Northern Illinois University  
UNDERGRADUATE COORDINATING COUNCIL  
128th Meeting  
Thursday, October 14, 2004  
Watson Hall 233  

MINUTES  
(Approved)

Present: M. Barnes (VPA), S. Beyer (BUS), A. Calloway (Student - BUS), N. Boubekri (EET), L. Derscheid (HHS), A. Doederlein (LAS), D. Gough (HHS), C. T. Lin, C. Marcus (Student Association), (LAS), K. Millis (LAS), D. Rusin (LAS), E. Seaver (Vice Provost), D. Sinason (BUS), L. Townsend (EDU), M. Van Wienen (LAS), P. Webb (LIB), E. Wilkins (EDU)

Absent: W. Goldenberg (VPA), M. Mehrer (LAS)

Guest: (None)

I. Adoption of Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made by D. Sinason and seconded by D. Gough. The motion carried.

II. Announcements

A. Electronic Approval of Minutes

The minutes of September 2, 2004, meeting were electronically approved.

III. Reports/Minutes from Standing Committees

A. Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee – K. Millis

A motion to accept the APASC minutes of August 25, 2004, was made by K. Millis. The motion passed.

K. Millis reported that at the August 25, 2004 meeting, the committee heard a report on enrollment numbers, and Don Larson, reported on a number of processes that were developed to handle some APASC decisions from last year primarily regarding enrollment procedures. The APASC annual report was also approved.

At the APASC meeting held on September 29, 2004, the committee began discussion of the grade change issue. Don Larson is collecting data on grading options from several universities and will be pulling in data and reporting back to APASC in the future.

E. Seaver gave an update on the new Advising Center, which will be operational next fall. The coordinator of the center, Michael Broshears, has been hired and is scheduled to be on campus on Monday, October 18, 2004. The center will be housed in the Campus Life Building. The review of applications for the two academic advising positions has begun, and the Search Committee will meet at the end of next week to begin identifying candidates to interview for those positions. The goal for
the center is to advise undecided transfer and freshmen students who will be starting in the Fall 2005. It is hoped that the center will be up and running for orientation in the spring.

B. General Education Committee – D. Rusin, E. Wilkins

E. Wilkins reported on the GEC meeting of September 23rd. The committee looked at this year’s course review schedule, and discussed revisiting the evaluation rubric that they have been using in the past.

Craig Barnard was in attendance, and he continues to share his willingness to meet with any departments or colleges with regard to assessment practices and to work with them to help them strengthen their general education coursework so that it will meet the standards that have been set.

C. Honors Committee – E. Seaver

E. Seaver made motion to accept the minutes of the Honors Committee meeting held on September 3, 2004. The motion passed.

E. Seaver reported on behalf of the Honors Committee. Data on the number of new honors students admitted as freshman is similar to past years. The total number of honors qualified students entering this fall is smaller – not as many this year, but the number of freshmen entering is also small. Approximately 2.5 to 3 percent of our incoming freshmen class consisted of fully honors eligible, essentially the same as last year.

L. Townsend asked about the status and funding of the Honors College. E. Seaver indicated that the committee is still discussing the concept of developing an Honors College rather than an Honors Program. The issue that needs to be addressed is relative to how it will be fundamentally different than what it is now, other than just a name change. Data has been put together in comparisons of other honors programs across the country relative to base budget. His recommendation is to bring in a consultant to gather additional data relative to funding.

D. Sinason questioned whether guidelines for capstones had been developed and if so, how they get distributed to those faculty running capstone projects in honors. A. Doederlein indicated that he thought the Honors Committee did meet regarding that matter and came up with some basic guidelines. There is a packet that all honors seniors get that explains what a capstone is, what the capstone proposal has to look like and basically the outline of the proposal – guidelines for the student and the faculty. E. Seaver will ask Dr. Martin about the procedures for distributing that information.

D. Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education – M. Van Wienen

M. Van Wienen made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 13, 2004, meeting of the Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education. The motion passed.

M. Van Wienen summarized the September 13, 2004, minutes. Regarding the Review of Grant Applications topic, questions were raised about various eligibility issues. Discussion centered around why members of the CIUE committee were not eligible for the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award. There were also questions about whether a student originated project could be sponsored by a member of CIUE. Both of those questions were answered in the negative in terms of what the current policy is. Questions also arose as to why non-tenure track faculty members were not eligible for winning the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award. After some discussion, results of a straw poll revealed that several members of the committee were interested in investigating the change in
eligibility requirements with regard to tenure line versus non-tenure track faculty. The CIUE Committee is interested in receiving guidance from UCC as to whether that question should be pursued and how.

A Writing Center Report was also received in which the committee received information about how widely the university community is served by the Writing Center. Brad Peters was thanked for his report and requested to submit a report on the Writing Center on a regular basis.

M. Van Wienen also reported on the CIUE meeting of October 11, 2004. The committee looked at and discussed the name of the Microcomputer Software Acquisition Grant and decided to change the name of the grant to the Microcomputer Software Acquisition and/or Development Grant. The wording of various other awards for grants and programs for the improvement of undergraduate education were also reviewed. Some changes were made in some of the oldest of the descriptions. Deletions, streamlining, and the changing of language were made in order to clarify what the grants are.

