Registrar's Advisory Committee
Monday, March 7, 2016
Hubert Humphrey Hall, room 50B
9:30-11:00 a.m.
Prepared by: Julia Marshall

Undergraduate education agenda items

EAB update

Kate Sophia said EAB staff met with on-site representatives today. They will start hands-on training soon. In May, there will be discussion over how effective the product is and whether or not to incorporate it into our practices.

Leave of Absence update

Amber Cellotti said a working group convened by LeeAnn Melin and Beth Lingren Clark met on February 22 to:

- Look at the current Leave of Absence policy
- Look at recommendations for changes (e.g., language changes)
- Identify areas of concern and inconsistencies in practice (relating to how students are being put on leave and how students are returning)

Highlights:

- There is indeed a variance in practices
- Would be helpful to document best practices regarding when leave is or isn't appropriate
- Look at timing of applying leave in PeopleSoft
- Look at including exception language (e.g., military leave for international students who serve in their home country's military often extends beyond two years)
- Better define matriculation
- Would be helpful to have FAQs to clarify the purpose and benefit of leaves of absence
- Clarify what good academic standing means
- Review Readmission/Return From Leave form
- Establish priority deadline for students to complete Readmission/Return From Leave form
- The working group discussed the leave of absence report, which went away after Upgrade

Next steps: The undergraduate policy group is better suited to advance this process. The undergraduate policy group will discuss the review of policy, practices, and specific issues such as financial aid applications.

Questions:
Q: So this was a brainstorming session with no recommendations yet made?
    A: Yes.

Q: We should incorporate language into the policy so students are aware that if they're gone for six months, they've used up their grace period and don't get another one.
Q: You talked about why students shouldn't be approved to go on leave to take classes elsewhere, but there can be good reasons for that. I have concerns about changing the leave of absence policy just for the sake of change. I don't see a need for a new form for students returning from leaves of absence when we could just use the readmit form.

A: We're open to feedback, so please send in your feedback.

Summer/fall 2016 registration appointments

Amber Cellotti said that currently, the appointment times for summer and fall are being prepared. There are two different, potential dates in which we could display this information to students in the portal:

- March 25: Would allow students to see their enrollment appointments sooner
- April 1: Waiting until this date could cut down on manually-adjusted appointment times

Feedback:
F: The earlier date would give students more time to meet with their advisors.

F: I want to second that; CLA has a lot of students.

It was determined that the March 25 date would work better for most.

Changes to course information after registration

Amber Cellotti said a working group is assessing issues and opportunities regarding the course/class setup. A subgroup of the working group is reviewing changes to course/class information after registration is open at the start of the term.

Primary focus: Grading basis & credits
Objectives:

- Understanding why these changes happen and when (e.g., Are changes happening earlier in registration or after the classes are full?)
- Looking for a better way to communicate those changes
- Understanding what ASR can be doing centrally to reduce those changes (e.g., Does ASR's scheduling method conflict with the way courses are being set up?)

Send feedback to knap0071@umn.edu.

Financial aid verification progress

Cheryl Johnson reminded the group that FAFSA verification is mandated by the Department of Education. The University has to check the accuracy of the information people put on the FAFSA. The people chosen for FAFSA verification are not random; they are usually selected because of high taxes paid, a large family, or other factors. It doesn't mean they have made mistakes.

Two pieces of information are collected: A verification form (there is one for dependent students and one for independent students) and a tax return (assuming the student filed one and can give a copy to the University).

By the end of the year, the University will have to start collecting transcripts, even though this wasn't necessary in the past. Students will have to have their taxes done. Students and parents may use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to transfer their tax data from the IRS website to the FAFSA. If taxes done electronically they are available for transfer sooner than those done on paper.

The University can request additional info, including:

- W2 forms (in order to verify income or in the case of parents having separated since filing)
- 1099R (if they might have had distribution from a retirement account that rolled over)
- Verification of child support
- Evidence a student isn't being claimed as part of one household but actually living with another parent
- Asset information

Frequently-asked questions:

- Q: Parents may ask how they can make their student independent.
    - A: They can't. FAFSA guidelines say if the student is 24, a grad student, married, or has dependents, he/she is independent. Veterans (excluding the National Guard) are independent. Orphans or wards of the court are independent. If a students say they have dependents, they will be selected for verification to confirm they are in fact supporting the child(ren). If a student says he/she is estranged, this will be verified.
- Q: What if a family's financial situation changes (e.g., medical expenses, parent loses job)?
    - A: Students can file a Special Circumstances Appeal. There is specific criteria the University will consider. However, the family should be sure the situational change will make a difference in the expected family contribution. Before doing the SCA, all of the tax data is verified - there have been situations where filing an SCA penalized the family because their EFC went up after the tax data verification.

