

RAC minutes

December 6, 2010

Present: Gary Andersen, Maureen Andrew, Ginni Arons, Frank Blalark, Sheryl Bolstad, Earlene Bronson, Kelly Condit Shrestha, Cortney Carlson, Laurel Carroll, Pam Cook, David Crane, Damian Damiani, Dan Delaney, Molly Diethelm, Tina Falkner, Tracy Fischer, Jennifer Franko, Michael Galegher, Laurie Gardner, Kit Gordon, Kellie Greaves, Stacey Grimes, Amanda Grimm, Ann Hagen, Colby Heineman, Jeremy Hernandez, Kim Hindbjorgen, Shannon Hofmann, Jason Holscher, Lisa Hubinger, Jill Johnson, Sue Johnson, Charleen Klarquist, Jennifer Koontz, Mary Koskan, Nathan Kopka, Mark Larson, Linda Lindholm, Aileen Lively, Jo Lundblad, Katie MacDonald, Gayla Marty, LeeAnn Melin, Ann Miller, Becky Mooney, Katherine Murphy, Anya Norton, Ingrid Nuttall, Bill O'Connor, Celeste Pape, Cindy Pavlowski, Heather Peterson, Lonna Riedinger, Genny Rosing, Cindy Salyers, Jody Seiler-Peterson, Mary Ellen Shaw, Deanne Silvera, Jody Seiler-Peterson, Judy Soine, Susan Suchy, John Vollum, Sue Van Voorhis, Chino Watanabe, Lisa Wiley, Stephanie Wiesnski, Kasi Williamson, Emily Wood, Kris Wright

There were no corrections to the November minutes.

Undergraduate education agenda items

Announcements

Sue Van Voorhis reminded the group that the grading due date has been changed to January 4, 2011, and asked for everyone's assistance to ensure grades are turned in on time.

Project updates, Jody Seiler-Peterson

Jody Seiler-Peterson gave the following ASR technology project updates:

- Queued registration for spring 2011 began for Twin Cities students on November 9. As of December 6, ASR processed over 406,000 registration transactions, and over 396,000 of these were completed in five seconds or less. Our highest registration day so far was November 18, which was also the highest registration day ever. We processed 42,464 transactions.
- The new process for Truth in Lending Act (TILA) disclosures is now live for students. This application helps provide University Trust Fund and Health Profession Loans more efficiently and effectively to students on the Duluth and

Twin Cities campuses. It will allow an estimated 1,200 students per year to receive their TILA disclosures online, avoiding the need for in-person appointments.

- The Office of Classroom Management and the ASR web team have launched the "Request for non-standard meeting time /day pattern" workflow. This workflow speeds up routing, improves accountability, and communicates the rationale for using standard class meeting patterns as much as possible.
- Until recently, the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) maintained course information in both the Electronic Course Authorization System (ECAS) and a CLA "shadow system." In order to eliminate unnecessary duplication of data entry, maintenance, and communication efforts within CLA, ECAS was modified to include data from the shadow system. This enhancement allowed CLA to retire their system and use ECAS exclusively to maintain course information.
- The University Bookstores have been granted access to real-time student information that will support a student account fraud prevention system. That system, which will be linked with the Bookstores' sales system, will allow the Bookstores to limit what students can charge to their account based on identified risk factors for fraud such as what they are trying to buy and the amount of purchases made over a specified time period.

In-progress projects include:

- PeopleTools upgrade. The new timeframe for this upgrade is now set for mid-April 2011.
- Spring tuition and fee setup is in progress. Verification will start in December, and tuition will be calculated and posted according to each campus's requested schedule.
- 1098-T review and data correction is in progress to prepare for the production process that will run in early January.
- ASR is working with the University Foundation to streamline scholarship funds management processes by providing information that helps scholarship managers plan their scholarship expenditures and policy makers identify spending priorities. The project is currently in analysis and early development phases with a goal to roll out for departmental use in March 2011.

