

Minutes\*

**Senate Committee on Educational Policy**  
**Wednesday, November 17, 2004**  
**1:00 – 3:00**  
**238A Morrill Hall**

Present: Emily Hoover (chair), Victor Bloomfield, Dale Branton, Vernon Cardwell, Shawn Curley, LeAnn Dean, Adam Hirsch, James Leger, Richard McCormick, Leah McLaughlin, Marsha Odom, Christopher Pappas, Emily Ronning, Mary Ellen Shaw, Craig Swan, Douglas Wangenstein, Joel Weinsheimer

Absent: Gretchen Haas, Karen Seashore

Guests: Susan Van Voorhis, Tina Falkner (Office of the Registrar)

[In these minutes:

**1. Mid-Term Alerts**

Professor Hoover convened the meeting at 1:00 and welcomed Ms. Van Voorhis to discuss mid-term alerts.

Ms. Van Voorhis told the Committee she was providing "apples and oranges data" because the policy does not require mid-term alerts for all students, it is difficult to get data, and no mid-term alerts need be provided if everyone in the class is doing acceptably. Dr. Falkner also noted that the data are "dicey" because colleges may use their own systems, instructors can contact the students themselves (rather than use the forms), and they are only required for students in danger of receiving an F, D, or N. Mid-term alerts are required only for 1XXX courses.

Dr. Falkner reviewed the data with the Committee. For 2004, it APPEARS that only slightly over one-third (37.4%) of Twin Cities courses used alerts; at UMM the percentage is 11.5, for UMC 39.5, and for UMD 42. For the Twin Cities campus, however, the most-commonly-failed 1XXX courses used the mid-term alerts in significant numbers. Dr. Swan noted that the percentages are for COURSES; it may be that the non-participants are small classes, so perhaps the data should be checked. Dr. Falkner said they could do so.

If the rationale for the alerts is to let students know they might be failing (it is), what happens when a student receives an alert, Professor Weinsheimer asked? It should not be a surprise to the student—or else there is a problem with the grading in the course. What is the remedy once a student receives the bad news? In CLA, an advisor automatically intervenes, Dr. Falkner said. But one would have to ask each of the colleges what happens; she said she believes they are taking the alerts seriously.

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The alerts were instituted because of a concern with retention, and freshman-to-sophomore retention is critical for overall retention, Professor McCormick recalled. Is anyone monitoring freshman-to-sophomore retention? The fear is that if a student receives an alert he or she will drop the class, which will not help the student. Dr. Swan said they have not looked at that but the number of W's is declining. Students do not like to receive an alert by they seem to take them seriously. Some WILL drop a course because they cannot make the work up, Dr. Falkner said, but some students can and do make it up.

The number of alerts issues on the Twin Cities campus went up noticeably in Fall, 2004, because there was a much more aggressive approach to reminding instructors about the need to provide them. Professor Leger inquired if any thought had been given to reminding department chairs/heads of the obligation to provide mid-term alerts in 1XXX classes in order to raise awareness; there might be better compliance if the message came through department heads. Dr. Swan said they could try that approach as well as reminding individual instructors. Dr. Falkner commented that it maybe that instructors collected all the information or that all students in some courses are doing OK; she said she did not want to create hostility towards the policy. Professor McCormick agreed that one cannot tell if non-participation is non-compliance or if students are doing acceptably in classes; perhaps it should be required that instructors report when they have no mid-term alerts to issue. That was discussed, Ms. VanVoorhis said, and they concluded they did not want to inconvenience faculty in that way. Professor McCormick said it was not that much of an inconvenience.

Professor Weinsheimer raised a question about courses that have TA's, many of whom may be responsible for grading. To whom does a reminder go? It goes to the instructor of record, Dr. Swan said.

Professor Weinsheimer, noting that one sheet of data distributed at the meeting was titled ""Top 20 1XXX courses for the Twin Cities campus in which Students Received a D, F, or N for Fall 2003 and the corresponding number of sections and sections that did not send alerts for fall, 2004," suggested that perhaps students should be told about the list. Dr. Shaw commented that students know; Professor Hoover agreed. What is missing, Professor Branton said, are data on the number of students who received an alert and withdrew/who received a D, F, or N for the course. Dr. Swan said they could look into who received what grades and what happens. There would be need for a control group, he said. Professor Hoover said, apropos the number of W's declining, that one cannot tell if that is because of mid-term alerts, the 13-credit rule, or other factors.

Professor Hoover thanked Drs. Swan and Falkner and Ms. VanVoorhis for presenting the information.

