Northern Illinois University
UNDERGRADUATE COORDINATING COUNCIL
137th Meeting
Thursday, November 3, 2005
Altgeld Hall 203

MINUTES
(Approved)

Present: P. Brown (BUS), S. Conklin (HHS), J. Corwin (LAS), L. Derscheid (HHS), A. Doederlein (LAS), J. Gau (EET), W. Goldenberg (VPA), B. Hart (VPA), C. T. Lin (LAS), M. Mehrer (LAS), D. Rusin (LAS), M. Van Wienen (LAS), P. Webb (LIB), E. Wilkins (EDU)
Students: K. Eckmann (EDUC), D. Kettlestrings (LAS), S. Zondag (BUS)

Absent: R. Beatty (BUS), N. Boubekri (EET), S. Ouellette (HHS), E. Seaver (Vice Provost), L. Townsend (EDU)
Students: D. Smith (SA)

Guest: Donna Smith (Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator)

I. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made by J. Corwin, seconded by S. Conklin, to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

II. Announcements

A. Electronic Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the October 6, 2005, meeting were electronically approved.

III. Reports/Minutes from Standing Committees

A. Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee – A. Doederlein

A. Doederlein gave a brief overview of the APASC meeting of September 28, 2005, noting that UCC had been given a brief report on this meeting at the last UCC meeting, although minutes were not available at that time. He reported that APASC discussed and approved the development of four AAT degrees, three of which were approved for Compact Benefits and one for admission but not for Compact Benefits.

In a separate item, D. Rusin suggested a correction be made in the second paragraph on page three of the minutes to change “does” to “do” in order to make the sentence grammatically correct. He also suggested that, in order to separate and clarify, quotation marks be added preceding and following each of two phrases in that same
Upon receiving the approval of the APASC chair, the changes will be made, and corrected minutes will be distributed.

J. Corwin made a motion to accept the September 28, 2005, minutes of the Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee meeting. The motion carried.

B. General Education Committee – D. Rusin

D. Rusin reported that the September 22nd meeting was the first meeting of the fall semester for GEC and was basically an introductory meeting, with committee members reviewing the agenda items for the 2005-2006 year. The committee has some leftover curricular items from the previous year that will require action, but most of the committee’s work during 2005-2006 will focus on the assessment of the general education program.

J. Corwin made a motion to accept the September 22, 2005, minutes of the General Education Committee meeting. The motion carried.

C. Honors Committee – L. Derscheid

Reporting on the September 2, 2005, Honors Committee meeting, L. Derscheid stated that Honors Program enrollment has increased 21% from Fall 2004 to Fall 2005. A chart attached to the meeting minutes included the enrollment breakdown by college and the total Fall 2005 enrollment count to be 1222.

Although L. Derscheid did not attend the October 7, 2005, Honors meeting, she provided a brief overview of that meeting. Chart attachments to the minutes of that meeting included breakdowns of enrollment figures as well as cohort retention rate data. She pointed out that the cohort retention rate for honors admits increased from 76% in fall 2003 to 90% in fall 2004. She pointed out that when comparing these figures to the university retention rate of 64%, it appears the program is one that quality students want to stay with and to stay with NIU.

C. T. Lin asked if there was any breakdown of enrollment figures related to discipline. L. Derscheid answered that only a breakdown by college is available now, but she will request that information to share with UCC.

L. Derscheid also noted that a consultant, Dr. Robert Spurrier, Director of the Honors College at Oklahoma State University, will make a site visit to the NIU campus December 1 and 2, 2005. It is hoped that a fresh set of eyes will aid in helping the Honors Program find new ideas.

J. Corwin made a motion to accept both the September 2, 2005, and the October 7, 2005, minutes of the Honors Committee. The motion passed.
M. Van Wienen noted that much of the committee discussion at the September 12, 2005, meeting of CIUE pertained to the proposed Excellence in Undergraduate Instruction Award. Other than that discussion, this meeting was largely an organizational meeting, and there were no action items other than agenda and adjournment approvals.

M. Van Wienen made a motion to accept the September 12, 2005, minutes of the Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education. The motion passed.

