Northern Illinois University
UNDERGRADUATE COORDINATING COUNCIL
134th Meeting
Thursday, May 5, 2005
Altgeld Hall 203

MINUTES
(Approved)

Present: S. Beyer (BUS), S. Conklin (HHS), A. Doederlein (LAS), J. Gau (EET),
D. Gough (HHS), W. Goldenberg (VPA), B. Hart (VPA), C. Malecki (LAS),
M. Mehrer (LAS), D. Rusin (LAS), E. Seaver (Vice Provost), L.
Townsend (EDU), M. Van Wienen (LAS), E. Wilkins (EDU)

Absent: N. Boubekri (EET), C. T. Lin (LAS), D. Sinason (BUS), P. Webb (LIB)
Students: C. Marcus (SA), E. Person (BUS), J. Katz (LAS)

Guest: Mary Pritchard (Associate Dean, College of Health and Human Sciences)
Kay Van Mol (Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator)

I. Adoption of Agenda

Two modifications were made to the May 5, 2005, agenda: 1) “Selection of
UCC Faculty Chair for 2005-2006” was added under New Business; and 2)
“CUAE Goals for 2005-2006” was added under Old Business.

A motion to approve the modified agenda was made and seconded. The
motion carried.

II. Announcements

A. Electronic Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 7, 2005, meeting were electronically approved.

III. Reports/Minutes from Standing Committees

A. Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee - C. Malecki

C. Malecki reported on the March 30, 2005, meeting of APASC. At that
meeting several requests from the Department of Family, Consumer and
Nutrition Sciences, relative to adding the language “grade of C or better
in prerequisite classes,” were approved by APASC as well as eight limited
retention and/or admissions requests.

In addition, the committee extensively discussed and approved
prerequisite/corequisite language changes to be made in the Academic
Policies and Procedures Manual to clarify and reflect both prerequisites
and corequisites more carefully. This issued had been referred back to
APASC from UCC with suggestions for the revised language.

In other action, APASC approved a new B.G.S. program proposal from the
College of Health and Human Sciences as a limited admissions program along
with the wording revision to be made in the undergraduate catalog
reflecting the offering of the new program.

   C. Malecki made a motion to accept the March 30, 2005, minutes of the
   Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee meeting. The
   motion carried.
C. Malecki gave a brief report on the April 27, 2005, APASC meeting although meeting minutes were not available. The committee discussed, again, the proposal to change the grading system. A query went out to all of the colleges to obtain input on their thoughts about the proposal – whether NIU should continue with the current system, change to a plus/minus system, or change to a half-step system. A majority of the respondents favored staying with the current system. C. Malecki reported that there were varying opinions, and there appeared to be some interest in making a change, but there was overwhelming support for not changing the system. APASC actually did vote on the issue, and it is no longer on the table.

E. Seaver commented that this issue will come back to UCC in the fall by way of the APASC minutes. UCC will need to communicate to University Council their decision on this item. APASC is now done with the issue, and they see no need to move any further forward with this.

B. General Education Committee – E. Wilkins

B. Wilkins reported on the March 24, 2005, meeting of the General Education Committee. She reported that GEC continued to review programs that have been resubmitted. There was a lengthy discussion about UBUS 223. The decision was made to ask the College of Business to provide an interim report based on an example of a format used by the Division of Statistics, STAT 208 course. Also, the committee approved granting a one-year extension on ECON 160 and requested the department to furnish GEC with a detailed account of changes that would affect the general education aspect of the course.

The General Education Committee also had a long discussion about the assessment of general education. Virginia Cassidy, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Development, attended the meeting as a guest. Dr. Cassidy provided the committee with some direction on what it needs to do next year while focusing on the assessment of general education which will be the focus for the committee for the 2005-2006 academic year.

B. Wilkins also reported that GEC will be continuing discussion on IDSP 200 and IDSP 211 at the next meeting. The committee is continuing to look at the different charges of the two courses and how they relate to the general education core competency.

B. Wilkins made a motion to accept the March 24, 2005, minutes of the General Education Committee. The motion carried.

B. Wilkins reported that at the April 21, 2005, meeting, the General Education Committee continued to look at resubmissions, specifically, the IDSP 200 and IDSP 211. After a long discussion, the committee decided to invite Dr. LaVerne Gyant to the first meeting of GEC in the fall of 2005 to continue to help address her questions or concerns to see if alignment can be found with the general education requirements.

The committee also approved the TECH 245 resubmission. Regarding the IENG 100 Interim Report, the additional information requested by the GEC was not received in time for the current meeting, so discussion of this item was postponed until the April 28, 2005, meeting.

She also reported that the committee further discussed the assessment of general education. The chair of the committee and the chair’s graduate assistant provided information to the committee as to what current data is available about the general education coursework at NIU. The graduate assistant will be working through the summer in providing and looking at different pieces of information to help as the committee continues in the fall to look at assessment of the general education program.
B. Wilkins made a motion to accept the April 21, 2005, minutes of the General Education Committee. The motion passed.

