

RAC minutes

April 5, 2010

Attending: JoAnn Ash, Frank Blalark, Laurel Carroll, Carla Claussen, Carolee Cohen, Nicki Cook, Maggie Cosgrove, Molly Diethelm, Tina Falkner, Tracy Fischer, Laurie Gardner, Jamie Gearhart, Amanda Grimm, Carol Gross, Kim Hindbjorgen, Kellie Greaves, Sarah Ihrig, Mary Koskan, Anne Lawrence, Stephanie Lawson, Gayla Marty, Margo Mueller, Heather Myers, Heidi Meyer, Anya Norton, Ingrid Nuttall, Cindy Pavlowski, Heather Peterson, Lonna Riedinger, Genny Rosing, Cindy Salyers, Jody Seiler-Peterson, Mary Ellen Shaw, Nathan Tesch, Kasi Williamson, Peter Woxland, Kris Wright

Announcements

Margo Mueller announced that the Office of the Registrar was taking extra steps to avoid issues with APAS or Graduation Planner this next registration cycle. Since last November, ASR has made changes to the Darwin application and has moved the application to a new server, which should help. There were some performance issues in APAS and Graduation Planner which have been corrected. The printer-friendly version of APAS will now run only on demand rather than running automatically. Margo has also been working with the vendor to get code changes into the actual application. More steps will be taken after registration is over. OIT is also going to be monitoring the system; if the response times get slow, OIT will throttle back the number of users that can get into Graduation Planner. If that doesn't help, a setting will be put into place in Darwin that allows students to use Graduation Planner, but only returned unfulfilled requirements when a "What Do I Need?" list is run; courses to choose from to fill those requirements would not be returned. This would be a temporary fix that would last about a half an hour. A message would be put on Graduation Planner to let students know what's going on.

Margo Mueller made an announcement regarding the 2010 Liberal Education (LE) requirements. So far, alternate bulletin years have been set for freshman and sophomore students. This means if a junior or senior runs an audit for the program they're in, they will see the correct requirements. However, if a junior or senior is major shopping and they run a What If APAS, they would see the fall 2010 LEs. TO mitigate this issue, an alternate bulletin year will be set for juniors. If an adviser is working with a senior who is doing some major shopping and/or who is planning to change majors, please send an email to apasle@umn.edu to request an alternate bulletin year be set. An email went out to all advisers notifying them of this plan. Margo Mueller noted that if anyone knows of students who are returning, they should forward these names to Laurel Carroll directly (l-carr@umn.edu).

Ingrid Nuttall announced that training offered by ASR for student records, student finance, and classroom management will be housed on a series of new web pages that will launch at the end of April. A demonstration of the new pages will be given at the May RAC meeting.

Kasi Williamson announced that by the end of April, the University will begin using maroon official transcript paper (the old paper was blue). Frank Blalark noted that if anyone has leftover blue paper, they should contact him directly.

Frank Blalark announced that he and Rick Benson have been working together to create a new transcript for non-credit work. It won't be on official transcript paper, it will be on a special type of paper meant specifically for this transcript.

Frank Blalark announced that the P3 suspension holds are due June 2, and SAP will run on June 3. It will run daily as it did last term, from May 21 through June 1. Reports can be run from May 22 through June 3.

Review of March minutes

There were no changes to the March RAC minutes.

August RAC meeting date, Mary Koskan

Mary Koskan noted that on Friday, July 30, staff from One Stop Student Services and some offices from the Office of Student Finance will be moving to the new STSS building. Mary asked the group if the RAC meeting can be moved from August 2 to August 9; the group agreed this is a good idea. The August RAC meeting will be held on August 9, room to be announced.

Financial aid update, Kris Wright

Kris Wright provided the group a financial aid update for 2010-2011. Tuition is likely going to continue to rise. The Office of Student Finance (OSF) continues to push four year graduation, financial literacy, and retention efforts. As a part of budget discussions, more conversations are being had at the faculty level about need and merit based aid and what this funding will look like once stimulus funds are gone.

The estimated cost of attendance for 2010-2011 is \$23,010. This includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, transportation, and a personal/miscellaneous stipend. Kris reminded the group that the expected family contribution (EFC); the lower the EFC, the more financial aid the student will likely receive. Financial need is the difference between the cost of attendance and the EFC. This year, a family making \$125K or more would not have financial need. At the University, approximately 60 percent of students are from incomes less than \$100K. In many cases, students don't take out all the loans that are offered to them, which is a good thing.

