The Chair welcomed new and returning members and guest attendees and invited them to introduce themselves. She indicated that, regrettably, Karen Finnsson has had to resign. Action is being taken to have the Nominating Committee recommend Lynn Cavanagh as her replacement until June 30, 2010.

1. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

   Crowe - Riemer

   moved approval of the agenda as distributed.

   CARRIED

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – June 9, 2009**

   Riemer - Ryan

   moved the approval of the minutes of the meeting of June 9, 2009 as circulated with one amendment to include Dawn Flood in the list of members sending regrets.

   CARRIED

3. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

   3.1 Recommendation regarding Repeated Courses

   It was reported that the motion regarding Repeated Courses, as detailed in Item 5.8 of the June 9, 2009 agenda and minutes, which was recommended to Executive of Council for approval, was defeated. Members were asked how they would like to proceed as a result of this action.

   Why was the motion defeated? What were the concerns? It was suggested this regulation would encourage student irresponsibility if they knew repeating the course would not affect their grade in the course because the highest grade would stand. It was also noted that instructors felt students may not be motivated to do well if there was no affect on the outcome.
Typically students are repeating courses to improve either the grade in the class or their overall grade point average. Because they are required to pay for the repeated class, which is a significant expense, this would be the motivational factor to do well. Some students “NP” the class regardless of the cost. That means they either stop attending but don’t formally withdraw, or they fail to complete a mandatory component of a course.

Faculties have the right to override this rule.

Can any regulation be overridden by faculties? No. Which ones cannot be overridden? This is difficult to ascertain. Typically, they are academic regulations associated with program requirements, over which faculties have ultimate control.

Members were asked if they wished to resubmit or revisit this regulation. The answer was no.

4. OLD BUSINESS

4.1 Report from the RTD Sub-committee

Sub-committee members in attendance were: Katherine Arbuthnott, Glenda Good, Brien Maguire (Chair), and Rick Kleer. A rationale to support the report was distributed and is attached to these minutes as Appendix I.

In its deliberations, the committee discussed many things:

- Are there things that could be done better to help students succeed? This was reviewed as a retention issue.
- Early intervention could help students who aren’t doing well, but the signs related to this need to be recognized.
- There should be measures in place for students who are in a mandatory advising state. Adequate resources need to be in place to support this.
- Pros and cons of universal policies versus faculty flexibility.

A discussion of the report ensued, with points being raised as follows:

Consistency is desired.

The regulations contained in the report are quite weak, the wording is too loose, and there are fewer stages for review than existing regulations have.

How long are students on probation? The committee was reluctant to define this as they preferred this judgment be left to the faculty based on the student’s performance.

Mandatory advising encourages early intervention, which is more conducive to principles of fairness and consistency.

Flexibility can be dangerous because it can lead to abuse. There should be guidelines developed which form part of each faculty’s entry in the undergraduate calendar.
When an rtd occurs, is it indefinite? Yes; however, indefinite equates to 2 years. In some cases, this is too long.

Some faculties, when students are required to discontinue, advise them to ‘spend some time in Arts’. Faculties should be sure they want their students to leave their faculty.

Two plus two students have little time to sort out their programs. Sometimes they remain in faculties taking courses that are not transferable to any other faculty.

Reference was made to Section 5.12.5.7 and the failure of English 100 after a third attempt. Some faculties are looking at removing English 100 as a degree requirement. There is a practical recognition of English 100, which is currently required for all degrees. This appears to be the only university regulation regarding rtds.

The situation surrounding distance students cannot be ignored. It is assumed in these regulations that all students are on-campus when they aren’t and therefore don’t have access to advisors. How are these students being supported? CCE needs to discuss this with faculties. Often these students don’t hit the 24-credit mark because CCE certificate programs are less than 24 credits. Distance education students are now subject to these regulations and how these students obtain advising needs to be addressed. Currently it’s not consistent or well done.

These regulations present problems for student appeals. Early intervention is important. Unless the process can be clearly articulated and applied, it won’t be clear and guidelines and parameters across the institution won’t be consistent.

The intent of these proposals is to give latitude, along with consistency and transparency. If faculties are given too much latitude, the job of the appeals committee becomes extremely more difficult.