A name change was made to the former student originated Instructional Research and Improvement Grant to the new name of Student Instructional Research and Improvement Grant to reflect accurately the fact that it is student work that is awarded and honored rather than faculty.

One last item discussed at the meeting revolved around the question of why members of the CIUE committee were not eligible to win the Excellence in the Undergraduate Teaching Award. Discussion of this issue resulted in examples of cases in the past in which members of the committee, when they have realized that they have been nominated by students, have resigned from the committee midyear so that they could be considered for the award. Several members of the committee felt that this question of eligibility should be investigated along with the question of whether non-tenure track faculty should be considered for the EUTA. CIUE is interested in receiving the guidance of the UCC on this issue.

E. Seaver requested that the UCC committee come back to revisit the following two issues that CIUE has requested guidance on from UCC:

1. Issue of non-tenure tenure-track faculty, i.e., instructors, as to whether they should be included in the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award. Currently, guidelines read that eligible faculty must be full-time, tenured/tenure-track faculty.

After extensive discussion relative to award eligibility and criteria, E. Seaver reported that it was pointed out at CIUE that the criteria that’s specified is clearly not relevant to instructors, regardless of the tenure/tenure-track. CIUE is not free to change anything; they can recommend that a category be opened up to instructors, but it would have to come to UCC to be approved to make that change. The CIUE committee would like UCC’s guidance in this matter – is there strong support for changing the criteria of the existing award to include instructors, continue to have no specific award for instructors, or should there be movement in terms of trying to develop an additional award specifically designated for instructors. Neither CIUE nor UCC have bylaws that call for any representation on their committees from the instructor group.

D. Sinason made a motion, seconded by E. Wilkins, to issue a mandate to the Committee for the Improvement of Undergraduate Education to investigate/evaluate and report back to the Undergraduate Coordinating Council the possibility of creating another excellence in teaching award specifically for non-tenured faculty, i.e., instructors, including defining eligibility requirements
After further discussion, the following motion was made:

M. Van Wienen made a motion, seconded by D. Rusin, to charge the Committee for the Improvement of Undergraduate Education to consider investigating other options for recognizing excellence in undergraduate education instruction that might include instructors as well as tenure-track faculty. The motion passed (7 to 6).

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2. Concept of members of CIUE being eligible to receive the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award.

E. Seaver opened discussion on a second issue regarding members of CIUE serving on the CIUE Committee if they are nominated for the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award.

E. Seaver noted that CIUE is asking UCC for assistance in clarification of the interpretation of this criteria. In the past, individuals have been allowed to resign from the committee if nominated for the award. E. Seaver interprets the rule as it is stated. The rule as it stands right now states that CIUE members are not eligible to be nominated. E. Seaver indicated that notification can be sent to all colleges and departments as to who the members of CIUE are with the notation that these individuals are ineligible for the award for this year.

E. Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Environment – C. T. Lin

C. T. Lin reported on both the September 14, 2004, and October 12, 2004, meetings of the CUAE. At the September 14, 2004, meeting, the committee reviewed the USOAR guidelines and expressed interest in inviting Tim Griffin, Ombudsman, to give a report at the next meeting.

At the October 12, 2004, meeting, the committee approved the USOAR guidelines. It was reported to the committee by E. Seaver that the funding for this year will be one half of the previous year, approximately $25,000.

Tim Griffin, Ombudsman, gave an extensive statistical report on student activity in the Ombudsman office. Discussion at the meeting, as a result of Dr. Griffin’s report, revolved around the “customer service to students” aspect. A major issue with students is appropriately directing them to the proper campus office for information. As a possible solution to this issue, to make things easier and friendly, the suggestion was made that a campus-wide “make a telephone call” policy could be developed. In order to help facilitate students, making an immediate telephone call for them, to lead them in the right direction sooner, would be most helpful to the student and be a beneficial factor to retention efforts. The subject was discussed further and will be revisited by the committee.

F. Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum – D. Gough

D. Gough moved to accept the minutes of the September 9, 2004, meeting of the Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum. The motion passed.

D. Gough reported that most of the items from the September 9, 2004, were continuing/finalizing of previous issues. The major issue of discussion was related to the major in Family and Child Studies. Previously, in this major, students were required to take a math course option. The discussion has continued to evolve, with regard to adding some other options for students to address critical thinking, writing skills, problem solving, and adding an English course, PHI course, research methods
course. After discussion, it was requested that additional clarification be brought back to the next meeting.

IV. Other Reports

A. University Assessment Panel

Paul Webb reported that the first meeting of the academic year was on October 1, 2004. Minutes are to be forwarded to E. Seaver. This meeting was basically a “getting to know you” meeting with introductions and review of committee responsibilities. Next meeting is October 15, 2004.

V. Old Business

A. Change in Grading System

E. Seaver reported that data are still being collected. Student input has been great, and Don Larson is getting some information together about practices in the State, what other universities do, some data on grade changes, etc. Additional discussion on this will be regarding how to obtain more student input across campus.

VI. New Business

No new business, however, since there were new members in attendance, self-introductions were made.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:02 p.m. The next UCC meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2004, beginning at 1:00 p.m. in Watson Hall 233.

Respectfully submitted,
Mollie Keller