Estimated financial aid packaging begins in late March and goes through June. Right now, OSF is in the midst of freshman verification. An award letter is not sent until the student has been verified (1/3 of students are verified). Freshmen are verified first and in late July, OSF will decide if they have enough information to package students. A package is an actual contract with the students; they receive electronic notification and accept their awards online. Students have to complete entrance counseling before we will disburse funds to them. About one week prior to semester starting, OSF disburses aid to students for the first time, and continues to disburse after that as more information comes in.

Kris Wright reminded the group that the University is a direct lending school and was therefore unaffected by the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA). The University received money from the federal government; certifies, and draws the money down just like research grants. Kris reviewed

the types of financial assistance students can receive. She noted that the Minnesota Achieve Scholarship won't exist in its present format; the University applied on behalf of students and was able to secure \$5 million from the Achieve Scholarship for students.

Kris reviewed two examples of freshman packages for two different students with different adjusted gross incomes (AGI). For a student with an AGI of \$25-30K, he or she would have to take \$5,500 in student loan money and \$1,826 in parent loan money to cover the cost of attendance. For another student with an AGI of \$83K, the parent loan money rises to \$13,566. Both of these scenarios include work study money as part of the student's financial aid package. Kris emphasized that the cost of attendance has risen to the point where students would need to work full-time in order to "work their way through school."

Kris reminded the group that scholarships can be an important part of financing a student's education. The more specific a student can be about his or her background and activities, the better chance the student has of finding a scholarship. It is also important students are aware of financial aid scams; students should never have to pay someone to help them find a scholarship.

Kris emphasized that students graduating in four years pay much less than students who stay longer. They don't lose income they would have been earning if they had been working; students who take longer to graduate borrow more on average, and more of them borrow. One of the federal requirements mandates that students who have fulfilled requirements can't receive aid; the University has not been enforcing this but that is going to change.

Finally, Kris reminded the group that students who are in financial trouble should go to One Stop Student Services. They have a process in place to work with students and continue to work with OSF on financial literacy efforts.

Project update, Jody Seiler-Peterson

Jody Seiler-Peterson provided the group an update of completed and in-progress information technology projects.

Completed projects: Starting this month, students will be able to immediately see classes they add and/or drop in the MyU Portal.

Projects in-progress: Highlights of the upcoming quarter work plan include:

- Pillar upgrade and web apps banner changes
- Graduate education changes
- Institute of Technology name change
- Scholarship automation enhancements
- Truth in Lending Act (TILA) implementation
- Online Exit and Entrance interviews for student loan borrowers
- Student account enhancements
- Add functionality in PS to calculate and store Big 10 GPA for athletes
- Collect and store emergency contact info

Summer tuition set-up is in-progress. Financial aid is working on packaging preparation for fall and has begun sending out estimated award letters to incoming freshman.

The Pillar upgrade continues. ASR and OIT have made the decision to delay moving the applications scheduled for March to April. Delaying by a month will allow for more thorough testing and will lessen the risk of problems during registration. The majority of the applications are scheduled to move into production in late June.

The Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) project also continues to move forward. The project team has a mass vendor meeting scheduled in mid-April to review RFI responses. The team will then submit an RFP to the marketplace; they hope to have a vendor selected this summer.

Dual programs report, Cindy Salyers

Cindy Salyers informed the group that she is conducting preliminary research into a report the committee requested awhile ago to show students who are active in multiple programs as of the first day of the term. Cindy asked the group what information specifically would be useful to know about these students. The following information was requested:

- Major/minor
- Sub plans
- Enrollment status by career
- Expected grad term
- Advisors of record
- If the student is MultiG

Cindy noted that basically, the group would like the Student Roster report times two. Additional requirements can be sent to Cindy directly at csalyers@umn.edu.

Advising audit, Tina Falkner

Tina Falkner followed-up on a March agenda item regarding additional reports or system enhancements the group would like following the release of the advising audit.

Mary Ellen Shaw noted it would be helpful to be able to figure out who a student's "real" advisor is so corrections can be more easily made. Tina noted that as adviser coding begins to be more thoroughly investigated as it related to the enrollment tracking system (ETS), we may find some better ways to take care of this issue.

Tina Falkner noted that CCE had commented that the graduation application deadline was too early and asked the group if they felt this was the case. Lonna Reidinger said yes and no; there are hundreds of students who CLA identifies later than the deadline. Cindy Salyers commented that a request has been made for an advising load report to help with new advisee assignments. Ginny Rosing noted the

Graduate School already has a similar report and suggested that perhaps the two could be merged. Tina Falkner noted that adviser roles have not been consistently coded in PeopleSoft; currently, there are 31 different advising roles and this is an issue. Tina asked that additional thoughts be forwarded to her at rovic001@umn.edu.

Graduation Planner discussion, Tina Falkner

Tina Falkner asked the group if they would like to see a demonstration of how ASR has used Graduation Planner to help undeclared students. The group would like to see a demonstration; this will be included in the May meeting.

