

RAC

May 4, 2009

Present: Gary Andersen, Deb Basarich, Jackie Carlson, Laurel Carroll, Carla Claussen, Pam Cook, Dan Delaney, Molly Diethelm, Tracy Fischer, Jennifer Franko, Teresa Fruen, Marci Freundsuh, Laurie Gardner, Jamie Gearhart, Shelly Gehrke, Kit Gordon, Stacey Grimes, Carol Gross, Kevin Havard, Jennifer Koontz, Sarah Kussow, Anne Lawrence, Stephanie Lawson, Linda Lindholm, Aileen Lively, Emily Mraz, Margo Mueller, Jessica Etten, Kathy Nolan, Linda Norcross, Ingrid Nuttall, Matt Nuttall, Cindy Pavlowski, Heather Peterson, Lonna Riedinger, Genny Rosing, Jody Seiler-Peterson, Mary Ellen Shaw, Tom Shield, Clare Strand, Paul Stykowski, Erin Swanson, Nathan Tesch, Nate Thompson, Danielle Tisinger, Terri Tuzinski, Kasi Williamson

Announcements

Kasi Williamson provided the group with a handout of probation/suspension dates. On June 4, SAP will run and on June 8, financial aid will disburse for summer. These dates will also be posted on the One Stop Web site.

Jackie Carlson announced that this is her final RAC meeting. She will retire on June 5 after 38 years of service.

Linda Norcross announced she will be retiring May 29.

Kathy Nolan announced she will be retiring; she has worked at Mortuary Science for 44 years.

Teresa Fruen announced that Cindy Pavlowski received a Tate award for Academic Advising.

Mary Koskan announced that system performance was good during registration. There were 11,000 students registering the first day of the queue. One Stop has been working with OIT on ensuring that performance during registration is good. During registration for spring 2009, 87 percent of students were completing registrations within 5 seconds or less. On April 14, 2009, 98 percent of students were completing transactions within 5 seconds or less. This has been a good partnership with OIT. One Stop is still looking at the registration queue for spring 2010; they are discussing adding more times and spreading out the load but this will only happen if it's really going to make a difference.

Tina Falkner asked the group if the previous day's system downtime caused students or faculty to raise any questions. No one heard anything.

Tina Falkner announced that OIT is planning an opt-in policy for Google Apps, including Gmail. We are working with them on getting a communications plan. Students will be informed of the Google Apps option at orientation. People will still keep what they choose. Tina noted that staff can't respond with private student data to Gmail accounts. OIT has created a website to inform the University community about the Google Application adoption. It can be accessed at <http://oit.umn.edu/google-initiative/index.html>. We will keep you informed as we learn more.

Sue Van Voorhis announced that someone from the Marriott called and wanted to contact staff in the colleges that worked with commencement. The group agreed they did not wish to be contacted.

Sue Van Voorhis asked the group if the June and July RAC meetings should be canceled; the group agreed that they should be. The next RAC meeting will be held the first Monday of August from 9:00 until noon. Details about room location will be forthcoming.

Review of April minutes

There was one change submitted to Kasi Williamson via e-mail. No other changes were given.

IT advising system

Sue Van Voorhis reminded the group of Colin DeLong's earlier presentation of the College of Liberal Arts' (CLA) advising system. The plan is for this system to become enterprise wide. Shelly Gehrke will present the Institute of Technology's advising system at today's meeting because it might have some additional features that should be considered.

Shelly Gehrke noted that about a year and a half ago, IT student services underwent reorganization. The Office of Academic Advising was created. All IT students now go to Lind Hall for advising and are assigned an adviser. Advisers and students now working together toward success and graduation.

