Faculty Oversight 20
Recording Curriculum and Changes 20
Substantive Changes and Approval 21
Limiting Exceptions 22

Students under Prior Curriculum Requirements or Teach Outs 22
Outcomes 23
Program 24
Course 24
Non-Course Elements 25
Assessment 25
Assessment Cycles 25
A Data-Rich Process 26
Catalog 26
Required Elements 26
To Print or Not to Print? 27
Disciplined Accreditation Considerations 27

CHAPTER 4

Curriculum Standards and Management Process 29

by Jason Brown

Curricular Action Process 32
Initiation 32
Development 33
Approval 33
Initiation 33
Course Development and Modification 34
Cyclical Course Reviews 36
Elements of Courses and Curriculum Standards 36
Course Classification 36
Course Types 37
Other Types of Courses 38
Timelines for Course Changes 38
Criteria for Evaluation of Course Proposal 39
Course Nomenclature: Subject Prefix, Number, and Suffix 39
Course Title 41
Course Credits 42
Course Type 42
Repeat Options 43
Course Description 43
Prerequisites 44
Co-Requisites 44
Recommendations 44
Information 45
Course Content Form 45
Course Performance Objectives/ Student Learning Outcomes 45
Course Outline 45
Program Development and Modification 45
Reasons for Developing a New Program 47
Reasons for Modifying or Inactivating an Existing Program 48
General Program Guidelines 48
New Program Request Guidelines 49
Program Title and Degree Conferred 49
Program Area Narrative 49
Program Description 49
Program Display 50
Supporting Documentation 50
Effective Dates 51
Resource Requirements 51
Evaluation Criteria for Program Proposals and Modifications 51

CHAPTER 5

Considerations for Graduate and Professional Programs 53

by Heather A. Chermak and Julia Pomerenk

Graduate Programs 53
Graduate Committee Composition 55
Professional Programs 55
Law 55
Considerations for Health Sciences Professional Programs 56
Medicine 57
Pharmacy 58
Veterinary Medicine 58
Special Requirements for Health Science Professional Programs 59
Documentation 59
The Role of the Registrar's Office 60

CHAPTER 6

Competency-Based Environments 63

by Darin R. Hobbs, Kurt R. Linberg, and David Leasure

Competency Units and the U.S. Department of Education 65
Course-Based Curricula at Western Governors University 66
Transfer Students and Foundational Competency 67
Credit by Examination 68
The Transfer of WGU Competency Units to a Traditional Institution 69
Future Considerations 69

CHAPTER **7**

Technology 71

by Robert Morley

Evaluating the Need for Curriculum Management Software 72
Institutional Autonomy and Culture 72
Selecting Software from an Outside Vendor 73
Key Functionality 74
Administrative Workflow 74
User Access 74
User Action 74
Learning Objectives 75
Course Set 75
Reporting 75
Desired Functionality 75
Administrator/User 76
Publishing/Printing 76
Additional Enhancements 76
Export Courses from the Curriculum Management System to SIS/ERP 76
Export of Programs from Curriculum Management to a Degree Audit System 78
Security 78

APPENDIX **A**

AACRAO 60-Second Survey on Curriculum Management Practices 81

APPENDIX **B**

Glossary of Terms 85

References 87

About the Authors

Jason Brown

Jason Brown is acting director of curriculum and articulation services for Pima Community College in Tucson, Arizona. He holds a bachelor of science in political science from Arizona State University and a master of arts in library and information science from the University of Arizona. Brown has a professional career that spans the non-profit and higher education arenas. He has served as executive-level support and as a curriculum coordinator at Pima Community College for the past ten years.

Heather A. Chermak

Heather A. Chermak currently serves as university registrar at the University of Idaho. She earned a bachelor of business administration in management information systems from the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire and her master of science in administrative leadership from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. Chermak began her higher education career at Oregon State University as assistant registrar. She learned about becoming a registrar from an AACRAO brochure she discovered in the Evanston Public Library in 1994. Before transitioning to a career in higher education, she managed a trading desk for a national brokerage firm in Chicago, Illinois. She has served in many roles for ORACRAO and PACRAO, culminating in serving as PACRAO president in 2014–2015.

Darin R. Hobbs

Darin R. Hobbs has a rich background in policy application with an emphasis in property and casualty insurance adjudication, rehabilitation case management, workers' compensation, and catastrophic storm deployment. He is also experienced in nonprofit management. After accepting a position at Western Governors University in 2009, Hobbs was quickly promoted to university registrar in recognition of his operational strengths. He

is a member of the National Student Clearinghouse Advisory Committee, the PESC Academic Credentialing & Experiential Learning Task Force, as well as AACRAO. Hobbs earned both his degrees in psychology from Angelo State University (Texas).

Wendy Kilgore

Wendy Kilgore serves as director of research for AACRAO and has more than 19 years' experience as a higher education administrator and consultant in the United States and Canada. She brings expertise in recruitment, admissions, financial aid, academic advisement, curriculum support, registration, records management, veterans' education services, technology, organizational restructuring, student-centric business practice development, policy development, and managing comprehensive collaboration to support enrollment efforts. Prior to joining AACRAO full time in 2009, Kilgore served as state dean of enrollment services for the Colorado Community College system and as director of admissions and registrar for the Pima County Community College District. Her professional and consulting experience spans a wide array of institutions, including large public universities, small private colleges, private faith-based colleges, private for-profit institutions, technical colleges, a large two-year multi-campus community college district, and a state community college system.

Reid Kisling

Reid Kisling serves as dean of student development/registrar at Western Seminary (Oregon), where he holds administrative faculty status. He has worked in higher education administration since the late 1990s and has developed unique expertise in the areas of registrar's office functionality, organizational culture and change, organizational structure, and effective uses of student information systems to drive enrollment services and growth. Reid has participated on curriculum and self-study committees for several institutions. He holds a master of theology degree and a Ph.D. in organizational leadership and serves as a senior consultant with AACRAO Consulting.