M. Van Wienen reported that at the October 10, 2005, CIUE meeting, the committee returned its attention to consideration of having an Excellence in Undergraduate Instruction Award (EUIA). He explained that the committee defined this award as being devoted to educators on the NIU campus who did not qualify for the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award (EUTA), which means, basically, non-tenure track or non-tenured educators. In other ways, this award and its guidelines were modeled very closely after the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award, which places a high premium on the written feedback of alumni and the evaluations of teaching through the regular written and computer scored evaluation. One of the criteria is overall excellence, not merely popularity, in challenging students to excel with the focus being on instruction of students. The committee felt that the rationale was compelling to create an award dedicated to encouraging excellence among one class of educators on our campus who do a great deal of attending to and helping students.

J. Corwin asked what the guidelines were. He had the understanding that faculty who come to NIU, new assistant professors, would not be considered for this award. M. Van Wienen said that was correct in that the EUTA requires five years of service on NIU’s campus.

Motivation for creating that requirement is that a sustained record of teaching excellence, not just a couple of outstanding, stellar years, must be shown. That criteria will apply to both the EUIA and the EUTA. A. Doederlein pointed out that the five-year criteria is related to the tenure clock. M. Van Wienen explained that the current award, the EUTA, could not go to instructors and that there were compelling reasons why it would not make sense to simply include instructors in competition with professors for the existing EUTA. He emphasized that the key point is that there were a lot of ways the committee felt the profiles of instructors and regular faculty would not compare in such a way that we would very often or ever have an instructor winning the award. The committee felt it was important to have the EUIA; but at the same time, the committee wants the award to get the same financial award of $2,000. Therefore, most everything else is patterned closely after the EUTA, including the rubrics and the expectations.

C. T. Lin questioned whether the financial award of $2,000 was reasonable. He said that the EUTA award is compounded into the basic salary of faculty, a one-time $2,000 award, which seems
feasible to him since the awardees are tenured faculty. He asked if then for the instructor who is most likely temporary, not a permanent faculty, would the award be added to the base salary. M. Van Wienen stated that it was his understanding that EUTA award does not get added to the base salary; however if that were to change, then there would probably have to be something that would be different about the EUIA as compared to the EUTA, otherwise that might create problems with how the union contract for instructors works.

M. Van Wienen also reported that the committee made some fairly routine changes to the CIUE grant application proposal forms. The major change made was amending the forms so that they are in compliance with the state expectations stating that funds may not be used to reward participants, that is, gift certificates and/or bribes may not be given from state funds to individuals participating in the studies.

In other action, M. Van Wienen reported that CIUE passed a motion, noting that a variety of constituencies among the NIU community are represented on CIUE and knowing that already some of the grants that CIUE awards are available to anyone teaching undergraduate classes at NIU, to expand the membership of CIUE by one additional member to be selected by the instructor’s union.

A. Doederlein pointed out that if UCC approves the change in committee structure, it would need to be sent on to University Council for approval. D. Rusin asked if the committee talked with the union about this proposed change. M. Van Wienen answered that the committee spoke to the union representative; and the representative said that there are already many department and/or college committees where instructors are serving on committees and that she felt it was appropriate that there be an instructor member on CIUE. The representative also pointed out that the union contract stipulates what an instructor must do in order to be paid, but that doesn’t preclude anyone from taking on such a responsibility, provided they understand that they will not receive compensation for it. D. Rusin pointed out that, although CIUE has extended an invitation to a representative from the instructor’s union, from the instructor’s point of view, it may seem more like another duty that someone has to do; it may be difficult to obtain compensation or release time for this extra service. M. Van Wienen explained that the committee understood this to be something outside of the contract and that there are instructors already serving on other committees at the university. He pointed out that students serve on committees without being compensated, as well, however, they are willing to do so, just as many instructors do.

L. Derscheid asked if there was another way, in case the instructor’s union is not interested in doing that, to include that in the contract. She also asked if Supportive Professional Staff (SPS) are eligible to be nominees for the instructor award. M. Van Wienen answered that it is possible for an SPS employee to qualify for the EUJA without being a member of the instructor’s union. L. Derscheid pointed out that most SPS staff are hired on a twelve-month contract and are full-time, many of whom volunteer for committees without it necessarily being part of their job. J.
Corwin asked if this was requested by instructors or by the instructor union. M. Van Wienen answered that this was originating from within the committee itself; the committee felt that this would be beneficial to the structure of the CIUE committee, especially since grants are already being given to instructors among other projects for the improvement of undergraduate instruction. As such, it seemed reasonable to suggest this possibility to the union. L. Derscheid suggested that, possibly, as an alternative to a union representative for the instructors on CIUE, the committee could look at a SPS employee as a representative, since they are also eligible for the EUIA. M. Van Wienen speculated that perhaps it would make sense to add another member from the SPS or a designee from the SPS Council, which would, of course, mean creating another addition to the committee. However, he stated the instructors would represent a much larger group in terms of numbers of students taught, and the instructor’s union seemed to the committee to be a reasonable body to go to to obtain a representative. After thorough discussion about instructor and SPS representatives on the CIUE, it was agreed that an instructor representative be sought (after University Council approval) and that an SPS representative be discussed by the CIUE.

