Northern Illinois University

UNDERGRADUATE COORDINATING COUNCIL
140th Meeting
Thursday, March 2, 2006
Altgeld Hall 203

MINUTES
Approved

Present: P. Brown (BUS), S. Conklin (HHS), J. Corwin (LAS), L. Derscheid (HHS), A. Doederlein (LAS), J. Gau (EET), J. Hathaway (VPA) (representative for W. Goldenberg), B. Hart (VPA), C. T. Lin (LAS), B. Mackie (representative for E. Fredericks) (BUS), M. Mehrer (LAS), S. Ouellette (HHS), D. Rusin (LAS), E. Seaver (Vice Provost), M. Van Wienen (LAS), P. Webb (LIB), E. Wilkins (EDU)

Absent: N. Boubekri (EET), E. Fredericks (BUS), W. Goldenberg (VPA), L. Townsend (EDUC)

Students: D. Smith (SA), K. Eckmann (EDUC), S. Zondag (BUS)

Guests: Donna Smith, Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator
David Wade, Chair, Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee (APASC)

I. Adoption of Agenda

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

II. Announcements

A. Electronic Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 2, 2006, meeting were electronically approved.

III. Reports/Minutes from Standing Committees

A. Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee – E. Seaver

E. Seaver noted that David Wade, Chair of APASC, was present to assist with any clarifications that may be needed in the APASC meeting minutes.

In the absence of N. Boubekri, D. Wade offered to report on the APASC minutes of February 1, 2006. He reported that APASC had two items for UCC regarding the catalog changes for the Academic Advising Center (AAC). UCC requested in its last minutes that APASC develop a document that indicates current catalog copy, advising deans recommendations with their votes, and APASC’s final recommendations with their votes. That information has been provided in the 15-page document circulated to UCC. There has been one change to what was provided to UCC and that was pursuant to a request both by UCC as well as by the Faculty Senate and is reflected in the February 1, 2006, minutes. The item on the bottom of page four of the materials, starting with the bold face page 41 Academic Advising Center, the following provision should be added:
The Academic Advising Center will not, under any circumstances, initiate or approve exemptions to curricular requirements or requests for waivers to university graduation requirements. For students with no college affiliation, such exemptions and waivers must be initiated and approved by the Vice Provost (or the Vice Provost’s delegate).

D. Wade noted that there had been a great deal of concern by various bodies in the university that the Academic Advising Center may be called upon to or may determine for themselves the right to either exempt certain curricular items or waive graduation requirements. There was a request made by the Faculty Senate to include language in the organic document constituting the AAC to this effect. It was found that no organic document constituting the AAC existed; therefore, we are left only with catalog copy. APASC had a concern that this language appear somewhere so that it is not simply implied. APASC felt that the appropriate place was at the end of the description of the Academic Advising Center. This stipulates clearly that such waivers or exemptions would be inappropriate.

E. Seaver pointed out that in the original motion regarding waivers and exemptions, APASC wanted to add a sentence indicating that exemptions could be initiated and approved by the Vice Provost. However, E. Seaver pointed out that these exemptions should come from the colleges, so APASC made another revision and approved as final wording, the following language:

The Academic Advising Center will not, under any circumstances, initiate or approve exemptions to curricular requirements or requests for waivers to university graduation requirements.

The other issue brought to APASC by Faculty Senate and UCC, was the concern that there was lack of faculty oversight of the AAC. APASC made a motion and a recommendation to UCC that a faculty oversight committee be set up that will report periodically, at least annually, to APASC. APASC is recommending that this committee be composed of one member from every undergraduate degree granting college and one designee identified by representatives from the college advising offices, which will create a group of seven. This Oversight Committee will review the actions by the AAC that are done throughout the course of the year and report back to APASC.

In other action, reinstatement reports for 2004-2005 were accepted, which is done on an annual basis.

M. Van Wienen asked for clarification as to where the new sentence approved by APASC would be placed in the catalog relative to the copy on page 41 of the catalog. D. Wade answered that this new paragraph will appear at the end of the description of the academic advising center on page 41. D. Smith added that this will be added at the bottom of the first column on page 41. M. Van Wienen expressed concern that this key point, depending on text and catalog layout, might appear in a remote spot, separated from the rest of the language.

E. Seaver indicated that in the past every effort was made to keep things consistent and formatted so as to avoid breaks in the catalog copy. He noted, also, that there still will be printed catalogs, although it is hoped that most people will use the electronic catalog.

M. Van Wienen added that his only observation (with reference to page 41, top paragraph, catalog language) would be that with the addition of “consult,” as presented, his feeling is that it is ultimately misleading to say “consult with the Academic Advising Center.” He noted that his own preference is that the phrase “or with the Academic Advising Center, if the student has no college affiliation” simply be struck out. Then, if a student who is undeclared wondered, after looking at the opening paragraph, if they could go to the Provost Office’s or the Academic Advising Center to initiate an exception, they would see at the end of the
Academic Advising Center language that such a waiver is not possible. However, he said
he is willing to support the language as long as the language makes it clear somewhere in
the document that they can’t actually get the exception through this means.

