

RAC minutes

November 3, 2008

Present: Frank Blalark, Amy Brewster, Laurel Carroll, Carla Claussen, Janet Crittenden, Dan Delaney, Tracy Fischer, Teresa Fruen, Laurie Gardner, Jamie Gearhart, Shelly Gehrke, Kit Gordon, Sarah Goskreutz, Emily Holt, Barb Jensen, Stephanie Lawson, Aileen Lively, Margo Mueller, Kathy Nolan, Linda Norcross, Ingrid Nuttall, Matt Nuttall, Les Opatz, Cindy Pavlowski, Andrea Raich, Lonna Riedinger, Cindy Salyers, Mary Ellen Shaw, Pat Sherman, Clare Strand, Nathan Tesch, Sue Van Voorhis, Kasi Williamson

Announcements:

- 1) Janet Crittenden handed out a flyer that can be duplicated and posted for the upcoming Veterans Appreciation Event on November 12. She notified the group that there has been a change to the agenda for the day: the flyover was canceled due to the deployment of the Air National Guard out of Duluth. The planning committee is working on arranging another flyover. A new feature of the event: students, staff, and faculty will have the opportunity to rappel off of the Armory (the height is about 60 feet). There will be an ad in the Daily about the event on Wednesday, November 5 and Monday and Tuesday, November 10 and 11.
- 2) Frank Blalark reminded the group that probation/suspension dates will be made available in early November once a couple of relevant processes have been run. This information will be posted on One Stop at http://onestop.umn.edu/staff/student_records/probation_suspension_schedule.html.
- 3) Kasi Williamson announced to the group that one of the issues arose after the launch of Graduation Planner launch involves the "term offered" field. In ECAS, when the input for this field is "offered when feasible," no year information is showing up (in other cases, it says "all years, even academic years, or odd academic years"). It is recommended that there be an option added that says "contact the department." Would this be an acceptable solution? Cindy Pavlowski noted that a lot of times the department really doesn't know when or if the course will be offered. Linda Norcross noted that having this option would be better than not showing the term. The group determined that adding this option was the best solution.

Changes to the October minutes: There were no changes to the October minutes.

SCEP policies:

Course Numbering: Tina Falkner noted that the subcommittee will be adding language regarding "zero credit" courses to clarify that these courses are remedial and carry billing credits. This has been approved by SCEP.

Kit Gordon noted that there are some zero level/zero credit courses in music for Junior and Senior recital requirements that are clearly not remedial. Clare Strand asked for any information about how

these courses end up being displayed as Morris has a similar course and would like to have an example to point to.

Cindy Salyers noted that if anything is changed with regard to Grad 0999, please contact IMS as they have a report that uses this number.

Aileen Lively noted there's a new zero level management course that does carry credits because Carlson wants it to appear in the front of the schedule; however, it will be replaced with four "real" classes after the second week.

Sue Van Voorhis noted that there was an Honors course that was zero level and carried one credit.

Tina Falkner reiterated that the understanding of what a zero level course is should be that it is a remedial course. This is aligned with our colleagues across the country. We will look at whatever we've plugged in as placeholders. But as we allow exceptions, it waters down the rationale that these are remedial.

Linda Norcross asked what percentage of courses offered are 2xxx level; Sue Van Voorhis responded that it's a very small percentage. Linda Norcross noted that the way it is stated is that these courses are primarily for undergraduate students in their second year.

Sue Van Voorhis asked for clarification regarding whether or not zero level courses can carry credit. The answer is no; they should not carry credit.

Tina Falkner noted that suffixes will be part of the procedure; specifically, that no additional ones should be used other than what is already there.

Shelly Gehrke asked if there have been any conversations about 5xxx level courses; specifically, the fact that some of these courses have 80 percent undergraduate enrollment despite being "graduate" courses. Sue Van Voorhis noted that she could ask her colleagues around the country.

Credit and GPA requirements for undergraduate baccalaureate degree: Tina Falkner noted that Sue Van Voorhis has been charged with leading a group that will look into what is considered major coursework. Mary Ellen Shaw noted that this needs a lot of clarification.

Laurie Gardner asked if Tina was specifically referring to courses required for the major that might not necessarily have the same designator as the major (i.e., outside the major department). Yes, this is of specific concern. Tina noted that the sentiment is that we want to be as fair as we can for students to transfer in and out of colleges and want to be equitable. When the policies are published on the policy Web site, we will add the Wanhala list (the list of skills courses). We are trying to find the SECP discussion from years ago to determine the criteria for being added or removed from this list.

