

EPAG Minutes

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Noon-1:30 Campus Center 214

Present: Holly Barcus, Kendrick Brown, Terri Fishel, Janet Folina, Kate Hamilton, Ann Minnick, Yeukai Mudzi, Kathy Murray, Jayne Niemi, Sonita Sarker, Patrick Schmidt (Chair), Harry Waters Jr.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the February 22, 2012 Meeting. Minutes approved as circulated.

2. Trustees meeting on Friday – Advancement meets at 7:30 and Sonita is unable to attend. The topic is the campaign wrap up, so it was determined that not having an EPAG representative would be o.k.

3. Student forum on Russian studies at 4:45 on Thursday in Olin Rice 150. It was requested that if EPAG members were available to please attend the session.

4. Course change memorandum – Jayne had circulated a memo with the course change requests. Educational Studies is making several changes based on their assessment and survey of graduates. Changes were approved.

5. Discussion of allocations and department assessment plans - After discussion it was determined that in the future there should be an alignment with department assessment plans and their allocation requests. All departments will need to provide their assessment plans along with their allocations requests beginning with 2013. The form for making allocations requests will be updated to include this information. The Handbook has general guidelines, but the memo that is sent out announcing the deadline for allocations requests will have the specifics of what needs to be included. It was suggested that a draft memo for next year be prepared and that the education process should start with chairs for next year. We currently have six allocations requests and it was anticipated that there would be eight requests. The Moodle site for allocations is ready.

6. Request by student for exception – The discussion focused on a request by a student to be granted an exception for meeting the math/science graduation requirement. Jayne shared information on the communication that had been shared with the student:

- November 3, 2011 – email to student noting the need to register for a course to meet the requirement
- December 8 – individual email noting that the course was not included in her spring registration
- January 25, 2012 – review of progress toward graduation stated that math requirement was not complete

Jayne discussed the options that were available for the student to complete the requirement during the summer since the student had failed to register for a course to complete the requirement this spring. Student was requesting credit for AP work, but we don't allow AP credits. Ann also met with the student. The question was raised in terms of transfer credits and it was pointed out that transfer credits are for classes and AP is high school experience and a score while a transfer course is based on college classroom experience. The student's preferred

option is to start a class now with faculty approval and do catch up work. After discussion it was determined that the appeal would not be granted and that Jayne is asked to determine with the student her best course of action. The Chair requested that Jayne provide an update on the situation.

7. Review and edit of EPAG's response letter to the Geology Department – The letter was approved with some style suggestions to be submitted to Patrick before the final letter went out.

8. Review and edit catalog language for the 3:2 Engineering program was pushed to April.

9. Continued Discussion of Writing General Education Requirement with Adrienne Christiansen, Director of the Serie Center as guest – At the start of the conversation, there was a brief recap of the incremental steps that were under consideration as well as the issue of presenting the report to faculty without requesting any substantive changes to the requirement this year.

Adrienne began by praising Ann Minnick and Kathy Murray for their work on the writing program. Adrienne has had several conversations with Patrick to keep him informed of the work that has been done since the GERC report which was shared with faculty last spring. She reminded EPAG that there is a CST group of faculty members, the Faculty Learning Community, who are exploring issues related to the writing requirement. Adrienne is very interested in clarifying the W course. While she supports a course that focuses on writing based on a claim supported by data, she believes it is necessary to do more education and have more conversations about what we want from the writing requirement. Adrienne also recommends separating the grade for writing from the substantive content of the course. Adrienne's recommendations were:

- EPAG should convene a series of campus discussions and department meetings to gather faculty to answer the fundamental question – *what is it we really want from our writing program?*
- Bring in Jill Gladstone, who runs the Swarthmore writing program and is publishing a book on writing programs at the top 100 institutions, including Macalester, to talk about writing programs at liberal arts colleges
- Prepare an education campaign to explain what “argumentative” writing means
- At April faculty meeting walk through report on writing and what has been done. Present the ideas and start the process for a conversation and work on this issue next fall.

In the course of the conversation it was decided that EPAG would present the GERC report at the March meeting, prepare for conversations in the spring, and continue conversations in the fall. The faculty meeting is March 20th and the Department Chairs meet March 27th. Adrienne offered the Serie Center for holding faculty conversations. The Faculty Learning Committee will be completing their report in the fall.

Adjourned 1:34

Respectfully submitted by Terri Fishel, Library Director