

Minutes of the Educational Policy Committee December 5, 2012

Approved 1-30-13

Educational Policy Committee

December 5, 2012 (Meeting #7)

Present: David Beard, Carol Bock, Adam Booker, Brandon Breuer, Paul Cannan, Bob Carlson, Harrison Defries, Linda Deneen, Aydin Durgunoglu, Jill Klingner, Jim Klueg, Sue Darge Lombardo, Lisa Reeves, Andrea Schokker, Jennifer Schultz, Maureen Tobin Stanley, Matt Weber

Excused: Chris Carroll, Ted Pedersen, Julia Williams

Absent: John Dahl, Vicki Weiss

Guest: Jerry Pepper, Kim Riordan

The minutes from the 11-14-12 meeting were approved.

Community-based learning designator

Kim Riordan provided an overview of the proposed community-based learning (CBL) designator. Draft language was distributed with the agenda regarding a proposed policy on CBL course designation and a draft form for requesting CBL designation. This is intended to serve as an identifier to help students in choosing courses and identify CBL courses on a transcript for potential employers. The draft policy describes how CBL is different from internships or volunteer service. Paid internships do not qualify as a CBL experience. EPC discussed this issue last year and requested more clarity in the course proposal process. A member questioned the two-stage review process that a course would need to go through (first to the collegiate curriculum committee then to Civic Engagement steering committee.) It was clarified that only brand new courses would go through a two-step process; it would predominantly be existing courses that would apply for CBL designation, so for these courses it would only be a one-step process. It was suggested that the approval process be changed such that the Civic Engagement committee would review proposals first and then to the collegiate curriculum committee for final review. A question was raised regarding how CBL hours are counted in terms of faculty contact hours. The expectation is that faculty are doing work related to that activity, similar to a lab. It was suggested that the CBL criteria be more explicitly defined in the CBL course designation form. Kim will draft revisions based on these suggestions; we will revisit this issue at our next meeting.

HS prep enforcement

Jerry noted that UMTC has now publicized to students their decision to not enforce high school prep requirements. He noted a recent news item from the UMTC Ledger (a Student Affairs website similar to UMD's Bulldog Update): "As of spring 2012, any undergraduate student admitted to the Twin Cities campus who was missing stated high school preparation requirements at the time of admission will not be required to complete the missing requirement in order to graduate."

At our last meeting EPC held to our current policy that UMD would continue to enforce high school prep requirements as a university graduation requirement. Over the past week Jerry has discussed this issue with the student affairs directors from each college unit and they were unanimous in agreement that enforcement is nearly impossible. Course access and conflicts with required and sequenced courses makes this extremely difficult. Enforcement of this policy is handled by putting a hold on a student's registration. The student then has to request their advisor to have the hold released. The student then goes in to register and either can't get in to the section that they need or have a time conflict with another required course, so the deficiency remains unfulfilled and the same scenario plays out again the next semester, and the next semester. They reach 60 credits as an otherwise successful student, and we are then supposed to kick them out?

It was suggested that we either don't admit students with deficiencies or we accommodate them by increasing the number of sections. Another member noted that not admitting these students is problematic. We admit over 200 students a year with deficiencies. Not every student has an opportunity for two years of foreign language at the high school level. These are otherwise high-ability students. Enforcing this as an admission requirement would not be beneficial to UMD. There are many ways to solve this problem rather than waiving the requirements. Increasing the awareness amongst advisors would help address this issue. This is generally not sly behavior on the students' part, many students and advisors simply don't know. It is also a registration issue because once they do know, students often can't get the courses that they need. The majority of students with foreign language deficiency are only deficient in the 2nd semester. By the time a student can get the course that they need they might need to start all over with the language. Once a student reaches 60 credits they are booked solid in courses required for their major and making up this deficiency becomes nearly impossible.

It was suggested that we exclude transfer students from these requirements. If students have completed their AA degree, high school coursework should no longer matter. Another member asked why we would consider waiving it for transfer students but not for students who have been successful here for two years?

Several members commented that two tiers of students is a bad idea.

If foreign language is really important to our campus, it should be as a college level requirement. If we were to require foreign language for all students at UMD, it would be very expensive. The policy can stand as is; we will put out the word to advisors to work more aggressively in tackling this issue, and we will work on course access for foreign language courses, but if those things fail and a petition to waive high school prep requirements comes to EVCAA, it will be approved. Enforcing high school coursework as a university graduation requirement is not fair to students. The policy that EPC has chosen to maintain is enforceable, but it is not practically enforceable. Kicking out otherwise successful students for a high school deficiency is simply not good policy.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

UMD is working to increase international student enrollment. Given the time and expense involved in international recruitment, administration has been exploring the possibility of working with an outside vendor. A number of vendors were researched last year with the top candidate being ESLI (English as a Second Language International). ESLI works with universities to help recruit students and teaches beginning level ESL. If we pursue a partnership with ESLI, their

recruits would come to UMD as conditional admits (not as UMD students) for a year of intensive ESL. They could then be admitted the following year as undergrad or grad students based on their experience. This would not replace our current ESL; it is intended to work in tandem with what we offer. ESLI admits students with a lower level of proficiency and works with them to bring their skills up. Our ESL fine tunes their language skills at a higher level. The international students pay ESLI directly and working with them costs UMD nothing. ESLI handles all the recruiting (approximately 15-25 students a year). We would provide classroom space for instruction. These students can apply for on-campus housing on a space-available basis. A faculty member noted that UEA has filed a grievance on this issue on the grounds that this is moving teaching out of the bargaining unit. This can become a slippery slope. What about students who are not proficient in math? Should we outsource beginning level math? This could start a trend outsourcing instruction in other areas. Andrea noted these are not UMD students and ESLI is not providing university-level coursework; this is not taking away from what we are doing here, it is intended as a feeder to expand our international students. UMD could commit to doing this all internally but it would involve committing significant financial resources to hiring term faculty to teach remedial coursework. A member expressed concern that UMD also serve the needs of U.S. students from non-English speaking families and not just well-to-do international students that can afford a program like this. It was noted that once we attract students from a location we tend to get more, but we do not yet have a critical mass to grow our international population. The intent is to build up our internal capacity to the point where UMD could manage it internally.

Meeting adjourned 4:30 p.m.