Mary Ellen Shaw asked if anyone had raised a question about why we need the skills portion of this policy in the first place. If one looks at all requirements a student needs to fulfill for graduation and his or her major, the Athletic APAS, for example, would kick out a lot of excess electives. This just seems to

be another layer of defining what “good” electives are and what are not. This becomes a problem for students in CEHD; if they come into a Sports Management major as a junior and if they’ve taken a bunch of electives that don’t count toward the major, CEHD has to do a lot of work with them. Tina Falkner noted that it was not within the purview of the committee to change policies substantively. She suggested Mary Ellen Shaw come as a visitor to SCEP and bring up this issue. Sue Van Voorhis asked CLA to comment on this issue since they have room for several electives. Les Opatz stated that, as an example, it would not be acceptable if a Communication Studies major had half their degree consist of electives in Physical Education (i.e., courses outside the major). Sue Van Voorhis stated that a sub group might want to take a look at this piece in particular. Margo Mueller noted that this policy is written the way it is because it was a CLA policy. Students had room for electives and CLA didn’t want them to take more than 6 credits of electives.

Clare Strand noted that in 4d, the wording makes it sound like it’s not a Twin Cities only policy; this will be looked into.

Clare Strand noted it would also be nice if ECAS form could help flag skills courses.

Mary Ellen Shaw noted that this issue could bring in the new policy group created under Laura Coffin Koch.

Degrees with distinction and degrees with honors: Kit Gordon noted that the way that this policy has always been implemented in CLA is that the last 60 GPA credits are counted when determining Latin honors. This is the way it will continue to be implemented in the University Honors Program (UHP). “S/N” courses are “graded” courses, but do not count in the calculation of Latin honors.

Laurie Gardner noted that in 3d, there still needs to be language about the last term. There should be a parenthetical “full terms included” so students understand that the total may be more than 60 credits.

Tina Falkner suggested the following text be added in parentheses to the front of “Degree with Honors”; “all courses, excluding those graded S/N, for full term must be included.” All GPA final term credits count.

Margo Mueller stated that we look at the last course they took and go backwards until we have 60 GPA credits and if 60 credits fall in the middle of the term, we take all the credits from the entire term.

Kit Gordon clarified that 60 credits has always been the minimum number of credits, including full terms; “60 or more semester credits.”

Les Opatz clarified that we need to separate out “Latin honors” from “graduating with distinction” if we change any language with regard to Latin honors. “Distinction” looks at all credits. Latin Honors looks at the last 60 GPA credits. Under “Honors,” we need to say “60 GPA credits, no S/N.”

It was agreed that, ideally, Latin Honors would have its own letter in the policy.

Mary Ellen Shaw asked if it is the intention of the policy to exclude S/N classes. Sue Van Voorhis said this was brought up in the SCEP discussion because S/N is a grade. Cindy Pavlowski noted that internships are often taken for S/N.

Sue Van Voorhis noted that Morris has different campus honors and may therefore need to be separated out in this policy. Clare Strand suggesting adding the following sentence to 3C to address the Morris campus, "Or graduating with 'honors' at the Morris campus." This could be put in square brackets at the beginning.

Educational materials conflict of interest: There were no suggestions for this policy.

Establishing, Enforcing, and Waiving prerequisites: The language in this policy suggests that when a student takes and passes a course for which they have not completed the prerequisite, the student automatically receives credit for the prerequisite course. This is not the case. If a student completes and passes a course requiring a prerequisite and then later opts to complete the prerequisite, the student can still earn credit for the prerequisite.

Mary Ellen Shaw noted that the language in the policy suggests it will be the exception that credit will be granted when this is not the case; it is currently common practice.

Tina Falkner suggested that two separate statements are needed that should address the issue. Number 4 should be broken into two separate numbers; the first sentence would be number 4 and the second sentence would be number 5.

It was also recommended that the word "takes" be changed to "successfully completes."

Laurie Gardner noted that in the College of Design, many prerequisites are hardcoded into the system. For those courses where this is not the case, faculty have an issue with students not having the prerequisites but still do not ask them to leave the course. Laurie suggested better communicating this option to faculty.