“Ugrad Update” student newsletter, LeeAnn Melin and Bill O’Connor

LeeAnn Melin (Office of Undergraduate Education) and Bill O’Connor (Orientation and First-Year Programs) updated the group on a new effort to improve communication with undergraduate students, including minimizing the number of emails they receive and improve consistency across messages. Three primary tools will be used in this strategy: the MyU Portal, a new publication (*Ugrad Update*) and the “Do what matters” website.

Bill O’Connor showed the group a rotating graphic that will be used on the home page of the Portal in order to make better use of home page real estate. Individual content will no longer have to be put on separate tabs only; the tabs will still be used, but the home page will also link to those resources so students will be able to see the information they need up front.

Bill also noted that peer institutions send a regular, centralized email to undergraduate students. The Office of Undergraduate Education, Orientation and First-Year Programs, Student Affairs, the Office of Equity and Diversity, University Relations, and Academic Support Resources have collaborated to create the *Ugrad Update*, an email newsletter modeled after *Brief*. This group will work with constituents across campus to send important information that all undergraduate students need to know; this should also help make targeted communications that colleges and departments send to their students more strategic. The first message will be sent today (December 6) and will focus on the upcoming winter closure. The next message will come in January (timing TBD). Currently the goal is to send a message bi-weekly, but that may change to a more frequent distribution if needed.

In terms of content, the goal is to limit it to information that will help the undergraduate student experience no matter what college the student is in. Events that are simply recreational or carry a corporate sponsorship are less likely to be included.

For content providers, a form has been created to facilitate content submission and can be found at this page: myu.umn.edu/ugcp. If you want to know who your key contact is to help get content submitted for the Portal, *Ugrad Update*, or the [Do what matters website](#), you will find that information on this page.

Mary Ellen Shaw asked if there will be an RSS feed version or Twitter notices. Currently, there are no plans to do this, but there may be in the future.

Someone suggested that a message be included in the *Ugrad Update* reminding students of the importance of registering for their classes as soon as their queue time opens; students do receive this information via other means, but it can also be included in an update.

The group strongly recommended that part-time students also receive the *Ugrad Update*; seniors can also be part-time students. It is important that all students receive the information.

Mary Koskan asked how long the newsletter will be; ideally, students shouldn't need to scroll to read it, which would limit it to 5-7 items. Keeping it short is another argument for sending it more frequently.

Sheryl Bolstad asked if the newsletter would contain a catchy subject line in the email to help entice students to read it. Currently, the plan is to simply use the subject "Ugrad Update" with the appropriate date. However, suggestions for a different subject are welcome. It is important that students trust the information and take it seriously.

Student study space, Dave Crane, Katie McDonald, Anya Norton

Dave Crane, Katie McDonald, and Anya Norton from ASR and the Office of Classroom Management shared [student study space design concepts](#) created by sophomore CDES students. The students were asked to create brand concepts and incorporate the brand throughout the space while keeping in mind a goal that their concepts should be transferable across spaces. The students used study space in 10 Ruttan Hall and 223 McNeal Hall as the targets of their designs. OCM will apply the student input into their long term strategy for managing all learning space. Currently, the University has not designated funding to manage student study space; OCM is mindful how the need to enhance and maintain study space without reducing its commitment to classrooms. The students who worked on these designs provided invaluable input that will inform future student study space development.

Readmission and criminal history, Mary Koskan

Mary Koskan provided the group with an update on the effort to request information about prior criminal history on several student forms. Mary is working with the Office of the General Counsel and the Office of Admissions on how to proceed and asked the group to continue to send her forms that may need to be considered. A process needs to be created for how to move forward when a student does indicate they have a prior offense. Mary will provide an update at the January meeting.

Spring registration update, Mary Koskan

Mary Koskan referred to the previous update given in Jody Seiler-Peterson's project update, and also noted that a network outage November 10 from 12 noon -5 p.m. did cause issues for some users. One Stop Student Services continues to collaborate with the Office of Information Technology to ensure the best registration experience possible for all users.

