Northern Illinois University

UNDERGRADUATE COORDINATING COUNCIL

208th Meeting
Thursday, November 6, 2014
Altgeld Hall 203

MINUTES

APPROVED

Present: G. Aase/BUS; T. Atkins/LAS; M. Ayers/LIB; A. Birberick/Vice Provost; P. Braun/HHS; K. Gill Student/LAS; L. Guo/ EET; H. Joung/HHS; J. Kot/LAS; L. Matuszewski/BUS; M. Shokrani/HHS; J. Stafstrom/LAS; C. Thompson/LAS;

Absent: C. Campbell/EDU; J. Gau/EET; W. Hung/EDU; M. Kolb/ Associate Vice Provost; M. Konen/LAS;

Guest: D. Smith, Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator; J. Ratfield, Vice Provost’s Administrative Assistant

I. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made by P. Braun, seconded by J. Stafstrom, to adopt the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Announcements

A. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by P. Braun, seconded by M. Shokrani to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2014 meeting with a few minor editorial changes. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Reports/Minutes from Standing Committees

A. Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee

Birberick reported that the committee mainly focused on helping the School of Music with suggestions of a rationale for an item sent back to them for clarification.

C. Thompson made a motion to receive the September 3, 2014 minutes, seconded by J. Kot. Motion passed unanimously.
B. **Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education**

L. Matuszewski reported that this meeting was the first of the year. They discussed their responsibilities and elected a chair. The committee focuses on three awards: Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, Excellence in Undergraduate Instruction and the David Raymond Grant for Use of Technology in Teaching. She reported that the committee adopted a time table for the Instruction and Teaching Awards and worked on the rubrics for those awards.

Birberick urged committee members to be cognizant of when the nominations are called for and encourage the submission of nominees. The nominations for these awards are initiated by students (student advisory committees, etc). There was a short discussion regarding the process itself - the guidelines are presented clearly in the nomination and selection procedures. Kot questioned how the students are being advised of the awards. The call for nominations is listed on the Provost’s website and well as an announcement in NIU Today. It was suggested that CIUE discuss how to better target students to ensure they receive the information.

A motion to receive the September 8, 2014 CIUE minutes was made by C. Thompson, seconded by T. Atkins. **Motion passed unanimously.**

C. **Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Environment**

J. Stafstrom reported that the committee elected a chair and planned their activities for the year. He said CUAE has had a strong role in the content and delivery of UNIV 101 and there was discussion about that. He added that discussion about the Common Read, which is a component of UNIV 101 also took place. There were questions about the selection of the book, etc.

Birberick added that this was the second year using the book Acts of Faith by Eboo Patel. A new book will be selected for next year. Mr. Patel did come to campus at the end of October to speak. There was a terrific turnout at his presentation and the students asked some good and insightful questions.

A motion to receive the CUAE minutes from the September 9, 2014 meeting was made by C. Thompson, seconded by J. Kot. **Motion passed unanimously.**

D. **Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum**

T. Atkins said that the minutes accurately reflect the meeting. He pointed out that one thing they would be handling soon would be the PLUS catalog language. He also spoke about a proposed new course called Local Food Management; that would enable students to work in the Communiversity Gardens which would include planting, harvesting, packaging for distribution to the target
audiences. There was discussion about the designation for it - possibly UNIV or an already existing academic unit. He said it was a valuable skill for students to acquire. There was discussion about cross-listing or ENVS designation, Atkins indicated that there would be more discussion on the topic.

C. Thompson made a motion to receive the October 9, 2014 CUC minutes seconded by P. Braun. **Motion passed unanimously.**

E. General Education Committee

September 18, 2014

C. Thompson reported that the draft of the PLUS report was discussed. She indicated the main discussion revolved around what new duties the GEC would have if the PLUS recommendation were approved. There was also discussion of changes that would be needed to the APPM. If the changes are approved - the potential changes that the GEC would need to make and that the GEC would be responsible for figuring out the pathways and would have oversight of them as well as discussion of who would be the coordinator.

Birberick added that if PLUS does get implemented it will change the role of the GEC. She indicated that she has been in conversation with Bill Pitney and Alan Rosenbaum before him about the archaic curricular structure and the need for that to change. They have been looking at how the structure may be changed to improve the process. These discussions will continue.