Graduate education update, Frank Blalark

Frank Blalark informed the group that ASR and the Graduate School are working together collaboratively to prepare for potential recommendations that may come as a result of the the graduate education transformation work group reports. Mary Ellen Shaw noted that the reports have been taken off the Provost's website; Frank noted they may be reposted once the recommendations are finalized.

From the reports, ASR has looked at them seeking to create a more flexible graduate education program (a more federated model) to give colleges more flexibility and freedom. From ASR's perspective, if programs are going to have more access, more flexibility, we'll have to think about how the academic structure works. It seems likely that this would mean the "08GRD" code in PeopleSoft would be replaced with a "GRD" code in every college. All of the impacts of such a change would have to be investigated, and there are many. Without a final word on recommendations, what we have planned so far is two-tiered approach with admissions changing first, then everything else live by fall 2011. It will be crucial to get more information from collegiate units so duplicative structures are not created. ASR is also doing a business process review with the Graduate School to look at what they currently maintain to see what stays the same, changes, or gets retired.

Mary Ellen Shaw asked who is involved in the group Frank is working with. Right now, ASR is working directly with Graduate School staff. In the near future, Frank will be coming around to individual colleges to talk to DGSs. Some colleges want to start making changes right now; however, ASR is recommending they wait to avoid duplicative efforts. Future communication about these college visits would likely be sent out through the RAC listserv

Mary Ellen Shaw asked if there had been decisions made about how much the departments will take on and how much will be centralized. Frank Blalark replied that this is likely to vary from college to college; some have the staff to take on more duties while other have less. Some processes will be decentralized because the Graduate School will no longer maintain them, but in these situations (i.e., where a process has to be decentralized) the transfer will be steady and seamless. Some will want to take on more and some less; we will have to be accommodating.

Mary Ellen Shaw asked if there had been conversations with Graduate School Admissions at this point about how that process will work; Frank Blalark replied that Admissions has determined to keep the

“Apply Yourself” system in-tact for all colleges. It will have to be more flexible and allow colleges to upload their own information.

Tina Falkner also noted that she has been asked to be part of a committee looking at educational policies of the Graduate School; she does not know who else will be on this committee and work hasn't started yet. She will keep the group posted and it's likely she would bring changes forward to RAC for discussion.

Frank Blalark noted that ASR and the Graduate School are also looking at how to communicate updates out to the University community. We want to have this process be as transparent as possible. Changes will be announced on the Graduate School's graduate education transformation web page and a similar page will be created on the ASR website as well.

Enrollment tracking system (ETS) update, Tina Falkner

Tina Falkner announced that the implementation of ETS is going well. One of the important features of ETS is the comments viewing and writing in and out of PeopleSoft, which will allow advisers to have a more robust view of students. To this end, guidelines are being developed to assist with appropriately documenting comments. This is to ensure a continuity of care of students. There is still discussion about how to document sensitive issues, and it is not likely that a “magic answer” to this question will be forthcoming.

Teresa Fruen asked what the next steps were regarding comments and notes in ETS. Tina replied that she is gathering feedback on what the practice should be. The general rule is that advising notes are to assist the adviser in serving the student; there should not be anything in notes that an adviser wouldn't want a student to see or couldn't defend in the need arose to do so. There are still many broad, philosophical questions to deal with.

Someone asked how email correspondence is being handled; are these being put into comments? Tina replied that when an ETS user has the Thunderbird plug-in enabled, emails can be uploaded; they are not automatically uploaded. When a procedure is being documented, this should all be included in the comments. An ETS update will be provided at next month's meeting.

Prerequisites and mandatory placement tests, Tina Falkner

Tina Falkner deferred discussion of this item until May's meeting. The issue at hand involves enforced prerequisites for certain math courses and mandatory math placement tests to keep students from getting in over their head in certain courses.

Special examinations for proficiency or credit discussion, Ingrid Nuttall

Ingrid Nuttall deferred discussion of this item until May. This policy was left behind during the large educational policy review and there are still some changes that need to be made. Ingrid asked the group to review the proposed text and bring comments to the next meeting

Lonna Riedinger noted that CLA has told departments they have to charge and that the college charges centrally. The most confusing thing that happens with this process is when you have a student who wants to take an exam for a course credit for a course outside their declared college; there are questions over who gets the money.

Kasi Williamson noted that the procedures outlined in the policy are different than those listed on the form.

Jennifer Koontz noted that the form states the policy applies to, "currently enrolled undergraduate degree seeking students." However, students participating in College in the Schools occasionally take pursue these exams as well. Tina Falkner noted that FAQ might support some of these issues, and the new policy template provides for FAQ.