

Educational Policy and Governance (EPAG) Committee Meeting Agenda

September 21, 2009

Present: Kendrick Brown, Pete Ferderer, Terri Fishel, Chen Gu, Terry Krier, Carleton Macy, David Martyn (Chair), Ann Minnick, Kathy Murray, Jayne Niemi, Michael Orr, Patrick Schmidt, Eric Wiertelak.

1. Welcomed new student member Chen Gu, and Michael Orr, ACE Fellow.

2. Approval of Minutes – approved with suggestion for corrections regarding Math Dept. review and CDP.

3. Math Department Review: Draft Memo to Math Dept.

Discussion focused on concern about increasing number of Computer Science upper division courses with small number of majors. It was suggested that they be encouraged to add a distinctive first year course that would generate excitement about the CS major. It was suggested that a more direct, “we disagree with the reviewers” be used as needed. David will revise the letter and share.

4. Inviting the Director of Admissions: Preparation and Questions

It was suggested that the Director of Admissions be invited to come and speak about opportunities and challenges for approximately 5 to 10 minutes in a conversation with EPAG members. It was mentioned that 25% of the incoming class planned to major in international studies, followed by English and PoliSci. One point of possible discussion is the high numbers who express interest in certain majors, and whether the numbers remain the same in application phase as in total admitted. It was pointed out that the bylaws express the need for a periodic review of academic requirements for admissions. The group would like to know what are the factors, how are students ranked, and what does the ranking mean. Another question was raised about the increase in home-schooled students. Is this a factor? It was also suggested that a question be asked regarding how admissions gathers information from depts. How do they learn what departments are doing and how do they tell their story? Is it active? Lastly, are there any attempts to shape an incoming class?

5. Biology Department Review

Concern was expressed that the review team didn't address questions that had been asked by EPAG and that specific questions from the handbook were also not addressed. While there are no corrective actions that can be taken now, the Provost can address at first and final meeting with the team for future reviews. The main concern was that EPAG concerns be included in the letter to the Biology Department so that they can become part of the permanent record. The five main concerns were

- Undergraduate/faculty research and summer compensation
- Capstone experience
- Senior Seminar

- Lack of assessment – it was suggested that clear goals and objectives be identified for the majors, demonstrate that majors are meeting goals and objectives in different ways – whether by hands-on research or other ways – research project or a capstone experience
- Prerequisites versus requirements

A recommendation was made that the EPAG response to an external review be added to future allocation requests. This procedure would help build memory into the system for future members of EPAG. Kathy will draft an additional sentence for the allocation document. Further discussion focused on the number of courses required for the major, and the lack of credit offered for the capstone experience. A final issue was raised about the major investment made in the math course for biologists. The course is mentioned as a national model, but once students take the course, they are not required to apply what they learned in other courses. David will draft a letter with the five points.

6. CDP – discussion was postponed until the next meeting, but it was suggested that External Reviews be added to the plan.

7. Institutional Research Data

Kathy shared information that IR can gather about majors, enrollments, and numbers from 10 other peer institutions. The 10 institutions have geographic diversity, similar enrollment size, and similar resources. Kathy will work with Dan Balik to identify common majors and share the list with the group. It was suggested that majors that are offered by the majority of the peer group, but not offered at Mac, also be included.

Next meeting:

- Focus on CDP
- Last 10 minutes of meeting for short issues – including course changes

An invitation will be extended to Admissions before the end of the semester

Adjourned at 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Terri Fishel