MEMORANDUM

To: Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees
From: Frank Dooley, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning
Frank Blalark, University Registrar
Cc: Mitch Daniels, President
Deba Dutta, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Re: Comprehensive Review of University Student Academic Regulations
Date: December 15, 2014

Purpose. This memo provides background on a current initiative to conduct a comprehensive review of Purdue University’s student academic regulations (“Academic Regulations”) and requests the Committee’s endorsement of this effort, which is being managed by our offices in coordination with the Educational Policy Committee (“EPC”) of the University Senate.

Background. As you may recall, shortly after his arrival in 2013, President Daniels commissioned a comprehensive review of all Purdue system-wide policies to determine whether they were reasonable, internally-consistent, and necessary. That exercise resulted in some significant streamlining and other process improvements in our system-wide policy development process. However, the Academic Regulations were outside the scope of that review, and our offices are now leading a similar process for the internal guidance on the academic side of the house.

The Academic Relations generally refer to the regulations and procedures the University establishes and follows to help govern core academic functions, including those in the following categories, among others:

(i) academic year and calendar (e.g., timing and scheduling of exams, summer sessions)

(ii) academic programs (e.g., academic requirement definitions, academic classification of undergraduate students, units of credit, transfers of credits)

(iii) degrees, including their conferral and the requirements therefor; and

(iv) registration and course assignments (e.g., registration process, allowable academic loads, course assignments, schedule revisions, withdrawals from the University, refunding fees and tuition)
(v) grades and grade reports
(vi) scholastic deficiency and recognition (e.g., probation, Dean’s List, honors)
(vii) scholastic records (e.g., certificates of completion, notations on transcripts)

Historically, the University maintained the Academic Regulations in the form of a collection of bound volumes, small pamphlets, and guidance memos that had been compiled over time in paper form, which made for a very cumbersome process. In recent years, the University has transitioned to publishing and maintaining these regulations in digital form. In the course of making this transition, however, some gaps in coverage were inadvertently created. For example, some important regulations—thought to be obsolete—were prematurely retired. In other cases, changes in format and responsible departments resulted in accidental omissions of key details. The current holistic review of all Academic Regulations is intended to address these issues.

The end goals of the holistic review process are to:

(1) scrutinize all Academic Regulations with a view to determining whether they are up to date and internally consistent;

(2) develop a new template for Academic Regulations that, among other things, differentiates key rules and requirements from mere procedural language; and

(3) approve a process for regularly updating and enforcing the Academic Regulations and related procedures through authority delegated to the University Registrar.

The EPC has endorsed a plan to conduct this holistic review, which will include the manner by which changes and updates to the Academic Regulations will be submitted for consideration, voted, and approved by the University Senate. The new template for the Academic Regulations will also be presented to the Senate.

**Requested Action.** We are requesting that the Committee: (a) endorse the Academic Regulations holistic review process, (b) reaffirm the authority delegated by the Board of Trustees to the University Senate to adopt regulations and procedures related to the educational objectives of Purdue and the general welfare of those involved in its educational processes, and (c) recognize that the authority broadly delegated to the President and the Provost for the academic affairs of the University may be exercised by the University Registrar insofar as it relates to enforcement of the Academic Regulations.

We believe these Committee actions would set the appropriate “tone at the top” for the Academic Regulations review process and imbue it with the necessary authority to place it on a firm foundation for success—both in the context of the current review exercise and in the process for maintaining and enforcing the Academic Regulations going forward.

We are grateful for the Committee’s consideration of this important matter.
RESOLUTION OF THE
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (THE “COMMITTEE”)
of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”)
of the Trustees of Purdue University

REGARDING A PROCESS FOR CONDUCTING
A HOLISTIC REVIEW OF STUDENT ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

WHEREAS, the Board has the authority to make all bylaws, rules and regulations required or proper to conduct and manage Purdue University (IC 21-27-7-5); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article V, Section 5 of the Bylaws of the Trustees of Purdue University, the Committee has the authority to maintain oversight of the academic functions of Purdue University on behalf of the Board; and

WHEREAS, in the exercise of its statutory powers and responsibilities, the Board has delegated to the faculty, subject to the authority of the Board and in consultation with the President, the power and responsibility to adopt regulations and procedures intended to achieve the educational objectives of Purdue University and the general welfare of those involved in these educational processes; and

WHEREAS, as provided in Article I of its Bylaws, the University Senate is the governing body of the faculty; and

WHEREAS, the Committee has received a report on a current initiative to conduct a holistic review of Purdue University’s student academic regulations and related governance processes, which is being managed by the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning and the University Registrar in coordination with the Educational Policy Committee of the University Senate (“EPC”) and representatives of the regional campuses; and

WHEREAS, the student academic regulations do not govern or otherwise involve curriculum decisions but are nonetheless vital to the effective functioning of the academic life of the University and of each campus comprising the University system; and

WHEREAS, the holistic review process, which was summarized in a report reviewed by the Committee and which has been endorsed by the EPC, is not directed at formulating new academic regulations as much as it is intended to codify, clarify and ensure consistency in existing ones; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Committee’s oversight of the academic functions of the University, certain actions have been requested of the Committee relative to the holistic review of the student academic regulations:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Committee as follows:
1. The Committee hereby endorses the process for conducting a holistic review of the University’s student academic regulations in the manner reviewed and discussed at this meeting.

2. On behalf of the full Board, the Committee hereby reaffirms the authority delegated to the faculty, subject to the Board’s authority and as exercised through the University Senate in consultation with the President, to adopt regulations and procedures intended to achieve the educational objectives of Purdue University and the general welfare of those involved in these educational processes.

3. The faculty representatives on the Education Policy Committee, the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning, the University Registrar, and others involved in the holistic review process are encouraged to obtain input from each campus in the course of conducting it, so that the end result will identify and document system-wide regulations versus “local” regulations, as well as the means of adopting, implementing and monitoring them going forward.

4. The Committee hereby recognizes that the authority broadly delegated to the President and the Provost for administration of the academic affairs of the University may be exercised by the University Registrar insofar as it relates to the enforcement of the student academic regulations going forward.