C. Thompson made a motion to receive the September 18, 2014 GEC minutes, seconded by P. Braun. **Motion passed unanimously.**

October 16, 2014

J. Kot reported that the majority of this meeting was discussion of the five key changes in General Education. She reported the first is to change the maximum number of courses taken from any single department from three (3) to two (2). A brief discussion regarding courses or credit hours took place. The second change was regarding Nature and Technology Domain, there were concerns raised especially from the Science chairs, who submitted a letter about adding Science into the title. The Domains were purposely set-up broad to give more flexibility. The Pathways minors were discussed, some felt they were less vigorous than current minors. The 18 credit hour required for the pathways minor was an issue. Birberick added that this issue is still evolving and more discussion and data will be coming. The credit hour reduction (39 to 33) was also discussed and passed with one abstention.
Kot said there was also discussion regarding SLOs vs. gen ed goals and how these would come together as well pathway coordinators. Some issues have not been decided yet due to financing issues. She said Kolb presented draft forms relating to how to apply for pathways – one for existing gen ed courses and one for new courses. All existing Gen Ed courses will not be automatically part of a pathway – the department will need to apply for that. All new gen ed courses will be part of a pathway. Birberick said that an implementation budget has been put together for the PLUS program which is currently with the Provost. She said there are monies available to offer support for course and pathway development, etc.

There was discussion regarding the PLUS recommendation of writing infused courses. Kot pointed out that students' writing skills has been an issue for years and there is only so much that can be done. Aase said that it is something that needs to be addressed at the university level. Stafstrom said he envisioned a partnership between professors and the writing center and the overall product would be better. Aase indicated it needs to happen early in the students' academic career. Stafstrom said addressing this through the ENGL 103 and the equivalent of 104 aims to do that.

C. Thompson made a motion to receive the October 16, 2014 GEC minutes, seconded by J. Kot. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**F. University Honors Committee**

M. Shokrani reviewed the minutes - he highlighted the enrollment numbers for Honors, which indicated that new freshmen enrollment was the highest ever. They discussed the budget. The Honors criteria was also discussed. Some changes are being proposed. Retention initiatives for Honors students were also presented. There will be handbooks for both students and faculty.

Honors Faculty Status proposal is being withdrawn pending additional work. Stafstrom added that he met with Bowers and discussed issues brought up by this committee and Bowers indicated that he and other committee members will continue to work on this.

The new business was the spring 2015 courses. The budget is $45000 which doesn't allow for the 14 proposals to all be funded and it was suggested that those with the lowest enrollment will be canceled. There was some discussion regarding basing the elimination of courses strictly on numbers. Stafstrom indicated the process was more complicated than the numbers - there are other matters that are considered.
He mentioned the Alumni of the Year Award. There will be a ceremony for this and it is hoped that the selected individual will return to campus and reconnect with Honors.

The Honors program also is offering faculty workshops. Shokrani encouraged anyone interested in learning more about offering mini sections or seminars to investigate.

C. Thompson made a motion to receive the Honors minutes from September 5, 2014 meeting, seconded by P. Braun. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**IV. Other Reports**

**A. University Assessment Panel**

M. Ayers reported that the Assessment presentation were held on the 17th. She attended the morning session and it was very interesting. The meeting prior to that was spent going over the assessment folder on how to do the assessments.

**V Old Business**

Alex Martin, Director of Academic Affairs for the Student Association was present to continue the discussion regarding the repeat policy and taking courses at community colleges. Birberick indicated the discussion began late last academic year.

Alex shared with the committee the concerns of the students had brought to him. One specific concern was not being able to repeat a course at a community college, in which a D was earned at NIU however if an F is received the student can repeat the course. He viewed this as almost rewarding students to fail in order to be able to repeat a course. Alex talked about degree progress impacts and well as financial impacts of repeating courses. Basically he just wanted to continue the discussion and see if some adjustments could be made to the policy. He said that there is an FAQ for repeats and the policy states that a course can be repeated if a grade of D or F is earned but it does not indicate that the D cannot be repeated somewhere other than NIU.

Birberick added that another issue is credit earned. Sometimes if a student earns a D in a course which requires a C or better - they repeat the course at another institution but it cannot be transferred in since credit has already been earned. Something to consider would be whether the requirement could be viewed as met without the grade from the other institution coming into play.
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Birberick indicated the curricular deans also have issue with the policy as well so there is interest in reviewing and perhaps revising the policy. She said that Alex was bringing it back to the committee’s attention so further discussion could occur and that will continue throughout the academic year.

VI Adjournment

T. Atkins made a motion, seconded by P. Braun to adjourn @ 2:46 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Ratfield
Administrative Assistant
Office of the Provost