C. Honors Committee – M. Mehrer

M. Mehrer reported that at the Honors Committee meeting of April 1, 2004, the Director of the University Honors Program reported that the Honors Program had the highest enrollment (1,227 students) in the history of the program. He also noted that, looking ahead to next year, there will be the lowest number of honors seminars and courses being offered.

Other action taken by the committee included the approval of EYE grant proposals. These proposals are written and submitted by Honors students requesting monetary assistance with research or projects being done in conjunction with Honors coursework. The committee approved five proposals to receive funding. It was recommended that a sixth proposal be sent back to the student for revision and then be resubmitted for consideration at the April 22, 2005, Honors Committee meeting.

M. Mehrer made a motion to accept the April 1, 2005, minutes of the University Honors Committee. The motion passed.

M. Mehrer reported that on the April 22, 2005, Honors Committee meeting. As a quorum was not present, there were no action items. The committee discussed and will electronically approve or reject the revised EYE grant proposal which was resubmitted from the previous meeting as well as one newly submitted proposal.

The election of a chair for the Honors Committee for 2005-2006 will be elected at the first meeting of the committee in fall 2005.

D. Rusin asked what would happen due to the lack of honors seminars in the fall. M. Mehrer said that Dr. Michael Martin, Director of the University Honors Program, is working with administrators on that issue, and Dr. Martin reports that he is cautiously optimistic even though no solution has yet been found. The option of requesting additional funds in order to allow departments to add courses is being looked into.

D. Rusin asked about the matter of possibly transforming the Honors Program into an Honors College, a issue which was previously discussed by the Honors Committee. M. Mehrer reported that the committee has not made any new progress in working toward that goal. The committee briefly discussed this issue with regard to some information gathered from other honors programs at universities around the nation that are similar to NIU’s. The committee has not discussed an option or proposal to create a college to date; thus far it has been an information gathering undertaking. E. Seaver added that the committee spent some time last year gathering some comparison information. He thinks that the committee might consider bringing in a consultant to look at and evaluate programs and think about moving beyond the data collection stage. D. Rusin asked if there was encouragement from the institution to pursue this. Dr. Seaver answered that he is encouraging this, but he thinks that the committee needs to think about how the program would fundamentally look different than what it is now. The Honors Director has been discussing with the college deans the possibility of offering more honors seminars.

M. Mehrer made a motion to accept the April 22, 2005, minutes of the University Honors Committee. The motion passed.
M. Van Wienen reported on the April 4, 2005, meeting of the Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education. The committee gave final approval on changes to CIUE grant proposal forms. Most of the April 4th meeting was devoted to discussing Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award eligibility. Documentation included with the minutes reflects the report made by a subcommittee formed at a previous meeting for the purpose of doing some further fact gathering relative to revising the eligibility for the EUTA. The report of the subcommittee was the recommendation that the EUTA, as it currently stands, should be retained as is and that there should be a new award formed similar to EUTA which would be defined for non-tenure track instructors. There was considerable discussion, and the decision at that time was to pass no motions on either of the two recommendations but rather to meet a second time which the committee did on April 18, 2005. Although approved minutes from the April 18, 2005, meeting are not yet available, he reported that the committee did pass a motion to move forward in creating protocols and guidelines and whatever other logistics need to be worked out for creating an excellence for undergraduate instruction award. E. Seaver added that in the fall a proposal for the new award must be accepted, funding acquired, and a letter of agreement with the group that represents the instructors, then the award can be advertised along with the other teaching awards.

M. Van Wienen made a motion to accept the April 4, 2005, minutes of the Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education. The motion passed.

E. Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Environment – E. Seaver

E. Seaver gave an update on the April 12, 2005, meeting of the Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Environment, although minutes for that meeting have yet been approved. There were eleven action items that those committee members in attendance discussed in terms of looking ahead to the fall of 2005. Discussion centered specifically around the CUAE committee and its focus, as well as reviewing the history of the committee over the past couple of years. A number of suggestions were made for this committee to get started in the fall of 2005. E. Seaver feels confident that there are several ideas that will energize the committee at the beginning of the semester, some of which are specific action items, some are requests, some are topics for discussion.

He said that the committee did feel that next year CUAE should think about obtaining information regarding student concerns, making an effort to get a better feel of what things are of concern to students as they relate to CUAE. Suggestions were made that the committee either utilize focus groups with students or bring various student groups to CUAE meetings for discussion to try to get a feel of what concerns are on the minds of students. The committee did feel that in the fall it should also re-examine the responsibilities of the committee and they should be made a little bit more specific as they are very broad and very general. Committee members will review the roles and responsibilities of CUAE in order to prompt thoughts of issues that could be addressed.

