

RAC minutes

November 1, 2010

Attending: Rich Adamczak, Gary Andersen, Bonnie Anderson, Rockne Bergman, Rhonda Bjurlin, Frank Blalark, Sheryl Bolstad, Danielle Bordelau, Courtney Carlson, Kelly Condit-Shrestha, Laurel Carroll, Pam Cook, Dan Delaney, Sabina Deressa, Jessie Eastman, Tina Falkner, Tracy Fischer, Bonnie Fleming, Carol Francis, Jennifer Franko, Teresa Fruen, Laurie Gardner, Jan Goodno, Kit Gordon, Kellie Greaves, Amanda Grimm, Stacey Grimes, Kevin Havard, Connie Hessburg-Odland, Emily Holt, Lisa Hubinger, Linda Jagerson, Sue Johnson, Charleen Klarquist, Jennifer Koontz, Stephanie Lawson, Linda Lindholm, Aileen Lively, JoEllen Lundblad, Carla Mantel, Heidi Meyer, Emily Mraz, Margo Mueller, Katherine Murphy, Ingrid Nuttall, Margie O'Neill, Celeste Pape, Heather Peterson, Kristina Pearson, Guy Piotrowski, Sarah Ihrig, Ann Rausch, Lonna Riedinger, Cindy Salyers, Mary Ellen Shaw, Deanne Silvera, Judy Soine, Susan Suchy, Nathan Tesch, John Vollum, Georganne Tolaas, Kathy Walter, Stephanie Wiesneski, Lisa Wiley, Emily Wood

There were no corrections to the October minutes.

Undergraduate education agenda items

Announcements

The January RAC meeting will be held on January 10, 2010, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The meeting was moved to this date from January 3, which will be the first day after the University closure.

Sue Van Voorhis announced that the U Promise program will be changing; more updates will follow as details are finalized. A meeting with the president is scheduled later in November to discuss the issue, and an update will given at the December RAC meeting. In the meanwhile, Sue asked that those who are recruiting refrain from discussing the U Promise scholarship in terms of "free tuition." The ACG and SMART grant programs will be ending this year. There will be a comprehensive communication plan that will address changes to both financial aid programs, so that affected students can understand the impact of all changes.

Sue Van Voorhis also announced that the regional registrar's conference would be held in Minneapolis on November 3-5; many ASR staff have played a part in organizing the conference, and so they may have limited availability during those days. Sue thanked the group for their understanding.

Emily Holt surveyed the group to see if there were any objections to moving the undergraduate degree application deadline back two weeks, to the fourth week of each semester. Emily will follow up with an email inquiry to the RAC listserv.

Project updates, Jody Seiler-Peterson

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

- The contact verification page is now live for unofficial transcript and the MyU portal. Staff are now looking at adding the verification function to the online student account and some applications used by faculty and staff.
- The Electronic Course Authorization System (ECAS) has been updated to provide more accurate and useful course information. The Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) fields are now not required for certain courses for which the information is not needed. Updates to the Writing Intensive (WI) fields have also been made, based on recommendations from the Campus Writing Board.
- The online course catalog and the Program and Curriculum Approval System (PCAS) have been expanded to include Rochester degree programs. The Rochester campus will now be able to use Graduation Planner and build sample plans.
- ASR now has the ability to run APAS reports from external systems; this was implemented, in particular, for the student-athlete database that is currently under development. This new functionality will save staff time.

In-progress projects include:

- The upgrade to the Pillar environment for web applications. Most of the applications have now been updated. The goal is to have the final few applications moved by February, 2011.
- Truth in Lending Act (TILA) project. According to federal law, the University is required to provide disclosures to students who receive certain University loans. This project should be in production at the end of November.
- Parent/guest access updates. Currently, the parents or guests to which students give access lose their access as soon as the student is inactive. When this project is complete, students will be able to update their Parent/Guest Access settings after they leave. Guests will also be able to update their email addresses in the system.
- Online exit interview. Development on this project continues.
- CRM: The project team is wrapping up analysis of the two vendor finalists. They hope to have a vendor recommendation to the project sponsors by the end of 2010.
- PeopleTools upgrade. This implementation was planned for November, but has been delayed due to unforeseen technical issues. The revised delivery date has not yet been confirmed.
- Spring tuition set-up has begun. The target date for calculating tuition is early to mid-December.

