

Registrar's Advisory Committee Minutes

December 5, 2016

9:30-11:30 a.m.

402 Walter Library

Prepared by: Kate Sophia

Approval of November minutes

There was a small change in one of the answers to a question in the Instructional Time section. It was for clarification and readability. It was updated on the shared document. There were no other changes.

Announcements

New Office of the Registrar director

Adrienne Bricker was introduced as the new director of the Office of the Registrar. Adrienne was most recently the deputy registrar at Hunter College, City University of New York. She started the Monday after Thanksgiving.

January RAC meeting?

The group was asked about their availability for meeting in January. There was consensus that the week prior to the start of term is too busy for them to attend a meeting and that the next meeting should be held in February.

Follow up to Earlier Summer Registration

Julie Selander followed up on a previous agenda item related to the possibility of moving summer registration to earlier in the year. She clarified that any proposed change wouldn't take effect until the registration for summer 2018 classes.

Increasing Retention and Graduation for our Low-Income Students

[See presentation for more detail](#)

Les Opatz presented the findings from his doctoral thesis, which was focused on how to increase retention and graduation for low-income students — specifically Pell-eligible students. He created a framework, “the Persistence Pyramid,” based on students who were successful.

Some key points:

- Economic elements affect these students at all levels. Students sacrifice a lot. They work very long hours, have little sleep, take care of their family financially, struggle with reliable transportation for commuting, and don't have enough food.
- The degree to which students rely on friends for emotional support, academic support, and other resources is huge, yet many of these students feel isolated.
- Most of these students have a strong sense of purpose (e.g., what they would do after graduation) that really help get them through difficulties.
- Many students reported that the greatest experience they had was being a mentor/tutor. Les theorizes that this was due to a change in agency (they are giving instead of receiving) and the sense of responsibility because people are looking up to them, so they have a feeling that they need to do well.
- Many did research and it was meaningful for them.
- Many students did not have knowledge of resources. They didn't know what was available for them.
- Many students of color reported feeling different and not trusted. Arrived having a false impression of how diverse the University is.
- There needs to be an appropriate caring culture (not just in advising).
- These student encounter a lot of doubts and they are particularly potent at moments of transition.
- Messages are more successful when they are targeted to individuals or small groups rather than a generalized message sent to many people.

Les said that the implications of his findings were that the University needs to do a better job covering the total cost of attendance, ensure these students are connecting, that they are aware of the ability of resources and that they use them, and that there is better diversity support.

QUESTIONS

Q: When talking about doubts being more potent at transition, does that have to do with having built a relationship with an advisor and then they declare a major and switch advisors?

Les: Yes. Even if the two people are both very good and helpful, not having the established relationship or even just a different style/approach can lead to more doubts, especially if it is coupled with struggling in a class.

Q: Have you been able to implement any changes based on this?

Les: Going with smaller section sizes (more like 15 instead of 25-30). The career-readiness initiative is helping students see career connection with their liberal arts degree. There is a a lot of overlap with Pell eligibility and work study. Seeing if there are positions that can be reserved for this population.

Grading & Transcripts policy

[See presentation and policy draft for more detail](#)

Stacey Tidball presented a draft of changes to the Grading and Transcripts Policy based on the discussions at RAC and other places over the past couple of months.

She showed that the first sections establish the grading systems.

Stacey pointed out that there were minor tweaks in scholastic dishonesty section. They were made not to change meaning, but to better order the conversation. If scholastic dishonesty is determined, the instructor can assign an F or N as appropriate. If student tries to evade this process by dropping the class, they will be re-enrolled and assigned the F or N.

Incompletes

Stacey said that the Incomplete information is being broken up for clarity. Language has been added stating that an Incomplete can only be assigned by an instructor. The proposal is that incompletes will lapse to an F after 90 days.

Q: This section doesn't really address what a "substantial portion of the work completed" means.

Stacey: We would like to have that included as a definition and/or part of an FAQ.

Q: Does the 90 days include the next semester? Doesn't seem fair if they missed the final and need to wait for the next final to be offered.

Stacey: No. In the situation you mention, students should not have to wait until the final is offered again next term. While that is happening now, that is not the intent of the current policy either. Students could be offered alternative exams or alternative means of making up missed exams.

Q: Is the 90 days hard-wired into PeopleSoft?

Stacey: Not yet. What is regulating it now is the contracts and the lapsing of the grades in PeopleSoft at one year. We are also interested in exploring technical solutions to prevent the assigning of an I without evidence of a contract on file.

Q: There are cases of when we enforce these rules where it will have a major impact on graduation. There are cases where students are working with professors outside of the policy and that's important...what are we hoping to accomplish with changing the policy and making things more difficult?

Stacey: We have incentives on more than one side. It's also not good for students to have the weight of incompletes going into the next semester. In extenuating circumstances, the students can petition for an exception.

Q: Are we going to have policy around when an F is an F and cannot be changed?

Stacey: What we have now is that after a year, the I can be "re-upped" for another year. What would be changing is that a year and another year would change to 90 days and another 90 days.

Comment: Would like an FAQ about what to do when the I has been lapsed to an F.

Q: I am in favor of having a time limit. Not sure if 90 days is right, but a year was too long and lead to some bad behavior (such as an instructor advising the student to sit in on the class again without registering).

Stacey: There is language in the current policy that addresses this, but it possibly wasn't clearly organized. Changing the policy won't necessarily change the culture, but it can make it easier for those looking at the policy for guidance to understand what they need.

Q: Are we moving toward a universal contract?

Stacey: That is not known right now, we need to keep talking about it. Even CLA's good standard contract may not work for others and even standard contracts do not require routing.