Questions:
Q: I want to make sure everyone knows that if a student is selected for verification, their financial aid won't be disbursed until they complete the verification.

A: Yes. Usually, a record is selected when the FAFSA first loads, but it is possible for a student to be manually selected if a staff member sees something that doesn't make

sense. Students receive an email about the need for verification, but they often don't check
all of their emails.

Q: We have had instances where siblings have been selected for verification and only one turns in the forms and the other doesn't - they need to know they both have to turn in the forms.

Common session agenda items

Approval of February minutes

There were no changes to the February minutes.

Announcements

- All three One Stop locations as well as GSSP will be closing at 11:30 a.m. on March 16 for a staff retreat.

- Change to how student workers undergo SDI and SDU training: If students need additional access to pages, that access will be granted with supervisor consent and training. This change will take place at the end of April. There will be more information next month.

  Q: Will student workers who have access to APLUS need to go to this training?
    - A: APLUS access will remain the same.

- The e-business agreement for students is out today.

Medical School and the Wellness Initiative

Heather Peterson gave an update from the Medical School.

- A curriculum change for the medical school will be implemented in summer 2017.
- Degrees offered within the medical school: Doctoral, PhD, Graduate, Undergraduate, combined degrees
- New program: Students do the first three years of their undergraduate degree in CLA, then take med school classes their fourth year; these med school classes will transfer to CLA to round out their degree.

Medical school admissions stats: The medical school is one college but on two campuses (Duluth and Twin Cities). The Duluth campus had 1,628 applications and 60 matriculates in 2015, the Twin Cities had over 4,000 applications and 170 matriculates.

- Years 1 & 2 have a typical lecture style, where classes are held on both campuses.
- For years 3 & 4, Duluth students come to the Twin Cities campus.
- Years 3 & 4 involve direct patient exposure.

Factors leading to introduction of Wellness Initiative: A 2006 study by the Mayo Clinic showed nearly half of U of M medical students were suffering from burnout (personal life, curricular factors, and work-related). The average indebtedness for graduates in 2015 was $160,000. Most medical students had stellar undergraduate performance, but now struggle with the medical school curriculum (they have to deal with adversity for the first time). Additionally, a lot of these students care for and treat people who are suffering, which can be taxing.

Wellness Initiative:

- Summer Enrichment program: This program is outside of orientation. Specific students are identified (due to low AMCAS scores, reported disability, or status as first-generation college students) to come on campus for four days. They are introduced to classes and faculty, taught proper study habits, and connected with the Disability Resource Center.
- During the exam times for Years 1 & 2, PAWS brings therapy dogs to campus. The medical school has asked faculty and staff to donate money to the organization in order to subsidize the cost.
- The medical school hosts an end-of-the-year breakfast.
- There are nutrition classes - most students eat convenience food, but should be taught how to prepare quick and well-rounded meals.
- 1-credit Healer's Art Class: This class is a collaboration with the Center of Spirituality and Healing. It helps students learn how to be a self-healer and practice self-care.
- Wellness Lecture Series:
    - Hippocrates Cafe - a volunteer committee gets together and puts the experience of medical training into song, poetry, etc. It's a way for the whole medical community to get involved
    - MBSR (mindfulness-based stress reduction)
    - Health Coaching - students receive some health coaching, but are also taught how to provide health coaching to their patients
    - Massage Event - students are taught how to give themselves and other people massages
- Other support efforts:
    - Years 1 & 2 support group (de-stress through talking)
    - Confidential Peer Assistance Program (confidential support/consultation)
    - Wellbeing lecture series
    - Student piano in the student lounge
    - Yoga classes

Q: Can you talk more about the summer enrichment program - specifically, how do you pitch that to students? What if a student wasn't invited to attend but wants to?

> A: If a students wants to attend, by all means they can. Our summer enrichment program isn't posted anywhere, it's offered directly to students who are identified.

Q: How do you pitch it to students without having them feel singled out?

A: We pitch it as “We have an opportunity for you to come to campus if you want additional
resources.” Some students don’t come - more don’t come than do come. We’ve only had the program for one year so far, so there are no statistics yet about how helpful it is. Twenty-four students showed up last year, but 48 are signed up for this year - we had the 24 students from last year recruit people to come this year.