E. Seaver also reported that committee members have asked the Vice Provost Seaver and the Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Brian Hemphill, to consult on how to better utilize CUAE and how they can start to think about using CUAE as it relates back to Student Affairs and issues around students. E. Seaver will meet with Dr. Hemphill over the summer about how this group can better utilized particularly with issues related to retention and those that affect retention on campus.
The committee will most likely approach UCC at the beginning of the fall and ask for more direction from UCC as to matters that UCC would like CUAE to investigate. They also did suggest that the UCC representative and the UCC co-chair attend the first meeting of CUAE each fall to provide some context relative to the activities of CUAE within the workings and responsibilities of UCC and the relationship between CUAE and UCC. This will be beneficial to new CUAE members as well. Committee members noted that it is important to make sure that when new CUAE members come in for their first meeting that some time is spent making sure that new members are familiar with what the role of CUAE and the entire process as it relates to undergraduate.

E. Seaver said that the committee felt that CUAE should focus on making NIU a more student friendly place. Committee members suggested that CUAE discuss improving signage on campus. They also talked about having some discussion about the continuum of interactions with students here from recruitment, admissions, through graduation, which would tie into the student friendly aspect of the university. Other topics for discussion included, the concept of a commuter image of NIU, what kinds of things the university can do to keep students in the area, and possibly what the role of the community is, as well.

D. Rusin stated that in regard to the idea of polling students he thought that there was a study done. E. Seaver said that Nolan Davis oversaw a study of students which is posted on the web. CUAE did use the study the year before but the committee couldn’t generate much out of that. They would like now to use some focus groups to investigate what’s really relevant and important in students’ minds right now. Art Doederlein added that some of the items disclosed were rather obvious things that no committee is going to be able to fix like “some crime on campus,” which was one of the problems.

L. Townsend noted that there was also a study done of students who came for one year and then left NIU. UCC heard a report on that in the University Assessment Panel. One of the problems with students who left was that they didn’t become involved or use many of the services of the university. A relatively high number seemed to have family or personal issues with which they had to deal, and there were also a large number of students not returning to any university but making their associate degree or community college degree their final experience in higher education. E. Seaver said that this ties in with some of the items that he and Dr. Hemphill are discussing relative to the First Year Experience and what happens to students that first year. Student Affairs does have representation on CUAE as well, and it is hoped that discussion will prompt better ways to address some of these issues. He said that other data that is available may also lead to suggestions from the committee for programs and implementing things that are already being talked about.

M. Mehrer asked to clarify that, when making the motion at the last UCC meeting regarding disbanding the CUAE committee, he certainly had no animosity about the committee or history with the committee, but he felt it seemed, at the time, like a good starting point during the meeting to spur ideas for focus for the committee.

F. Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum - D. Gough

D. Gough reported that the major portion of business at the April 14, 2005, CUC meeting was the B.G.S. degree proposal from the College of Health and Human Sciences. M. Pritchard, Associate Dean, College of Health and Human Sciences, attended the meeting as a guest. The proposal was discussed and approved by the committee.
The committee also elected Donald Zinger to serve as chair of CUC for the 2005-2006 academic year.

D. Gough made a motion to accept the April 14, 2005, minutes of the Committee on the Undergraduate curriculum. The motion passed.

IV. Other Reports

A. University Assessment Panel – L. Townsend

L. Townsend reported that the committee reviewed the survey of students who left NIU after their first year. They also looked at the Illinois Commitment in which NIU is supposed to show evidence that it is meeting each one of its initiatives leading into the institutional indicators of success.

V. Old Business

A. Enrollments

E. Seaver noted that enrollment will be an agenda topic at the Advising/Curricular Deans Retreat which is scheduled for June 3, 2005. Much of the data that A. Doederlein has talked about and forwarded to UCC will be reviewed at the retreat.

B. CUAE Goals for 2005-2006

E. Seaver noted that there is still a tabled motion on the floor from the last UCC meeting. The motion was tabled to allow for further discussion. A. Doederlein suggested removing the motion from the table by either rescinding or voting it down. After further discussion, a vote was taken on the following tabled motion from the April 7, 2005, UCC meeting:

M. Mehrer made a motion, seconded by E. Wilkins, to recommend that the Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Environment be dissolved. The motion failed unanimously.

C. Election of Faculty Chair for 2005-2006

M. Van Wienen nominated A. Doederlein to continue as chair for 2005-2006. No other nominations were made. A. Doederlein accepted the nomination.

M. Van Wienen made motion, seconded by L. Townsend, to approve the selection of Art Doederlein as Faculty Chair of the Undergraduate Coordinating Council for the academic year 2005-2006. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Retirement Announcement

E. Seaver announced that this was Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator Kay Van Mol’s last meeting of UCC as she will be retiring at the end of May 2005. On behalf of the committee, he expressed thanks and appreciation to her for her many years of dedicated commitment to the curricular process and for her assistance in making sure the curricular process ran efficiently.

VI. New Business
There was no new business.

VII. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mollie Keller