Previously, there had procedural issues. Advisers needed a tracking system so they could track their caseloads. For the most part, all students are required to come in each semester. There are communications related to these holds before students can register. Previously, advisers were using Excel to move holds, and this was a clunky process. Stronger students weren't required to come in and were being advised via e-mail, requiring a separate process. Bringing in new advisers and training them required multiple PeopleSoft trainings, UM Reports training, and APAS training. To give advisers a profile of students required a lot of training, and the department wanted to take the opportunity to go as paperless as possible. A new advising system came from Aerospace department and could be expanded it to work with all our students. Now, IT has e-mail advising with date and time stamp. The application for upper division is now paperless.

The system has two sides: a student interface and adviser interface. In the adviser interface for undergraduate students: the system shows the caseload number for lower division students and then those who have moved to upper division, broken down by program. Advisers can get a lot of information at-a-glance about advisees, including ID number, when they were admitted, how many credits and at what point in the term those numbers are taken from, holds, and the students' 1-year plans. Advisers also have the opportunity to make comments. At-risk students are highlighted. If the student doesn't have a date, they are leaving IT at some point. There are admissions pieces available, including high school information. There is transcript information showing what the student is in now and what he or she is registered for. The official GPA, term GPA, and technical GPA are all included.

On the student side, there is the 1-year plan. When the student opens this, he or she will see the transcript. It takes student to four-year graduation plans for specific majors and shows what courses are needed, the order in which they should be taken, the prerequisites and/or the co requisites. Students can create a plan for a term and can lookup offered courses to see if it's offered over the summer. The student can indicate when he or she plans to apply for upper division and how many hours a week he or she will work.

Advisers can also click to approve a student's plan without having the student have to come in and see the adviser.

Shelly Gehrke asked if there were any questions. Tracy Fischer asked if any students are using Graduation Planner. If the student is thinking of changing to a different major, leaving IT, or adding a minor, they'll use it to see how these choices fit. Tracy noted that she thought they were planning out a whole career rather than just one year; Shelly replied that students would do two semesters at a time, but it's really up to the adviser. An adviser might have a student plan for just one semester if the student is at risk, for example. It was noted that this system runs off of scheduling, meaning students can only do plans for scheduled courses.

Clare Strand asked how advising holds get removed. This is still a manual process that has to go through PeopleSoft. The advising system doesn't communicate with PeopleSoft. A peer adviser removes the holds at the end of the day.

Matt Nuttall asked if the advisers do PeopleSoft comments for advising; this will probably not be used as IT transfers over fully to the new system.

Linda Norcross asked if this system is being used with/for faculty advisers. Professor Tom Shield noted that this system started in 2005 with faculty advisers in the department of Aerospace Engineering. It requires minimal training.

Tracy Fischer asked if this system helps students get their tech electives on APAS. Shelly Gehrke stated that this will always be tricky because so much of it is determined by the faculty. The answer is no; this is not happening right now. Currently, a note is made in PeopleSoft about what has been authorized as a tech elective.

Someone asked if there is a way staff interested in the system can take a look at it. There is a FERPA issue, and right now the system is housed in Aerospace so this would have to be investigated.

Dan Delaney asked if all holds show or just the IT holds. All holds are showing. The system also indicates if the student is a student-athlete.

Project update

Jody Seiler-Peterson provided the group with an update on ASR's IT projects:

OSF has begun awarding aid to students for summer. The initial disbursement dates for summer aid are:

DENT, MED, VMED: May 4

LAW: May 26

GRAD, PHARM, UGRD: June 8

Projects in-progress:

Education Abroad: 98 percent of the functional designs and 84 percent of the technical designs are complete. The team began working with Data Security to document security requirements and analysts have completed 22 test scripts, and continue to work on more. Testing is scheduled to begin July 6

Student Account Rewrite: The team is looking at options for the rewrite; this analysis will help in setting priorities and determining viability of various solutions. These options include examining how PeopleSoft Self-Service works with University data and business processes and how the current vendor's integration kit works with PeopleSoft.

Sue Van Voorhis noted that OIT is talking about the next PeopleSoft upgrade. ASR is involved in these talks and updates will be provided as more information is known. The system isn't available until possibly October. It will be a large upgrade because previously, Student was married to HR and the new version has Student separate.