Sue Van Voorhis stated that the Business Intelligence software, previewed at the October RAC meeting, arrived in late October and will be installed; this means that the project is on track in terms of the established timeline. She also provided a further update on the CRM project. The project team is currently bringing in the Vice Presidents and CEOs of the final two vendors

under consideration. Wayne Sigler is also involved in the negotiations. Finally, Sue reported that Jody has been compiling a list of projects for next year and comparing them to ASR's staff resources. Cindy Salyers from OIT has also been helping with this effort. Sue Van Voorhis and Doug O'Sullivan will review the status of all pending projects; they discussed this topic at a meeting in late October. Even without all projects yet included, ASR is at about 150% of staff capacity for next year; it will be necessary to determine how projects will be prioritized.

Student Veterans appreciation Day Event, Mary Koskan

Mary Koskan stated that the Student Veterans Appreciation Day event will begin at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, November 11, at Northrop Plaza. (If the weather is bad, the event will be held in the Atrium of Northrop Auditorium.) There will be a chili lunch in the Northrop Atrium (regardless of the weather). Guest speakers will include Regent Dean Johnson and CLA Assistant Dean Chris Kearns, both of whom are veterans, and Student Veterans Association co-president Kim Wooster. The event begins at 11:30 a.m., with lunch served from 12-1:30 p.m.

APLUS information sharing and referrals, Tina Falkner

APLUS is an advising tool launched by CLA in 2008; it provides near real-time data to advisers, so that they can intervene when students are exhibiting academic behaviors that could jeopardize their success. The Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) and ASR worked with CLA to expand the system to all undergraduate advising offices on the Twin Cities campus. The target date for this initial implementation phase is June, 2011; because the project is well ahead of schedule, the team is now beginning discussions about expanding to areas like career services and many other student services units that exist outside of the collegiate advising offices (for example, MCAE, the MAC, CAPE, and so on). This second phase of implementation will expand even further the shared data model that APLUS makes possible.

Tina Falkner asked for input on a topic discussed in late October with the Twin Cities campus career services directors, about their potential uses for APLUS. Tina asked: As the campus moves toward a model of sharing more data, what career services data should be shared with academic advisers, and what academic data with career counselors? CEHD's academic advisers and career counselors currently work in one system, and that seems to work well.

Sheryl Bolstad indicated that the career counselors may be interested in having access to advising comments. Could this access be given without access to students' grades?

Teresa Fruen stated that she found it interesting that CEHD has had a shared system. Teresa does not see any reason not to share information; it seems like it would be useful from both the career counselors' and the advisers' point of view.

Mary Ellen Shaw, from CEHD, added that they have had no problems with their shared data model. They see career services staff as part of the overall undergraduate advising team.

Carol Francis asked about how access would be determined. In her case, she works mostly with graduate students, but does advise some undergraduate students through the ICP and BIS programs. The School of Public Health is also working on a public health minor for undergraduates.

Tina Falkner replied that currently, access is based on the academic plan level, and users must have completed Student Data Inquiry and Student Data Update training for PeopleSoft. Tina stated that she would have to look into how access might be granted for those undergraduate students who have a public health component to their programs.

Nathan Tesch stated that Rochester, like CEHD, has a shared information model that has been very helpful.

Tina Falkner concluded that the group does not seem to have objections to sharing the data within APLUS with career counselors. Tina also does not see a problem from the point of view of FERPA regulations. In the future, there will be a broader conversation about this issue when it comes to the implementation of the business intelligence and CRM systems.

Tina summarized the status of the investigation into sharing data among the various groups. The APLUS advisory team met in late October; they are drafting proposed language about their position on the topic to share with CSAA; this draft will also go to the Career Development Network. The group will also send an inquiry to the national association of career services professionals, to gain insight into the national perspective on the issue. Tina will also consult with Tracy Smith in the Office of the General Counsel.

In terms of APLUS in general, the project has hired a programmer, who will be working on a referral module that will help advisers to refer students to additional resources from within the system.

A question was asked about when APLUS might roll out to departments. Tina Falkner replied that CLA is currently piloting this with a few departments in CLA. The difficulty is that departments have different concerns and need to track different data than collegiate advising offices; those specific elements are being defined in the current pilot process.

Closure planning impacts and communications, Tina Falkner

Tina Falkner reported that the web page that University Relations created to address closure-related issues is now available online: <http://www1.umn.edu/twincities/faculty-staff/closure/>

As more information is finalized and becomes available, this website will become more extensive.