David Leasure

An innovator in online higher education, David Leasure has founded online university programs, developed problem-based approaches to online learning, and emphasized STEM education and technology. He joined Western Governors University in 2012 as provost. Leasure earned bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in computer science and was a tenured professor of computer science at Texas A&M University Corpus Christi, where he researched effective applications of technology to learning. Previously he served as provost and chancellor at Colorado Technical University and led the creation of CTU Online. He supported the quality implementation of online programs as a peer reviewer and team chair for the Higher Learning Commission.

Kurt R. Linberg

Kurt R. Linberg has been involved since 1999 with innovations in higher education as a teacher, mentor, and administrator. As an in-

dependent consultant, Linberg helps colleges and universities implement innovative models that improve access, reduce costs, and improve learning outcomes. He recently served as vice president of curriculum development at Western Governors University. Previously, he was senior vice president/provost at American Sentinel University, where he oversaw healthcare learning innovations. He also served as dean of business and technology at the College of St. Scholastica, where he provided academic leadership to a traditional campus, five extended sites, and online programs. Linberg is the founding dean at Capella University, where he helped create business and technology bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs from 1999 to 2009. At Capella, Linberg oversaw 200 professors, 5,000 students, and nearly 200 courses.

Linberg holds a B.S. in applied mathematics, an M.S. in software engineering, and a Ph.D. in applied management and decision sciences. Prior to his career in academe, Linberg spent nearly two decades developing and managing life-critical software applications with Medtronic, Honeywell, and Alliant Techsystems. He is also the inventor or co-inventor of ten patents involving implementations of information technology in healthcare, including the Medtronic CareLink System.

Rebecca Mathern

Rebecca Mathern is university registrar at Oregon State University and has been involved in higher education for twenty years. She first learned to collaborate with academic leaders as a student government officer in college. She served previously as dean of students at a small non-profit technical school and as registrar of Portland Community College. Mathern earned her B.A. in political science from the University of Minnesota, where she subsequently earned an interdisciplinary master's degree in organizational development and human resources. Mathern is pursuing a Ph.D. in public administration and policy from Portland State University. She has enjoyed presenting on a variety of topics for AACRAO, PACRAO and Oregon ACRAO as well as for Ellucian and AACRAO Tech. She has served on program, local arrangement, and nominations and elections committees for PACRAO.

Robert Morley

Robert Morley has served as associate registrar at the University of Southern California for more than 30 years. During this time he has been responsible, at one time or another, for all offices and services in the registrar's office. Morley has led a number of technology initiatives, including the development of the student information system, electronic transcripts, PDF transcripts, degree progress/audit and curriculum management, among others. He served as the first AACRAO vice president for technology, chair of the SPEEDE committee, and contributing author to the following AACRAO publications: *Student Records Management, Academic Record and Transcript Guide*, and *Professional Development Guidelines for Registrars*. Morley earned a B.S. from the University of Southern Il-

linois and an M.P.A. from the University of Southern California.

Julia A. Pomerenk

Julia A. Pomerenk serves as university registrar at Washington State University. She earned her B.A. in English from Pacific Lutheran University and her M.A. in English from The Ohio State University. Pomerenk began her career as an admissions counselor at Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) and later returned as university registrar. Most of her career has been at Washington State University, where she served as assistant registrar for nine years and as university registrar for 13 years (and counting). Pomerenk has enjoyed involvement with PACRAO, including serving as PACRAO president for 2011– 12, and with AACRAO, including serving as AACRAO nominations and elections chair for 2017–18.

Introduction

by **Wendy Kilgore**

At institutions of higher education in the United States, the role of the registrar in curriculum management varies by institutional culture, size, and shared governance model. As evident from AACRAO's recent survey on the topic, curriculum action processes vary across institutions—as do the individuals, groups, and offices involved in those processes (*see* Appendix A: AACRAO 60-Second Survey on Curriculum Management). Some registrars are highly engaged in the process, serving as a voting member of the faculty governance body. Other registrars are the last to know about curricular changes and become responsible for making square pegs fit into round holes. In this model, the registrar sometimes has to say, "I'm sorry, but we are unable to make that particular curricular change" because of XYZ policy, federal regulation, or system limitation. In such situations, students are often the ones who bear the consequences of a disengaged registrar's office.

Ideally, the registrar is closely involved with the curriculum management process. Among other functions, an engaged role in curriculum management process is one that provides data to support proposed curricular changes; provides feedback on the guidelines for curriculum actions; and provides reasoned and data-driven recommendations in support of or against proposed actions (*e.g.*, mid-year catalog change, course number change, etc.). The registrar also is typically responsible for implementing required curriculum changes in the student information system, catalog, web pages, reporting platform, and degree audit system.

Curriculum management should be both nimble and reasoned: nimble in that associated policies and procedures are not so strict

as to limit the institution's ability to respond to necessary and needed curricular changes in a timely manner, and reasoned in that checks and balances should be in place to control the number, type, and timing of curriculum changes. This helps ensure the integrity of the degrees and helps maintain the ability to accurately and effectively advise students about degree requirements.

This guide is intended to help registrars understand how to help support reasoned and nimble curriculum management at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Included are recommendations and examples of how to establish and maintain positive working relationships with academics and other stakeholders; how to say "no" as needed; how to manage processes associated with curriculum management; and how to guide the application of technology. Additional content includes successes and challenges relative to curriculum management in the emerging competency-based education environment and accreditation and assessment considerations.

Wendy Kilgore, Ph.D.
Director of Research
AACRAO