D. Wade added that he presumes that the AAC is aware that they can’t initiate or approve
exemptions or waivers and would offer that as an informational item.

J. Corwin made a motion, seconded by S. Conklin to accept the February 1,
2006, minutes of the Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee.
The motion passed.

E. Seaver noted that he supports placing this last piece in the catalog because Vice
Provosts change, Advising Center personnel changes, and, if you’re talking about a policies
and procedures manual, which they have, those things get changed without careful scrutiny.
Being in the catalog makes everyone very aware.

D. Wade noted that APASC’s recommendation to UCC also was, if an organic document
does get created, it must also contain this language regarding curricular exemptions and
graduation requirements.

D. Rusin asked if the AAC was mentioned in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual
(APPM). E. Seaver answered that it is not at the present time. D. Rusin suggested that
might be another place where you might want to have sort of a permanent record of the
decisions that this body is making in addition to the catalog, that probably would be a good
place to have it. E. Seaver noted that information for the APPM comes from different
places throughout the university governance system, such as Graduate Council, UCC, etc.
Policies and procedures documents that some other colleges have are really operating
procedures, some of which are up on websites. This is the document that APASC has been
talking about in terms of an organic document, the document that stipulates how it operates.
The AAC does have a policy and procedure piece that they use for training, and they have
actually added this language into that. D. Rusin noted that he is not as familiar with the
APPM as with the undergraduate catalog, and he asked if there is a spot in there where
these kinds of things are spelled out where this should also be added. E. Seaver said no
and explained that the APPM contains items such as procedures for adding new courses, etc.

B. General Education Committee – D. Rusin

D. Rusin reported that the General Education Committee is discussing using standardized
tests as one the mechanisms for assessment of the general education program and what
other components could be used for that purpose. Greg Barker, Assistant Director, Testing
Services, spoke to the committee about the ACT General Education Outcomes Assessment
program.

D. Rusin made a motion, seconded by J. Corwin, to accept the January 19,
2006, General Education Committee minutes. The motion passed.

C. Honors Committee – L. Derscheid

L. Derscheid reported on the February 3, 2006, meeting of the Honors Committee. The
Director of Honors reported that 188 Honors students received a 4.00 GPA for the fall 2005
semester. The Assistant Director reported that they had some vandalism of a new DVD
player, and a new one had been purchased. UCC had requested from the Honors program
a breakdown of the number of honors students by majors so that this information could be
forwarded to departments and shared with faculty.

The committee also received and discussed the consultant’s report. Of interest and surprise
to the committee was the comparison of spending per student by NIU to the national
average, and NIU is far below the national average. The importance of consistent oversight was emphasized and how continuity would be helpful in strengthening the Honors Program. Seeking outside funding via corporate sponsors was also discussed.

Also, the committee reviewed and approved one EYE Grant Proposal.

D. Rusin asked if the Honors Program was going to be cut. E. Seaver said that the consultant was referring to the level of funding for the Honors Program. Data provided by the consultant indicates that the average spending for an honors student is $600 per student, and NIU is not close to that, spending approximately $200 per student. In order to get to the national standard, there would have to be over $400,000 infused into the Honors program. The question that was raised by the Honors Consultant is: Is the Honors Program too big? That issue has to be addressed by the Honors Committee.

L. Derscheid made a motion, seconded by J. Corwin, to accept the February 3, 2006, minutes of the University Honors Committee. The motion passed.

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

M. Van Wienen reported that the committee reviewed and approved funding for thirteen CIUE grant proposals.

M. Van Wienen made a motion, seconded by J. Corwin, to accept the February 6, 2006, minutes of the Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education. The motion passed.

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

There was no report

F. Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum – E. Seaver

In the absence of W. Goldenberg, E. Seaver motioned to accept the minutes. No further discussion.

E. Seaver made a motion, seconded by J. Corwin, to accept the February 9, 2006, minutes of the Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum. The motion passed.

IV. Other Reports

A. University Assessment Panel – P. Webb

P. Webb reported that at the December 2, 2005, meeting, the committee reviewed a funding request from the Department of English. Also, the committee had an overview presentation on Clicker (Personal Response System) technology. Faculty Development has been working on providing information to the university community. E. Seaver noted that some complaints are being issued by students when they discover that they have to purchase different clickers for different classes; there is no common system.

P. Webb also reported that at the February 3, 2006, meeting, the committee was informed that results are expected soon from the 2004 alumni survey. In addition, academic program annual updates will be requested within the next few weeks. The panel reviewed the final report on the Department of Economics capstone project, and the funding was approved.
At the February 17, 2006, meeting (no meeting notes available) assessment reviews were submitted for Housing and Dining, the Center for Black Studies, International Programs, and Faculty Development. All were full and detailed reports.