Vice President of Human Resources Carol Carrier sent a note to the DDD listserv in October, which included a “meeting minute” about the closure/furlough. The information is meant to help supervisors plan for the closure. There will be more information coming out from the Office of Human Resources, especially for Civil Service and Bargaining Unit staff and the impact on paychecks.

1-HELP will be closed during the closure, except for emergency outages. When someone calls, they will be asked to leave a message that will be forwarded. There is not yet a clear definition of what constitutes an emergency outage; Andy Hill recommends that individuals talk to their IT directors about what they can expect during the closure.

If faculty or instructors have questions as they are entering grades, they should email the student records training team at srhelp@umn.edu.

Lonna Riedinger asked for the group to reconsider the decision, made at the October meeting, to take down the online 13-credit exemption request form. She indicated that CLA could simply put an out of office reply on the managed email account that receives the request, so that students would be notified about the delay. However, students should still be able to submit their exemption requests during the closure. There were no objections to this decision. The 13-credit exemption request will be left online during the closure; colleges are encouraged to include an out-of-office autoreply on the email addresses that receive the online exemption requests.

“Auto-Graduation” committee update, Margo Mueller

A committee chaired by Laurie Gardner met over the summer to discuss the current graduation process for undergraduate students and improvements that might be made to it. The graduation process committee’s recommendations were forwarded Vice Provost Bob McMaster.

Related to these efforts, the APAS team has been working with OIT to create a database that can be used to analyze APAS data see if students have completed their requirements. This database is near completion; it could be available by the end of December. The database will include any academic programs that have APAS reports (primarily undergraduate programs). Though the database will be accessible only to ASR IT staff, they will likely be able to make data available to particular colleges or departments on request.

Readmission and criminal history, Mary Koskan

Mary Koskan is working with OGC to review all forms and processes related to readmission, to ensure that information pertaining to criminal history is being collected and reviewed appropriately. Please send Mary Koskan any forms and processes related to readmission.

Electronic Transcripts RFP, Frank Blalark

Frank Blalark reported that OTR is investigating an initiative to offer electronic transcripts (in PDF form) and to allow non-current students to request transcripts online. There is a meeting scheduled for November 8, in which ASR-IT and OIT will talk with a vendor to see how easy it would be to implement the software and integrate it with PeopleSoft.

Communicating the value of ASR, Ingrid Nuttall

Ingrid Nuttall reported that Vice Provost Bob McMaster asked ASR to put together information about why we're structured the way we are, the work we do, and the value we provide to the University. Ingrid is leading a group that is compiling this information.

Ingrid stated that this cross-functional group is pulling together information quickly so that Vice Provost McMaster can have it available for presentations. The group within ASR has been meeting since August. After creating initial presentation materials, they are now creating an overall communication plan. As a part of this, Ingrid wants to be sure that the group engages all of ASR's constituents to gain an accurate understanding of what is important to them, and what. Taking a step back and looking at creating a communication plan.

Ingrid asked if anyone in the group were aware of any of the colleges or departments who are engaging in a similar effort. She also asked about the concerns that they may have, which may relate to the services we provide. What is that ASR does that is most important to the everyday work in the colleges and departments?

Mary Ellen Shaw commented that they rely on ASR for many things that support their work; it is difficult to pinpoint anything ASR does to support the colleges that is not important. Ingrid followed up by asking whether the leadership within the colleges understands ASR's role in this way; the group indicated that this is not always the case.

Graduate education agenda items

Transition team structure: Coordinating with colleges, Frank Blalark

Frank Blalark stated that he is working to identify more efficient ways to work with the colleges to document, revise, and streamline processes, and ultimately to transfer work where appropriate. Frank is working with CLA on a pilot plan; CLA is creating an internal structure that will help them to be informed on key transition events and take on additional responsibilities. Frank also met with college IT directors, and discovered that necessary information is not always being communicated to them; it seems that communication is not always happening between different groups within colleges.

The pilot project structure involves categorizing the business processes into "buckets" that align with college processes, and having a key collegiate contact for each process area. So far, these process areas include admissions, curriculum & advising, progress to degree, placement, governance, data management, communication, and commencement. Frank asked the group how such a structure might work in their colleges, as CLA was the first to bring forward an internal structure.

An attendee from the Humphrey Institute stated that they are primarily working on the student services aspect. Attendees from CEHD indicated that they are working on many issues;

however, it has not been clear exactly what work will be handed over, and that makes it difficult to create an internal structure.