International students could be adversely affected. If they are required to discontinue, it could result in them being asked to leave the country.

Many students don’t understand the regulations. What are we doing to help them make a successful transition? The Faculty of Science has tutoring and supplemental instruction. There needs to be a more holistic approach to fixing and addressing students’ problems.

Do we need to make holistic changes or can the existing regulations be used? Rtd regulations need to be consistent in the same way our programs are consistent. Criteria for ‘at risk’ students would be different. There are a number of details within our current regulations that don’t work. For example, we use the UGPA, which doesn't necessarily affect the PGPA and simply deflects the problems. Students are asked to repeat prerequisites. These proposed regulations allow decisions based on performance in recent semesters and eliminate all of the ‘messiness’.

Do we still need a university minimum standard? These new regulations eliminate the Freshstart program, remove the petitioning process, and remove the transcript notation for stage 1 but provide a ‘landing spot’ for students who aren’t succeeding.
Can we not have an earlier review of grades and students who are in trouble?

URSU should be asked to provide a statement about these regulations.

Was this report considered by the Student Issues Committee? Yes, but it was an earlier version. Mary Jesse offered to present them with the current version.

This report needs to be discussed further at the faculty and college level in order to sharpen the focus. Comments and replies from these areas should be submitted to CCUAS for additional discussion.

AGREED

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Report from the Faculty of Education

ITEM FOR APPROVAL

Ryan – Crowe

moved that the “Selection Criteria” for the Faculty of Education, as listed in §2.3.4.1, and as detailed in Appendix II, page 7 of the agenda material, be deleted from the Undergraduate Calendar.

CARRIED

6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The next meeting of the CCUAS is November 3, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. in the Boardroom, Fifth Floor, Administration/Humanities Building.

7. CONCLUSION

Ryan - Barber

moved conclusion of the meeting at 2:17 p.m.

CARRIED
APPENDIX I

Rationale to change existing Probation and Discontinuance (RTD) Policy to Mandatory Advising, Probation and Discontinuance (RTD) Policy

Current State:

- often students are put on probation too late to allow them to have a real shot at avoiding being discontinued
  - students are put on probation if after 24 credit hours their UGPA is below 60%
  - they are discontinued if after 39 credit hours their UGPA is still below 60%
  - often they improve in the remaining 15 credit hours but not by enough to raise their UGPA above 60%
  - so they are discontinued even though they have been doing better
  - this discourages rather than motivates students to do better
- often students are informed too late that they will be discontinued
  - UGPA calculations often aren't completed until a few weeks after the semester has ended
  - for students on probation during the fall semester, this means they can be a week or two into the winter semester before they receive notice that they must discontinue their studies
  - this is especially problematic for our international students, whose home is far away
- the existing policy is not conducive to retaining students
  - while students are not doing well in the faculty they first joined, often they have grades strong enough in courses in other faculties that they would not even be in probation in that other faculty, let alone be required to discontinue their studies
  - but since the decision on a requirement to discontinue depends on their university GPA (i.e. all their grades), they are required to discontinue anyway
- the current policy leads to frequent and unnecessary appeals
  - students see the 60% UGPA rule as arbitrary; they don't believe that a few tenths of a percentage point should make any difference to whether they're required to go; so they appeal to be allowed to stay
  - this is because the 60% UGPA rule doesn't make clear the main intent of the policy: to prevent students from finding themselves in a situation where it has become mathematically impossible for them to graduate

Future State:

(assuming approval of the new policy as written)

- the new policy will be based not on an arbitrary UGPA rule but on a criterion whose rationale is easy for students to grasp – namely whether or not their academic performance will eventually allow them to graduate
APPENDIX I

- the determination of “ability to graduate” will be Faculty-specific, allowing for students to transition smoothly to another faculty if they're not doing well in the one they initially joined
- students will begin being evaluated after their first semester, rather than waiting for 24 credit hours to pass prior to taking action
- students deemed to be in difficulty will receive mandatory advising, which should give them a good shot at turning things around before it is too late
- a graduated approach will be used, so that students will have plenty of warning that their behaviour is likely to lead to a requirement to discontinue; this way there should be far fewer ‘surprises’ when they are eventually asked to discontinue