Scheduling update for fall 2009 and spring 2010: Sarah Kussow updated the group on the Office of Classroom Management's (OCM) scheduling initiative. This initiative started with fall

2009 and has gone well. As of May 1st, there were 75 unplaced course sections for fall - all are on Tuesday and/or Thursday; most are during the 2:30 p.m. time slot. Scheduling is communicating with departments and colleges about possibly changing course times (for courses without enrollment) or finding departmental space. OCM lost 5 auditoriums for fall and departments will notice that their courses will be spread further across campus than in previous terms.

Scheduling is now working on placing spring 2010 courses. Courses that are not scheduled at a Standard Time will not be placed in a General Purpose Classroom during the batch scheduling run. ECS Period 3 opens on May 16th and will reopen to schedulers to make emergent changes.

Anticipated training needs: Gary Andersen asked the group to think about any upcoming training and/or system access needs that your department or college might encounter. With retirements and reduced employment options, the Training Team would like to help make this transition as smooth as possible for departments, students, faculty and staff.

Gary offered the group a few helpful suggestions:

Visit the Student Records Training web site at: <http://training.asr.umn.edu/records/index.html> for a summary of training classes, training registration, access information, and documentation.

Feel free to contact us via the helpline: (612) 625-2803 or email srhelp@umn.edu to discuss:

- Training and access needs
- Set up refresher or special group training
- Reserve a spot in a training class for a new employee who has not yet started
- Ask questions regarding student records, ECS, ECAS, PCAS, Course Guide, Web Grading and more

Cost of books

Mary Koskan updated the group on an initiative to keep the cost of books down as part of a larger financial literacy initiative. The cost of textbooks has been an issue for decades, according to Bob Crabb, the director of University Bookstores. He says a recent survey indicated that the average CLA student on the Twin Cities campus pays a little more than \$900 per year on books; the average science student just over \$1,000. Many faculty have pledged to use cheaper books. Congress has passed legislation, to take effect in 2010, forcing publishers to release more information about their prices. It also requires them to sell a textbook separately rather than packaged with a CD or workbook. Alternatively, publishers are shortening the length of time between new editions in order to kill the used book market.

U of M Bookstores has a book rental program (as does Dinkydome's Student Bookstore). The rental fee for students is about one-third the cost of a new textbook, but the student has to return

it after the semester is completed. The bookstore also offers e-books which are significantly less expensive.

Bob Crabb says that the model the University is striving for, whenever possible, is for students to be able to buy a used book for 75 percent of the cost of a new book, and then sell it back at the end of the semester for 50 percent of the new price. For a \$100 book, the net expense for students would be \$25. Faculty plays an important role in this equation and need to let the Bookstore know of their next semester's book choices well before the finals week buyback period.

There are some other tips for students seeking to keep down the cost of books:

- Use open textbooks. Open textbooks are complete, reviewed textbooks written by academics that can be used online at no cost and printed for a small cost. What sets them apart from conventional textbooks is their open license, which allows instructors and students flexibility to use, customize and print the textbook.
- Borrow copies from the school library. The University Bookstore notifies U libraries of professors' choices so the libraries can buy more copies of these textbooks.
- Photocopy pages from a friend's book.
- Buy or rent textbooks online. There are many sites where students can buy, sell and rent textbooks for a fraction of the cost. Some basics include www.amazon.com, www.campusbooks.com and www.half.com.
- Shop overseas. Many American textbooks are available at a fraction of their cost here through overseas websites. Check out foreign versions of leading American Web sites like www.amazon.co.uk. Shipping can often take several weeks, so make sure to leave enough time.
- Swap. There are many ways to find used books to buy, borrow, or trade just by contacting other students. Ask around, look online for used book groups on Facebook or use Craigslist and MySpace or use an online book swap like www.campusbookswap.com.
- Borrow a sample copy from your professors. Chances are they have a free copy in their office. Before you buy a book ask if you can borrow a free copy.