Frank stated that CLA was looking into building applications for degree clearance, workflow processes, tuition, and other issues. Frank would like to create clear lines of communication, so that this work can be connected to the development of enterprise-wide systems, while avoiding duplication of effort or bottlenecks in system development.

Frank also indicated that some issues are currently unclear because decisions are needed in policies and other key areas.

Sue Van Voorhis asked if those processes for which ownership can currently be determined could be identified, and a timeline indicated.

Frank stated that the timeline for moving processes must also be coordinated with the transition in the academic data structure, Apply Yourself modifications, and so on.

Frank asked if it would be helpful to organize subcommittees based on general categories with the website. A listserv could be set up for each category, and updates would be sent to that listserv; in some cases, the same individuals might be on several of these listservs. Individuals agreed that they could identify key contact/liaisons for each of the categories. Emily Holt added that this is just one way for ASR to bring people together in order to share information and best practices. Frank added that it will be important for ASR to know who is responsible and/or directly involved in each process area. Sue confirmed that the BPR teams will be working on documenting processes; the key contacts/liaisons for each process group would be kept up-to-date on progress that is made.

Several individuals also asked that communication be sent out broadly, to the DGS Assistants and/or RAC listservs. They indicated that communication is not making it across departments and levels within the college. It was also requested that that, once identified, the key contacts from each college be listed on the websites, so that departments would know who to contact with questions or concerns.

Kasi Williamson stated that there has been a widespread sense that communication is not getting to the appropriate audiences; the dean's representatives from the colleges have also indicated that they are not certain when they should be forwarding particular communications, and to whom. This is an ongoing problem that will continue to be addressed.

Emily Holt stated that ASR is hoping to set up a structure of listservs, along with other mechanisms to help people work together.

The group consensus was that more information is preferred, even if individuals receive duplicate emails. Currently, colleges of various sizes are working within different structures. The group feels that it would be appropriate for key updates go to all listservs (e.g., RAC, DGS-ASSTs). They will raise objections if they feel that there is too much communication, and steps can be taken to reduce or narrow the audiences. Both specific listservs and broad-based communication are important at this point.

Graduate policy review committee update, Tina Falkner

Tina Falkner gave a brief update from the policy review committee. The draft policy related to the make-up of examination committees went forward to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP) and the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC). The policy review committee focused on this policy first, because they had heard there was widespread concern about the issue.

The FCC had different comments on some of the language than either SCEP or college representatives. The FCC said that only faculty members should be able to serve as advisers on committees; the college representatives indicated that this is not always the case in all circumstances. A decision will be made on this issue, and the draft will be put into policy format.

The next main issue the policy review committee is discussing is how Directors of Graduate Studies (DGSs) are appointed. There is currently no structure in place for the transition to new DGSs. Each policy review subcommittee is also beginning to review a designated portion of the comprehensive group of potential policies. Once the exam committee and DGS policies move to the next step in the process, Tina will be able to give a more detailed update on what each policy subcommittee is looking at.

Please contact Tina Falkner or Nita Krevans (chair of the committee) with questions about particular policies.

Business Process review team updates

Catalog, Gayla Marty

One of the BPR teams is related to the catalog. This committee includes staff from the Graduate School, University Relations, and Academic Support Resources. Kristin Cleveland, a member of that team, also attended the RAC meeting. The catalog BPR team has met, and they have three primary goals:

1. To document the past catalog process
2. To capture current and accurate program data for online and PDF catalogs
3. To capture this data in a format that it can be used for PCAS data entry

The BPR team expects to propose an interim catalog for 2011-13, which would include the programs formerly in the Graduate School. They asked the college representatives to name a catalog coordinator for each college; an initial orientation meeting is planned for around Thanksgiving. The team is moving as quickly as possible, so that catalog production can happen in a timely way.

One attendee asked about making changes to the current online catalog; they have requested the changes, but the changes have not yet been made.

Kasi Williamson commented that the implementation of PCAS will ultimately streamline this process, so that approved changes automatically populate the online catalog.

Gayla replied that the current delay may be due to the fact that it is not clear that the appropriate approvals have been made by the college. Gayla will investigate this issue and follow up.