U Promise update, Kris Wright

Kris Wright provided an update on upcoming changes to the U Promise scholarship. The current program has been in place for about five years and includes two parts: free tuition for Pell eligible students, and the U Promise Middle Income Scholarship for families with an annual income of up to \$100K. Over the last year, the Office of Student Finance has been looking at real issues with the way U Promise would be affected by increases in the number of students who are Pell eligible, cuts to the state grant program, and the ending of the AGC and SMART grants. U Promise relied on these programs in its “formula”; the program has to be changed for the 2011-12 year and forward to ensure U Promise students receive a stable, meaningful financial aid package in the future.

The president will be making an announcement about the new program in January, and students will receive email communication about how their financial aid package will look going forward.

Policy of the month discussion, Tina Falkner

Tina Falkner asked the group for feedback regarding the possible elimination of the language in the Credit and Grade Point Requirements for Undergraduate (Baccalaureate) Degree policy that limits the number of skills credits a student can take. There is concern that the exceptions to this policy have created inequity for students; for example, dance courses are exempt from the policy while physical education courses are not. The policy committee reviewing this language is interested in encouraging academic exploration and does not want to label some courses as “credit worthy” versus “not credit worthy.”

The group agreed that this language should be eliminated. Tina will take the recommendation to AAN and CSAA for further review.

Closure planning impacts and communications, Tina Falkner

Tina Falkner updated the group on communication planning for the upcoming University winter closure. All students received a message from the Office of Student Affairs notifying them of some of the impacts of the closure. The One Stop website will have a graphic on its home page and landing pages linking to a web page that provides information about online applications during the closure. Any user who visits onestop.umn.edu during the closure will see a pop-up message informing them that they can proceed with most transactions; however, if the request requires manual intervention, it will not be completed until after the closure.

Official transcripts will not be processed during the closure. The online application will be unavailable beginning at noon on December 22. A page will be added to the online form informing users that they can send it in but the request will not be processed until services resume in full on January 3. Fax machines will also be shut down.

A “closure lessons learned” agenda item will be added to the January 10 RAC meeting.

Graduate education agenda items

Documentation preview and update, Sue Johnson

Sue Johnson showed the group a sample of the business process documentation template that is being used for the 130 business processes under review. Most processes are two pages, and forms, policies, or guidelines that are associated with each process are being documented. The “as is” process is being documented so each business process review (BPR) team can evaluate the appropriate next steps. Business process document examples are available on the page. **Catalog update, Gayla Marty**

Gayla Marty updated the group on a recent meeting with college catalog coordinators. The goal is to use a newly-defined process for updating the 2011-2013 catalog, which will allow ASR to gather accurate academic program data that will populate PCAS. In the meeting, the group reviewed the past process for producing the Graduate School catalog; reviewed the new degree approval process announced by the Provost’s Office last May; previewed a draft of an interim process, including roles; and previewed a draft form that the programs will need to update. The group has not determined if a PDF of the catalog will be produced. The next steps are to determine curriculum contacts and clarify roles and responsibilities.

Degree progress BPR team update, Frank Blalark

Frank Blalark provided an update on the degree progress BPR team. Currently, the team is looking at issues from admission through graduation. In terms of tracking degree progress, a variety of technical solutions are being investigated, including APAS and documents from the Graduate School’s Degree Management (GSDM) project. APAS does some things very well but cannot be put in place for graduate programs without some changes. A goal is to avoid staff having to do manual entry when changes need to be made to a student’s planned courses. The next step will be to investigate what factors and metrics related to degree progress colleges would like to track. Because this essential analysis must be performed before a technical solution can be identified, it seems unlikely that a solution will be in place for fall 2011.