Sue Van Voorhis noted that Bob McMaster has been asked to supply stimulus projects, and one of those being submitted is trying to provide more of this type of information to students, including hooking it to the registration system and giving the students different options.

Petition form

Mary Koskan stated that ASR communications staff are going through forms and looking at the title of each form to make sure the words convey the form's purpose and what students are being asked to do. The name of the "Petition" form seemed to be inappropriate and a suggestion has been made to change it to "Undergraduate/Professional program appeal." The group felt that this

form serves as a “catch all” form and that changing the title would be confusing. Mary Koskan suggested pulling together a group to look at this issue further. Lonna Riedinger, Laurel Carroll, Laurie Gardner, Jess Etten, and Jennifer Koontz all volunteered.

Rochester discussion

Sue Van Voorhis stated that because Rochester is admitting students for fall 2009, ASR hasn't been able to make all the required system changes. In the Class Schedule, Rochester courses have a note to help distinguish them. Rochester students will be quick admitted and will be in a college, 34UGR. If you see anything that looks confusing, please let Frank Blalark know. An old process is being successfully used for transfer students. They will be ready to go for fall 2009. Nate Tesch noted that the quick admit process is being worked out. Staff might not see it on the plan on but Rochester is commenting on every student.

The new ASR Web site

Nate Thompson announced that the new ASR Web site will be live on May 26. Jody Seiler-Peterson has been working with staff from across ASR to get this project complete. Highlights for staff include an improved navigation system and search; a more visible link to the RAC home page; the ability to bookmark your favorite pages; and a project summary page that provides up-to-date information on current projects. To take advantage of all available features, staff will want to log-in with their Internet ID and password.

The same URL will be used (asr.umn.edu). Users may notice that for some of the pages, they look as they did on the old site. This doesn't mean anything is broken; we're trying to provide more consistence to the way pages look and will be updating these pages going forward.

Follow-up on first day of class policy

Tina Falkner followed up on an issue brought to an earlier RAC meeting. The issue is that there are faculty members who take the mandatory attendance policy very seriously and wont' let students in despite the fact that there are open seats. Tina brought three options to help clarify this policy; SCEP won't be meeting until early September, but if the language can be agreed upon before then, this will be helpful:

Three options:

Option 1 – If a course has seats available during the drop/add period, an instructor cannot deny a student a seat simply because the student missed the first day of class.

Option 2 – During the drop/add period (the first two weeks of the semester) students will be allowed to add any course that still has open seats.

Option 3 – If a class has open seats, instructors may not deny a student as seat in that class during the first week of the drop/add period, even if the student has missed the first day of class.

Mary Ellen Shaw preferred Option 2 as did Jess Etten. The group agreed on Option 3. Tina will bring this proposed language change to SCEP in the fall.

Liberal education update/questions

Laurel Carroll reminded the group that in April, information was distributed for transfer students. No feedback or questions have been brought forward. If there are any questions going forward, they should be directed to Laurel.

Nursing has two courses that meet Citizenship theme where the first is taken in freshman year and the second in senior year. Laurel is working with the nursing department to ensure students taking these courses across the liberal education transition will not be inconvenienced. If there are any other issues like this, they should be brought forward immediately.

Kasi Williamson stated that she has sent a revised APAS message to the LE communications committee. Kasi verified that no questions have been brought forward about the current message on APAS. Clare Strand asked if a student is transferring from Morris to the Twin Cities, how do his or her courses get evaluated. This will be handled by Maggie Gardner. If a course is approved for an LE requirement, it will map forward. All transfer courses will be handled that way.

Margo Mueller noted that “MnCAS” has changed to “USelect” and this should be reflected in communications.

Maggie Gardner and Carol Kline are looking at the whole process of reevaluating transfer courses. Laurel Carroll will work with students to ensure that LE requirements are not taken away from them. Staff can see courses that are transfer courses on USelect. Courses won't double-dip in fall 2010 or after.