V. Old Business

A. APASC Minutes of November 2, 2005

E. Seaver stated that the minutes of the November 2, 2005, APASC meeting were approved except for the catalog changes affecting the Academic Advising Center.

E. Seaver gave an overall explanation of the document previously distributed to UCC on January 26, 2006, entitled Catalog Changes Affecting the Academic Advising Center, put together for the February 1, 2006, APASC meeting. On each page is the current 2005-2006 catalog copy, the recommendation and vote from the Advising Deans, and the APASC recommendation and vote.

J. Corwin made a motion, seconded by L. Derscheid, to accept that portion of the November 2, 2005, Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee minutes relating to the Academic Advising Center catalog language.

A. Doederlein made a friendly amendment to the above motion to recommend discussing and acting on each catalog language change item relating to the Academic Advising Center in the November 2, 2005, APASC minutes individually. Support was not given for this friendly amendment.

M. Van Wienen made a friendly amendment to the above motion to vote on all of the changes as a whole except for the one on page 41, top paragraph (page 3 of UCC handout document) and to vote on that one item on page 41 separately. J. Corwin and L. Derscheid, who made original motion and second, gave approval for the friendly amendment change to the original motion.

M. Van Wienen explained that his reasoning for this is simply that he thinks there is a point of debate if this document is being treated as one which students may actually read for helpful guidance, then the phrase “or with the Academic Advising Center, if the student has no college affiliation” is less clear and potentially misleading to have it included rather than to not have it included.

With reference to the page 41, top paragraph, D. Wade pointed out that if the language "or with the Academic Advising Center, if the student has no college affiliation" is deleted, a student who has no college affiliation may be confused as to where he or she should go. Students are directed to go to the AAC under every other provision if they have no college affiliation. M. Van Wienen said he understands that this would be included in another area on the same page, but he thinks that there is a difference between students asking simply a question and being referred to certain people and asking a specific question which might include exemptions from various degree requirements. D. Wade said that he feels that to delete the phrase leaves students with no college left with no direction as to where to go.
A. Doederlein asked to discuss page 45, Academic Probation, as a separate issue. He expressed concern with the idea that academic dismissal will be in the hands of the Vice Provost (or the Vice Provost’s delegate), which we understand will be the AAC. He asked how it can be determined that someone should be retained on probation when there is no program that they may or may not be making progress in? E. Seaver noted that this is already done with any undecided students. He clarified that this will not include reinstatements, and no reinstatements will be done through the AAC. A. Doederlein said that he has concerns that dismissals, which are now being done by a dean’s office, will now be done outside of the context of a dean’s office. He thinks this is a significant change in the way we deal with retaining students on final academic probation. He added that another reason he is concerned is that the AAC Director was quoted in the Midweek as saying he would retain everyone. E. Seaver commented that if someone asked him, he would say his goal would be to have 100% retention, as well. A. Doederlein said that, with what APASC has done, most of his objections have been answered, but on the issue of academic dismissal, he would like that in the colleges as opposed to the AAC.

For clarification purposes, E. Seaver restated the amended motion:

J. Corwin made a motion, seconded by L. Derscheid, to accept that portion of the November 2, 2005, Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee minutes relating to the Academic Advising Center catalog language, except for the one item on page 41, top paragraph (the item on page 3 of “Catalog Changes Affecting the Academic Advising Center document, dated February 1, 2006, (UCC handout document). The motion passed.

M. Van Weinen noted that he feels it is important to convey as clearly as possible that students with no college affiliation are not students who can successfully initiate getting exemptions to any regulations outside of a major; they can’t go to the advising center for that. If students have questions, they can go to the advising center; if they want exemptions, they have to have a major. He feels that this would be more clearly conveyed by leaving the wording as it stands.

S. Conklin commented that she is not comfortable overriding what APASC has clearly recommended and has discussed at length. C. T. Lin agreed with Conklin.

M. Van Wienen made a motion, seconded by A. Doederlein, to leave the catalog language wording of the first (top) paragraph of page 41 of the catalog as it is currently written. The motion failed.

M. Van Wienen made a motion, seconded by S. Conklin, to accept that portion of the November 2, 2005, Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee minutes, relating to the Academic Advising Center catalog language on page 41, top paragraph. The motion passed.

A. Doederlein said that he thinks that everything that has been decided and approved by UCC today regarding the Academic Advising Center should be taken to University Council. E. Seaver said that he would consult with Paul Stoddard as to how he would like to proceed with this and report back at the next meeting.

VI. New Business

A. New Student Information System Update

E. Seaver reported that we are still in the process of developing a charter for the new student information system implementation. The campus kick-off for the project is
scheduled for Tuesday, April 11, 2006. E. Seaver plans to give monthly/regular updates as the implementation process moves ahead. A website is being developed, and there will be regular communications across campus. The implementation is expected to take two years. The consultant is currently having many meetings across campus for the purpose of getting input and concerns about the new system.

VII. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m. The next UCC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 6, 2006, beginning at 1:00 p.m. in Altgeld Hall 203.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Mollie Keller*