PeopleSoft/Data Management BPR team, Aileen Lively

Aileen Lively informed the group that the team continues to move students' academic records from the Graduate School into the colleges. Plans with multiple programs and multi-institution programs are going to remain in the Graduate School for the time being with the 08GRD program code; this is a small number of plans. The conversion should be completed by the end of February, in advance of fall registration. The change will be effective and official for students at the beginning of fall semester, 2011.

The team is working on a wave one conversion into the new structure to support fall 2011 registration; however, rules continue to change, so the team is also updating rules as needed. The team is looking at UM Reports as well to determine how best to ensure staff have appropriate access once the conversion is complete.

Sue Van Voorhis thanked Aileen Lively and the team for their efforts.

Registration exceptions BPR team, John Vollum

John Vollum provided an update on the on registration exceptions transition team. At this point, the team has two basic points of focus: workflow automation and compliance review. Regarding workflow automation, the team is investigating using WorkflowGen to automate the registration exceptions process. For staff in the colleges, this means a paperless process with built-in referrals and approvals. Regarding compliance review, the team is taking the opportunity to ask critical questions to understand the current process and make sure the future process is sound.

Someone asked if there will be a university-level policy that will support the registration exceptions process; there will be a standard process that the colleges will follow. The approvals will move through a consistent path. In terms of standards regarding deadlines, Sue Van Voorhis noted that the institution is bound by federal financial aid rules that dictate timelines.

Mike Galegher asked if the team is looking at issues related to permission numbers (i.e., if a non-graduate student requires one). Frank Blalark replied that currently, this information goes to the graduate school. After the 8th week, it goes to One Stop. The team has talked about who can give approval; it would make sense that it would go to the college.

Mary Ellen Shaw noted that the team should look at all graduate level exceptions (including those given to undergraduates to take graduate-level courses).

Graduate policies committee update, Tina Falkner

Tina Falkner informed the group that the senate had met the previous week and reviewed the "Appointments to Graduate Examination Committees" policy. They passed it with one minor change; in the clause that gave the dean the ability to designate

someone at the collegiate level to review committee membership, they struck the words, “at the collegiate level.” The policies committee will now review language existing elsewhere that implicates this policy and update and/or streamline it. An update will be provided in January.

Project website and communications, Kasi Williamson

Kasi Williamson informed the group that more detailed, comprehensive information about the different processes under review had been added to the [student administrative processes project website](#) to make it easier to navigate. Included is a brief description of what each group is working on, as well as current documentation. Next, Kasi will add an index of the processes themselves to the site to make it easier to find information if you’re not sure what you are looking for.

Kasi noted that she has observed the progress of this project moving in one of two ways: First, there is a process that is reviewed and an obvious technical solution to be implemented. The second method is that the process is reviewed, solutions are investigated, but it is determined that the process itself should change. The latter pattern requires an additional level of analysis. Kasi asked the question: at what point is it useful to have details, especially when a solution has not yet been identified? Kasi is investigating if and when, during the analysis, emails should be sent out to interested parties.

Someone noted that it can be confusing to discern whether a process being reviewed is a proposal or has been decided upon; Kasi said she can be more deliberate about calling this out in communication.

Someone noted that if feedback is requested, that should also be clearly stated. Kasi suggested there could be different types of statuses for different states:

- For your background
- Decision made
- Decision proposed
- Need your feedback

Questions

Someone asked if there is an ETA on when the list of processes will be completely documented. Frank replied that the documentation they’re working on is required for funding and many things have to be done by fall 2011. Currently, the project team is putting the processes into different “buckets” so they understand what must be done before fall 2011 and what can wait. This has to be done before an ETA is possible.

Mary Ellen Shaw asked if it is part of the discussion which processes might be better maintained in a central office; yes, this is being discussed with particular consideration being given to how to best maintain good data.

Sue Van Voorhis asked the group to take a look at what has been created already and the website as a whole to give feedback at the January meeting.

Kasi Williamson asked if having a listserv for different areas where updates could be provided would be helpful; the group agreed it would but also said they wanted everything to be sent to all lists.