X and K grades

Stacey stated they are proposing that the X would only be available to be assigned in continuing courses. May need to incorporate this into the ECAS process. There is some discussion happening regarding the X remaining on the student's record unless somebody changes it once the course is complete. Lapsing to an F is not fair to the student, but sometimes the student isn't motivated to have it changed. One possibility is removing the X to make it blank, which would then automatically change to an NR.

Stacey asked the group for insights on why the K grade is ever appropriate. Someone replied that there can be a cohort of graduate students who have an internship experience finishing at different times for different students. The students finishing earlier need the grade in order to graduate. In order to give them that grade, the grades need to be assigned to everybody. The students not done with the internship are then assigned the K.

Class cancellation student notifications

[See presentation for more detail](#)

Amber Cellotti said there was work underway to send notifications to students would start when a class they were enrolled in had been canceled. This had been the practice, but it stopped. Currently looking at both an email and a notification in MyU. The language is still a work in progress as the attempt is being made to have it be appropriate for system-wide use. Still looking at when this would launch and the timing of when the emails would be sent (e.g., right when registration opens or only closer to the start of term?).

QUESTIONS

Q: Would the same message be sent if it was just a section or a whole class?

Amber: Yes.

Q: Then would it be helpful to put language about contacting the department around

alternate registration options?

Amber: The language does say to contact the department with questions. Would that be sufficient?

Q: No. It needs to say that they can get alternative registration options (such as another section or another class)

Q: Will the notification be available in APLUS?

Amber: Yes, that is the intent.

End of term dates/processing

[See presentation for more detail](#)

Amber Cellotti had reminders for the group on end of term processing and key dates. The diploma is mailed to the "Home" address if there is not a "Diploma address" set.

QUESTIONS

Q: Is it possible for diplomas to be issued early?

A: No. Those are ordered and processed in batch. If there are extraordinary circumstances, we can look at things. In the past two semesters, we have offered diploma pick-up, but it hasn't been very successful.

Undergraduate-only items

Academic Standing Discussion - Stacey Tidball and Mike Brown

[See presentation for more detail](#)

Stacey Tidball and Mike Brown led a discussion on the academic standing process during summer term.

Alison Blomster: We're not doing academic standing review in the summer. We tried the first summer after the Upgrade, but there was not enough time. We have someone who goes in and reverses them back to the spring standing.

Angela Bowlus: It's not the time, it's minimal review. Sometimes over three credits. We want them to use summer as a benefit, not a detriment.

Mary Ellen Shaw: We look at the report at who was automatically processed to be dismissed. In some cases, we'll let that stand, but not if it's something like three credits.

Alison Blomster: Another piece was international students. ISSS was going to talk to international students about *not* taking summer classes because there isn't enough time to manage their visas if they are suspended.

Mary Ellen Shaw: If a student has been dismissed in spring, but will take a summer class that would allow them to improve their standing, we will allow that on a case-by-case basis.

CCE handles it on a case-by-case basis.

Les Opatz: CSOM was reviewing, but not suspending for summer. There usually isn't enough credits to either suspend or remove probation. Would need 100% of all grades be in by August 15. It's just not possible to do a legitimate review comparable to fall/spring in this amount of time

Allison Blomster: The students who are on probation, we continue to monitor.

Douglas Saldana: CLA already has a review standard. There is a problem with the timeline about when grades are due and when academic standing is run and that it's the same about of set-up work to run for a smaller amount of students taking fewer credits.

Mike asked the group if there was interest in forming a working group to hash out these issues as the Office of the Registrar is frequently asked by colleges how other colleges handle academic standing. Stacey said there is a certain amount of consistency needed (or at least a well-documented reason why colleges differ) for the NCAA.

With little interest in forming a working group, it was suggested that the information could be collected and shared electronically. Mike indicated that he would send a follow up email about forming a working group.

Academic Standing Reporting Update - Mike Brown

[See presentation for more detail](#)

Mike Brown provided an update on reports related to academic standing.

The changes to the Probation report (including renaming to "Academic Standing Report") that was announced at the November RAC meeting to go live at the end of November was rescheduled for December.

Two reports did go live in November: Academic Standing Mismatch and Academic Standing Change Report. These reports replace the ad hoc spreadsheets that Mike used to send to departments. Mike recommends running the Academic Standing Change Report after the clean-up run. The Academic Standing Mismatch will show good standing with service indicators needing to be removed and other standings with service

indicators not conforming to current documentation. Use your judgment as to what needs to be cleaned up/removed.

Mike also provided the fall timeline [available in the presentation].

Any questions about reports: srhelp@umn.edu

Leave of Absence update

Angela Bowlus provided an update about changes to the leave of absence process. She said that the key things to know are that the new LOA form has been taken down from One Stop and is only available in the advising toolkit. There is a document on advising guidelines to reference for the process. The information is now available for students on the One Stop website.

Some key changes: new form has six appropriate reasons for taking a leave of absence. Within PeopleSoft, it now will ask for one of the six reason codes when entering the LOA. That information will then be automatically brought into APLUS and the leavers reports.

Angela reminded the group that, in most cases, the RLOA should not be entered. Alison Blomster noted that somebody from ASR contacted CLA to ask with the RLOA *wasn't* added. Need to spread the word farther so this new practice is known.

Angela said that by the end of this week, APLUS will have updated LOA tags. "Considering LOA" will be the only one that advisors will need to enter as the other ones will be automatically pulled in from PeopleSoft.

Advisors should be reaching out to students while they are off campus to check in on how things are going. The prompt to the advisor to do this will only happen for four terms. If a student doesn't return after those four terms, the student is automatically discontinued.