Time Conflict workflow

Amber Cellotti and Sherief Elabbady said a group is working on using Workflow Gen to establish an online process for students registering for classes that overlap; it is currently a paper process. Currently undergoing a system-wide process documentation to ensure the workflow will work on all campuses. The goal is to create efficiencies within the process.

Work to date:

- Business process documentation: How can we switch this from an in-person interaction with a professor to an online interaction?
- Figuring out how to integrate online access with students and faculty.
- The working group has a general framework of what the form looks like and where the form will go.
- Working on a communication plan (e.g., error messages)
- Student-initiated process: Student will have to find the form and input information, then the form gets sent out to instructors. The workflow will allow up to three conflicts (which means three different instructors need to provide approval).
- Discussing open field for professors’ approval email/routing: Who should get the approval email? Sending out reminder messages over a shorter period of time would allow staff to act more quickly.
    - Who should the workflow route to? This varies widely between colleges and programs, so it was kept open. Students are able to put in another @umn.edu email to route the form to different individuals (e.g., a TA).
    - Have reminder messaging for approvers built into grad education workflows: Give the different approvers in each stage a certain amount of time to take action, send reminder emails.

Questions:
Q: As an advisor, if a student were asking for multiple time conflict approvals, I would want to know so I could look into it.

A: We can look into having a notification that goes out to those who aren’t part of the approval chain.

Next steps for time conflict workflow:

- Soft launch in April (the earliest open enrollment date, April 15, is the goal) with the hope that the workflow is available for students to use.

- The intent is to offer an online process and a paper process simultaneously so the student has options - but then the paper process would be phased out over the summer.
- The process should be iterative.

Graduate education agenda items

Graduate Program Coordinators Network (GPCN) follow-up

Kayleen Jacobson said organizers attended a planning meeting for GPCN and reviewed the feedback given by those in attendance - the turnout was impressive. Most people were interested in the networking aspect, so this will be built into each meeting. In the next meeting, the future of the meeting will be discussed - specifically, what should be brought to the meeting?

Graduate Education Policy update

- Credit Requirements for Master's and Doctoral Degrees policy was revised last summer.
- Appointments as Director of Grad Studies was revised this past month.
- The Application of Graduate Credits to Degree Requirements policy is being flipped on its head in terms of the structure for core requirements. This policy has been in review for over a year; it was presented to the President's Policy Committee on March 4, but it didn't pass, so it needs to be reviewed again.
- Appointments to Graduate Examination Committees: The language relates pretty closely to two other policies.

Policies currently under review:

- Doctoral Degree: Performance Standards and Progress
- Doctoral Degree: Completion

Points of interest:

- The GEC Policy Subcommittee is looking at forming a working group to review the Leave of Absence policy for grad students; it would pull together outside parties (such as HR) to help look at the language.
- Master's Performance Standards and Completion policies are next up for review.

Congrats/Letter of Certification update

The Congratulations Letter and the Letter of Certification are two separate processes. Once graduate students clear the requirements for their degrees, the ASR communication team manually sends out the "Your degree award" communication, which lets students know they've completed everything.

The Congrats Letter has been sent out at many different times during the month. It is manual to produce and has been both scheduled and ad hoc. The Letter of Certification can certify a student's completion of a few different elements (e.g., certain written or oral exams), or it can certify that the student has completed all of the elements required for a degree.

A new module of PeopleSoft is being developed that will automate the Congratulations Letter, providing more timely communication to students. This can be an opportunity to meet in the middle between the two different processes (for instance, if a student needs proof that they've completed degree requirements). The Letter of Certification is even more manual, so the working group has designed the new automated Congrats Letter with the text of the Certification Letter, which could be used by students as verification (for employers and such).

This is being called the "Your Degree Award" communication and will replace the other two processes. It will be sent from the Office of Registrar. The language will be similar to the GSSP Letter of Certification.

Benefits for students:

- Graduate students will be notified faster
- It can be used as proof of completion of requirements
- It aligns with the undergraduate certification processes

Questions:

Q: Has there been any discussion of bringing professional schools into this?

A: This is being developed for the same population of students that the current letters are being sent out to, but I can see if that's possible.

Q: Are advisors copied on this letter?

A: That's currently not a part of the process. Currently this letter isn't copied to advisors or departments. Since this is new, we can see if that's possible.

Adjourn

Next meeting will be April 4, 2016.