Registration exceptions, Dan Delaney

Dan Delaney reported that the current processes for the following registration exceptions have now been documented:

- Registering for doctoral thesis credits after the U deadline
- Registering for more than 18 credits after the U deadline
- Changing number of credits in a variable credit course after the U deadline
- Changing grade basis after the U deadline
- Canceling registration after the U deadline
- Adding registration after the U deadline

The transition team made up of volunteers from RAC will meet this Friday, November 5. Their role will be to:

- Identify collegiate practices
- Review and validate current documentation and make recommendations
- Plan for training on process responsibilities and implement process work

The names of these team members and the documents that detail current processes are posted on the project website:

https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/graduate_education/home/processes/registration-exceptions

MyU portal, Frank Blalark

A team has met to talk about what the graduate education transition means for the portal. They discussed the production of affinity strings, and who should be charge of the admitted and enrolled views of the student portal. They are exploring the implications of adopting the undergraduate model for how the portal is managed (i.e., a centrally-administered enrolled student view, with colleges and departments as content providers for particular cells).

AHC and some other programs have separate portal views; these need to be investigated further. Frank will contact the AHC and the Carlson School to discuss how their portal views might be affected.

Degree progress, Margo Mueller

Margo Mueller gave an update from the degree progress BPR team. The team has begun by reviewing the current process for tracking student degree progress. They met once before the November RAC meeting; they will continue to meet weekly for 1.5 hours. First, they will work to review the details of the current processes, learning from Graduate School staff. They will also

review any documentation that currently exists. Then, ASR staff will share their knowledge of APAS, PCAS, and ECAS. The goal is that all members of the team will understand the available tools and capabilities, as well as the current procedures and related policies. Following that, we will pull together a group of stakeholders to get them involved further. The team hopes to have more details to report by the December meeting.

ECAS, Frank Blalark

Frank Blalark stated that the ECAS-related modifications will be related to the approval of 8000-level courses. Currently, the Graduate School is a part of the approval sequence for many of these courses; this needs to be modified. There may be policy-related implications, however, related to certain full-time equivalent courses. After these policy issues are sorted out, ASR will revisit the issue of modifying the approval sequence in ECAS.

Interdisciplinary and inter-collegiate programs, Frank Blalark

There are several programs that are administered by more than one college. Currently, the Graduate School is the home college; however, the colleges are meant to be the collegiate homes for graduate programs in the future.

The initial proposed plan was to assign each of these programs to a primary, degree-granting college. However, it became clear that, for some programs, it is not appropriate to assign it to a single collegiate home.

One proposed solution is to create a new, interdisciplinary degree-granting entity. Degree clearance and other administrative processes would still be housed within the individual colleges.

Someone asked what the implications of this would be for how tuition dollars are distributed. Frank replied that tuition can currently be split between colleges (as “multiple plan owners”), so this is not an issue.

Sue Van Voorhis stated that this issue will be presented to the collegiate deans. If no alternative solution can be found, it will be necessary to choose one collegiate home for each of these programs. That single collegiate home will appear on the students’ academic records, which may not be beneficial for them.

Commencement update, Gayla Marty

Gayla Marty reported that the official decision to move commencement to the colleges was announced in early October. As dates are announced for the graduate commencements of several colleges, Gayla is posting those to the transition website:

<http://www.grad.umn.edu/Transition/commencement.html>

The provisional Graduate Education Council met for the first time on October 5. The members of that group, as well as meeting agendas and minutes, are available on the transition website: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/Transition/council/>.

The first Graduate and Professional Assembly event will be held November 2 in Coffman Union. William Russel, who chaired the national commission on the future of graduate education, will be the keynote speaker.

Questions, all

The question was asked if issues related to dual degrees are being discussed. Frank Blalark replied that dual degree and dual career issues are being discussed by the PeopleSoft/Data Management group. The details about how to make this work in PeopleSoft must be worked out before the issue can be brought forward.

Genny Rosing added that the processes themselves probably will not change radically; there will still need to be a single career within a given term. But how that career will be managed needs to be addressed. Emily Holt confirmed that the process of switching the student's career each semester would still need to be there.

Frank Blalark added that tuition is another complicating factor related to this issue. The more variation there is, the more difficult it is to set up tuition. Sue Van Voorhis indicated that, even in the current situation, there is barely enough time to complete tuition set-up in the system.

The question was asked if the names of committee members are on the project website. Kasi Williamson replied that yes, and efforts are being made to ensure this information is up-to-date. Please contact Kasi at will2026@umn.edu with any questions or concerns about the website.