

**ACADEMIC POLICIES COMMITTEE**  
**October 27, 2021**  
**Zoom Meeting from 2-3 p.m.**

Members Present: Cassandra Garcia, Keith Goyne, Chair, Kimberly Smith, Keith Thompson

Members Absent: Robin Panneton (on research leave), Susan Sumner

Guests: Harrison Blythe, Michel Pleimling, Katie Polidoro, Rick Sparks, Ellie Sturgis, Pamela Vickers, Vivian Yamoah

Recorder: Arlice Banks, Executive Administrative Assistant, College of Natural Resources and Environment

*Keith Goyne, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.*

**I. New Business. Keith Goyne opened the floor to comments on Version 11 of the Draft Compassionate Relief Policy**

- A. Section 3.2, Comment, Review and Approval Process, Steps 1-3. The suggestion was made to reorder the first three steps as follows: 1) Office of University Scholarships and Financial Aid, 2) Cranwell International Center, and then (3) college comments from the academic associate dean. The rationale for this change would allow the academic associate dean to include pertinent information received from the first two entities that may affect the student's academic status if academic relief (AR) is granted, and therefore, could influence the academic associate dean's comments regarding the feasibility of the request.
  - 1. Keith Goyne indicated that having the academic associate dean provide comments first served as early notification for the college to be aware that the student was going through this process. Notifications coming back to the college from the Office of University Scholarships and Financial Aid and Cranwell International Center would allow for discussion between the academic associate dean and the student to ensure that the student is fully informed of any implications due to the request. The committee will discuss this suggestion to determine if the steps could be refined to some extent.
  
- B. Section 3.2, Comment, Review and Approval Process, Steps 6 and 7. The student should not be notified of the Compassionate Relief Committee's (CRC) decision until after the Office of the University Registrar has taken action on the accounts and records of the student granted relief. The current version has the student being notified before the Office of the University Registrar takes action on the accounts/records of students granted relief.

1. Keith Goyne: The committee was trying to streamline some of the college's processing work. I understand your point about reversing the order of Steps 6 and 7, and the committee can evaluate this.
- C. Section 3.2, Comment, Review and Approval Process, Step 4. "The campus entity determined most appropriate for reviewing a request shall gather additional information from the student and meet with them as needed, review the student's case, and make a written assessment that includes a recommendation on the student's request to the Compassionate Relief Committee." What do you want in the written assessment besides a recommendation?
1. Keith Goyne: The committee will need to discuss what that content should be and what the different groups would provide as part of the implementation phase. However, it would not be appropriate to ask for private or medical information.
- D. There are only two offices where international students can get immigration relief, Cook Counseling Center and Schiffert Health Center. So, I don't know if there is a way to indicate in the policy that international students, as part of this process, need to be aware that relief through some of the other offices may not meet immigration requirements. Does Cranwell International Center need to document this internally, or should additional information for the student be added to this policy?
1. Keith Goyne: If you have additional information that you can share with the committee regarding this matter, I think we can evaluate whether this needs to be worked into the policy or handled with internal documentation.
  2. Keith Thompson: When the student logs into the system, is there a way to determine whether a student has a Visa, and thereby, the system routes the student's request to the Cranwell International Center?
  3. Rick Sparks: It depends on how the system is developed. Ideally, all of the information is in Banner. By practice, once something becomes policy, a more straightforward version of the policy is written for the undergraduate catalog. As we design this tool, we should keep in mind to incorporate Keith Thompson's suggestion where the requests are automatically routed to the Cranwell International Center.
- E. I have concerns regarding the committee's voting process and what criteria or standards the committee members will use to vote. For example, if I'm making a recommendation as a Title IX coordinator, but I'm not sharing private information with the committee, what is the safety net if the committee might vote in opposition to the Title IX coordinator's recommendation? How do we take care of our compliance requirements under Title IX in providing academic assistance when the final say may rest with a different group of people who don't have the information without reaching out to the Title IX coordinator?

1. Keith Goyne: As the Title IX coordinator, you are listed as a CRC member, so you would be present to advocate and answer questions appropriate for you during those discussions when you had a student seeking CR. Also, there is an appeal process through the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, Rachel Holloway.
  2. Rick Sparks: Another role of the committee is to evaluate the accommodation that's being recommended. While we have a statute that says that we must provide an accommodation, it doesn't specify what it should be. The CRC is measuring the academic response, not that they will have all of the details that occurred, but rather is this accommodation reasonable from an academic perspective.
  3. Keith Goyne: Also, The CRC ensures that students are being treated fairly across the different groups that might be making recommendations. The committee needs to have a degree of consistency in how it approaches requests.
- F. It could be problematic that the committee could review and veto or overturn a request for an accommodation or a remedy for a found violation that is a legal obligation. Aside from that, the process of sharing information related to an accommodation or a found violation policy request with the entire CRC gives me pause, and I think it could be a compliance concern under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, ADA, Title IV, etc. Essentially, the regulations vest authority to individuals to ensure that the appropriate remedy or accommodation is provided to a student when an obligation arises. I am concerned with a committee being vested with the authority to overturn the decision by a Title IX or Section IV Coordinator. Even if there is an appeal process, unless that appeal would go to the coordinator or person granted that authority, I think we are still in the same place.
1. Rick Sparks: The academic perspective, ensured with this committee, is not to circumvent the statute that allows you to put forth an accommodation. The CRC is not set up to second guess the work of the Director of Civil Rights Compliance, Title IX Coordinator, etc., but to provide consistency from an academic perspective, and I would argue that from an academic perspective, the academic associate deans are the only ones who can provide that consistency.
  2. Perhaps a sentence or two regarding the committee vote could be added to the policy laying out the criteria of what the committee will consider or what they should balance in their vote to provide context. This additional language would be helpful to new employees who are hired into our current roles, so they are aware of what this committee is voting on and its implications.
  3. Keith Goyne: How are accommodations defined under the statutes that you work under? Is AR defined as an accommodation and, if so, how?

4. With all of these regulations, there isn't anything spelled out specifically as an accommodation that the university must provide in any particular instance. Instead, the process for deciding what the university is legally obligated to provide someone is always an individualized assessment given the student's needs in that situation and taking into account all of the contexts. So, it is essentially what a student must have to access the university's educational programs and activities fully, and whether a denial of that access is related to general disability, sex, race, national origin, etc. When I think about AR, I think about what we are legally obligated to do—restore the student's access to educational programs and activities. This policy relates to what I'm describing because it may require something that looks like what is described as compassionate relief in this policy.
  5. Rick Sparks: Your explanation helps me understand your concerns. I do not see the situations you described as being AR because they fall outside of the bounds of this committee. All found violations are processed as instructed by University Legal Counsel.
  6. Keith Goyne: Maybe for those matters associated with ADA and Title IX, there is a statement in the policy that states that legally required accommodations associated with ADA and Title IX are not within the CRC's purview and are handled by University Legal Counsel.
- G. I still have some concerns about calling this policy Compassionate Relief. Students could interpret that if they are not granted a request, the university is not compassionate. I like the idea of calling the policy Academic Relief, which is not such a loaded term.
1. Three individuals agreed with this comment.
  2. Keith Goyne said that the committee would discuss this topic again.

## **II. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 p.m.