Aileen Lively noted that the Office of the Registrar did a study prior to semester conversion and checked students who did and didn't have prerequisites for courses against those that did. Students who did not have the prerequisites did just as well as those who had completed the prerequisites.

It was noted that the word "bulletin" should be changed to "catalog."

Clare Strand noted that Morris has a stricter part of this policy. For example a student can be in SPAN 1001 and registration system lets them register for 1002; if the student doesn't pass 1001, the faculty member has to inform the Registrar's Office within first week of class and the Registrar will drop the student from the course. Sue Van Voorhis noted that the Institute of Technology has a similar policy.

Evaluation of Teaching: Tina Falkner noted that the way this policy is currently written is very Twin Cities specific. The policy will be adjusted to make sure that language about the coordinate campuses is included.

Shelly Gehrke asked if there are any teeth behind this policy; some professors determine which classes they'll administer evaluations to. Tina Falkner noted that if an instructor stays in the room and a student complains, this issue should be brought to the dean. The dean does have the authority to enforce completion of evaluations. It was asked if an instructor can give evaluations only to certain students in the class; no, evaluations must be administered to all students. This can be clarified.

Expected instructional time for course credits: Cindy Pavlowski noted that currently, her department is trying to schedule a four credit class within the 200 meeting minute time and cannot find a room. This policy makes sense; however, trying to find the right amount of time for certain classes on certain days is challenging. Sue Van Voorhis noted that this is a huge issue. Currently, there are 650 unplaced classes for spring.

Expected Student Academic Work per credit: Clare Strand noted that a student workload statement is required for undergraduate courses; however, ECAS doesn't make it clear that there is a place to submit this statement. Mary Ellen Shaw noted that this statement is part of the course proposal process.

Faculty role in advising: Mary Ellen Shaw noted that advising is becoming more a partnership with faculty and professional advisers and this language doesn't reflect this. Sue Van Voorhis suggested that perhaps a definition of "advising" was needed. Faculty advising is more than just helping a student pick out courses. Clare Strand noted that in Morris, all advising is done by faculty. She also noted that the early notification system is helping to clarify what advising is because it will notify advisers not just of academic trouble but of other important indicators.

Kasi Williamson asked if the DUGS is working with professional advising staff to make sure requirements of major are met, does this cover the faculty obligation in this policy. Sue Van Voorhis noted that's why she thinks it needs to be further defined. This policy applied to both graduate and undergraduate students and this should be clearer.

It was asked if this policy should have language that specifically references the student learning outcomes. The policy talked about "effective advising;" how is this being measured?

Mary Ellen Shaw noted that this policy is no longer relevant for most colleges. The language is outdated. Linda Norcross added that the policy should state that advising is the responsibility of faculty and academic advising staff.

Sue Van Voorhis stated that a recommendation for this policy is to update to make it congruent with the work currently being done by the advising task group.

Grading and Transcripts: Regarding the one time late withdrawal; there will be a definition added to clarify what the "last day in a course" means. There were some instances of where the last day was being interpreted as the day the student took the final, meaning if a student never took the final, the last day hadn't occurred yet. Tina Falkner will send out the final language; basically, the last day of instruction for the term will be defined as the "last day in a course." Linda Norcross noted that when a

student comes in to drop a class, the office doesn't ask a student when the class was; they just use the last day of the term.

We will be adding language about auditing a course, including that students must register for a course.

A section was added to the policy on Grading and Transcripts regarding grading appeals. The new section will link to the academic grievance policy.

Mary Ellen Shaw asked if there would be any language changes about repeating courses. Sue Van Voorhis said that it was intentionally vague because the practice varies and cannot be enforced. Mary Ellen commented that if the policy isn't being practiced or enforced as it is written, the language should be changed.

Tina Falkner added for clarification that the University does not bracket U courses for courses taken outside the institution. Pat Sherman asked if we should not be accepting the transcript if we're not going to accept the credit. Sue Van Voorhis noted that this is a question that can be brought up to CSAA or the group that Laura Coffin Koch is leading.

Teresa Fruen asked for clarification; do we bracket between campuses? If the course is an exact equivalent, yes we do bracket between campuses.

It was ultimately determined that three working groups should be formed to deal with the issues of repeating courses, skills credit, and D grade in the major. Mary Ellen Shaw suggested that the new policy group that is part of the Student Services Advisory Committee (SSAC) might be a good place to start with these issues.

The remainder of the policies will be addressed at the December RAC meeting.