J. Corwin voiced concern as to whether a solution was being sought for something that isn’t a problem. He asked what the impetus was for doing this, especially since instructors are successful in receiving grants, the union hasn’t raised this issue, and no one else has raised this issue. M. Van Wienen answered that it was a matter of principle with the committee and that it was a practical matter in that the committee would be interested in hearing what an instructor would have to contribute. The committee felt it would be worth having the input of at least one instructor’s voice and viewpoint as committee members deliberate on the awards.

M. Van Wienen stated that if UCC would like this issue to go back to CIUE with the suggestion that an additional graduate student member or an SPS representative be added to the committee, he would do that. A. Doederlein commented that it didn’t seem necessary to add a graduate student member, but he felt that it might be reasonable to ask CIUE if they would also like to expand the membership of the committee to include an SPS member.

B. Hart commented that in the case of the School of Music, a significant number of teachers are instructors, and some of the undergraduates’ major professors on their instrument are instructors rather than full-time faculty members. He thinks it would be beneficial for an instructor to share the perspective of an instructor if he/she would be willing and has the time to serve on the committee.

P. Brown commented that it might be advantageous for the committee, in order to gain input, to invite a guest representative of the group to speak to CIUE. M. Van Wienen said that was the plan of the committee if UCC or University Council decides that this is not a good idea.

In other business of the October 10th CIUE meeting, M. Van Wienen reported that the committee heard a report on the activities of the
Writing Center, as well as viewed a demonstration of an online module on academic integrity, which was a follow-up to one of the grants for the improvement of undergraduate education awarded this past spring.

M. Van Wienen made a motion to accept the October 10, 2005, minutes of the Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education. The motion passed.

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

There was no formal report, but discussion notes from the September 13, 2005, were made available for UCC members to review.

F. Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum – W. Goldenberg

W. Goldenberg reported that at the September 8, 2005, meeting of the Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum, E. Seaver announced that the search process was underway for filling the position of Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator, which has now been completed.

He reported that the only action item taken was the committee’s approval of program changes that were required in the College of Health and Human Sciences Military Science program to bring the program in line with mandates set by the U. S. Military.

In addition, the committee tabled taking action on the Bachelor in General Studies in Health and Human Sciences due to late receipt of the proposal and also pending sign-off of non-duplication verification from several departments.

A. Doederlein asked for clarification on the undergraduate catalog change in the Military Sciences Program which designates deletion of “and Ethics” in the course presently titled “302. Leadership Under Fire and Ethics.” L. Derscheid explained that the title of the course was changed because Military Sciences is now including ethics throughout all of their courses. She noted that the same explanation applies to the course title “301. Adaptive Team Leadership and Problem Solving” in which “and Problem Solving” is being deleted.

W. Goldenberg made a motion to accept the September 8, 2005, minutes of the Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum. The motion passed.

IV. Other Reports

A. University Assessment Panel – P. Webb

P. Webb reported that the first meeting of the University Assessment Panel was held in October and was a general introductory meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2005.

V. Old Business
A. Selection of UCC Student Representative to the University Assessment Panel

For the benefit of Kimberly Eckmann, a new student committee member, P. Webb gave a brief overview of the University Assessment Panel responsibilities. However, since the close of the fall semester is soon approaching, it was recommended that selecting a student representative be postponed until the December 1, 2005, meeting. Student members will have a better idea at that time of what their class schedules and their availability will be to attend meetings during the spring semester.

VI. New Business

There was no new business.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m. The next UCC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 1, 2005, beginning at 1:00 p.m. in Altgeld Hall 203.

Respectfully submitted,
Mollie Keller