## **2. The Libraries and the Bookstores**

Professor Hoover now welcomed Mr. Crabb (Director of the Bookstores), Ms. Lougee (University Librarian), and Associate Vice President Scheich to discuss the relationship between the libraries and the bookstores. The Committee is having the discussion, she said, because the line between what the libraries and the bookstores do is becoming more blurred, with the digitization of information; she asked Mr. Crabb and Ms. Lougee to join the Committee to talk about how students get information.

Ms. Lougee said she would talk first about the "old" model and then about the "new" one. She distributed a one-page handout and discussed the evolving role of the libraries in the provision of information to students. There are blurring lines, she agreed, and there are challenges to the libraries and bookstores on values, productivity, and costs. The libraries and bookstores would like to think about working together and she said it would be helpful for them to have comments from Committee members.

Ms. Lougee reviewed the "traditional" context for the libraries and learning environments. Libraries do not purchase textbooks; students buy them in the bookstore. Libraries provide course reserve services, including "managed delivery of books from library collections," photocopies of journal articles and content for courses. The current context is somewhat different. Libraries still do not purchase textbooks. In terms of reserve services, they still provide managed delivery of books and photocopies, they scan material for on-line delivery, they "make direct links from licensed electronic content to course pages," "move licensed context into course environment" (about 20,000 journals and hundreds of newspapers), and place greater reliance on "fair use" in course reserves.

With respect to funding, in the traditional context, students pay for textbooks and course packs, the libraries support the reserve system, and departments cover the necessary copyright permissions for reserve photocopies. Publishers focus on course-adoption. In the current situation, students continue to pay for textbooks and course packs and the libraries continue to support the reserve system, with departments covering permission costs for reserve materials. However, reserves have changed in both physical and principled ways. The libraries both copy and scan materials for on-line use and make a liberal interpretation of fair use (they do not assume that publishers must be paid for access under fair use). Scanning materials is much more expensive, but it is being used much more, and it is not clear long the libraries can continue to subsidize the reserve system. In addition, a growing percentage of course content is covered by campus-wide licenses. Publishers, at the same time, are becoming more savvy: they license e-content, they have provisions about electronic reserves in their contracts, and have a legal interest in reserves. They restrict use of materials for reserves so there is much more scrutiny of library and University use policies.

The libraries are seeing potential paradigm shifts in the emerging technology environment, Ms. Lougee related. There are open systems and capabilities for integration through, for example, "seamless integration of licensed content and 'discovery' activities with course environments," "capacity for dynamically created resource lists for disciplines/courses," "capacity to alert individuals to relevant resources," and "integration of course, library, and tool environments (e.g., RefWorks, Portfolio, etc.)." There are more robust search tools to work across resources, there are tools for faculty creation of the course environment, and tools for on-line commerce and micro-payments. The search tools allow faculty to not predetermine course readings but to set a framework for searches; the libraries work with faculty to develop sites.

The libraries and bookstores did an experiment with the Carlson School of Management to integrate materials: it was an electronic course pack project for about 1000 students in 27 courses because they sensed that a high percentage of the readings were a good match with the University's licensed content; the students were provided direct links to about 120 articles. They learned that almost all faculty reading requirements could be met by electronic licenses. If all students were to download the materials, the determined that there would be about \$9500 in savings for students in these 27 courses. This helps prevent students from paying twice for the same material.

The libraries are taking other steps as well. They are striving for more integration of \_\_\_\_\_, they are working with faculty to create customized web pages, they are developing a suite of tools for more linking and robust searching within the environment of a particular course—and they recognize there is interest in activity in an unmediated model—a faculty member sees an article and wants to present it to a class, downloads it, and posts it on the class website. The libraries want to help support best practices in this area, in line with licenses and the law.

Mr. Crabb next explained that the bookstores were brought into the project with the Carlson School in 2003. The Carlson School wanted to take advantage of licensed materials that were in the libraries because they were seeing increased course packet prices. The bookstores were brought in because some materials are not available through the libraries; the Carlson School wanted course packets that were 100% electronic and asked the bookstores to provide the materials that were not available through the libraries—students would come to the bookstore to buy access to the materials.

The bookstores worked with the libraries to respond to the request. They looked at the textbook adoption system in place as a vehicle to enable what the Carlson School was seeking. The bookstores developed interfaces with the libraries, the Copyright Permissions Center, and the e-commerce site. When they developed the demo, they realized quickly that the library search mechanisms would be critical to make the process work well and so started discussions with the libraries. There are a number of issues that need to be addressed, but they have been selling access to electronic materials (e.g., URLs with pin codes).

The Carlson School site had a high "hit rate," Mr. Crabb reported; it would be lower in other disciplines.