

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Meeting #3

January 15, 2003

The Academic Council met on Wednesday, January 15, 2003, in the Wichita I&II meeting rooms of the Clark Student Center. The following members were in attendance: Dr. Friederike Wiedemann, Dr. Robert Clark, Dr. Michael Collins, Dr. Ron Fischli, Dr. Martha Harvey, Dr. Norman Horner, Dr. Grant Simpson, Dr. Susan Sportsman, Dr. Roy Patin, Mr. Brandon Dawson, Dr. Michaela Smith, Ms. Darla English, Ms. Clara Latham, Ms. Barbara Merkle, and Ms. Diane Spiller.

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Wiedemann called the meeting to order and called for a motion for approval of the minutes of the October 9, 2002, meeting. Dr. Fischli made the motion for approval, Dr. Sportsman seconded, and the motion passed.

SACS 25% Requirement

Ms. English distributed a list of hours in residence required for each major as prescribed by the Southern Association of Schools Criteria for Accreditation as follows:

4.2.2 Undergraduate Completion Requirements

...The institution must clearly define what is meant by a major or an area of concentration and must state the number of credits required for each. An adequate number of hours with appropriate prerequisites must be required in courses above the elementary level.

For degree completion, at least 25 percent of semester credit hours, or the equivalent quarter hours, must be earned through instruction by the institution awarding the degree.

English Usage Exam

Mr. Dawson reported that students had expressed concern over hearing the news that of the 165 students who took the English Usage Exam in spring 2002, 17% had failed the test. Students have experienced anxiety over rumors of the test's difficulty and many have complained because they took only the required English classes in their first years of college and subsequent courses have not required that the students use the standards they learned in those English classes so they were out of practice for the English Usage Exam. Mr. Dawson proposed a one-hour review session for the test, which would include information on the criteria for grading the test.

Ms. Dana Barnett was at the meeting to address these issues. She stated that immediately before the test, 25 minutes of instruction and examples are given along with the grading procedures. She reported that test grade statistics are kept which include transfer vs. non-transfer students, majors, and GPA's. It is rare that students with good GPA's fail the test. Ms. Barnett also stated that pamphlets and a page on MSU's website with FAQ's about the exam were in use. Review sessions had been offered in the past, and will be listed on the students' notification letters. She reviewed the basic criteria used for grading the tests. A passing paper should have the following:

Thesis

Development of the thesis with examples

Clean mechanical structure

VP Comments

Students on probation who have changed their major do not have to re-take classes from their former major in which they made a D or F. Students who must re-enroll in classes may wait until the next semester the classes are available.

Dr. Wiedemann announced that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has requested an evaluation of core curriculum due in the fall of 2004.

Dr. Wiedemann reported on the Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) student evaluation system. The IDEA Center is located in Manhattan, Kansas, and provides a detailed qualitative assessment service for universities that can be tailored to fit departmental criteria and also provides comparisons to faculty on the national level. As examination of adopting this system progresses, representatives from the company will visit the MSU campus. Sample packets are available in the office of Academic Affairs, Hardin 114.

Dr. Wiedemann provided an example of the new, more simplified faculty contracts.

Addition of Special Topics Courses

Dr. Simpson provided as a motion for acceptance, a list of seminar courses for the West College of Education. These are being added because "problems courses" are not to be used for classes that meet. Dr. Horner seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Planning for Summer & Fall Schedule of Classes Publication

Ms. English provided a schedule of publication of the summer and fall schedules. The Registrar's office will provide training to administrative assistants on scheduling. Early registration is tentatively scheduled for April 7-May 6.

Learning Community

Ms. Spiller reported that in the fall 2002 semester, 24 beginning freshmen became a part of the pilot program learning community. These students lived on the same floors of the male or female residence halls and enrolled in two courses in a block schedule. Peer leaders were used as resident advisors in the residence halls. In spring 2003, 23 of the students will return. Two of the students are on academic probation, but 83% are in good standing. Students' evaluations of the program were very positive. Comments from faculty and housing were also very positive. This has the potential to be an excellent retention tool.

Ms. Spiller asked the deans to speak with their faculty to get their input on setting up pilot programs in majors. Freshman courses would be combined with College Connections, and housing will work to accommodate the students in the program. The possibility of establishing a similar program for upper-level students without the living component is being considered. Ms. Spiller will go to the College Councils to discuss these programs.

Update on Honors Curriculum Planning

Dr. Smith reported on the status of the development of the Honors Program curriculum. After a lengthy discussion, the deans decided to meet later in the week to develop a plan for honors courses.

Round Robin

Mrs. Latham reported that the new computer lab was open in the library during library hours. The lab has 18 new computers and instruction can be provided. She also reported that the library has a new outside book drop.

Mr. Dawson reported that the Student Government Association office has a new office assistant. The SGA will be writing a new honor code.

Ms. Merkle reported that the next College Day Preview is scheduled for February 15. Faculty is asked to be available at 11:15.

Dr. Harvey presented as a motion a curriculum change for BCIS 5153. The change would entail the removal of the prerequisite of organizational behavior from Operations Management 3453. Dr. Collins seconded and the motion passed.

Dr. Wiedemann thanked everyone for a successful fall term.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for February 12, 2003, in the Kiowa Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Parker

Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs