EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Friday, March 28, 2014

2:00-4:00 pm

Conference room, MCB 3-104

**East Bank Campus**

AGENDA

**Present:** Jane Phillips, Sue Wick, Lorene Lanier, Nandu Ganesh, Salman Ikramuddin, Leslie Schiff, Nikki Letawsky-Shultz, Paul Siliciano, Stefanie Wiesneski, Jim Cotner, David Kirkpatrick, Fumi Katagiri, Taylor Boyle

**Absent:** Robin Wright, Jean Underwood, Rogene Schnell, Meaghan Miller Thul

1. Approve minutes from January and February EPC Meetings

Approved.

1. Old Business

* Neuroscience department is okay with other U of M institution students being awarded CBS minors.
* (Jim Cotner) There was talk about changing EEB biology designators to ‘EEB’ rather than ‘Biol’ but this hasn’t happened yet. If this happens, all the designators need to be changed in ECAS, and then go to Leslie Schiff to push these classes through. This then needs to be changed in PCAS, and then cross-referenced in the system so students do not get confused with the new designators.
* (Lorene Lanier) Neuroscience department uses both ‘NSC’ and ‘NSCi’ course designators but Lorene would like if they were all changed to ‘NSCi’. ‘NSCi’ designators are usually used for undergrads, and ‘NSC’ designators are usually used for graduate courses, but this doesn’t apply to every course. Lorene will look into this and try to find a uniform system for all courses.

1. New Business
   * Student Services Trends and Updates (Stefanie and Nikki)

Stefanie presented data regarding students on Academic Probation (AP) (2.0 GPA or below) from the fall 2013 semester. 36 Students were removed from probation, and seven students were suspended (nine students suspended last year so there is a slow downward trend). 23 students are on a third or more consecutive term AP which is concerning.

Suspension Probation is a university-wide policy for students who are below a 2.0 GPA. SPEC and FCC need to review this policy because this threshold is a C grade GPA, which is considered an ‘average’ student. What would it look like if the bar were a GPA of 1.6.GPA? The goal of probation is to ‘save’ the students from failing. If students aren’t passing courses, they are not getting close to a degree, and students can only repeat a course once. However, advisors do start the conversation earlier with these students about whether or not they want to continue in CBS or move onto something else.

One problematic course sequence is the Chemistry sequence. Aya and Stefanie will look at the Chemistry sequence, and provide more student support there. There can also be more training for advisors about how to have this conversation with students. Student Services will be looking at new strategies to deal with students who are on Academic Probation for consecutive terms. They can adjust how they work with students and the response. But does there need to be a policy changes? Consider suspension earlier?

The system used right now is an issue because students can be in AP for consecutive terms. Should we move in a different direction for those students on consecutive terms? There needs to be some clear guidelines to tell students. Student Services can look at some models for what this will look like and share those guidelines. For example, they could look at having greater control over registration for students in AP, i.e, could lock registration, have students agree to terms, and suspend them if they break terms/agreement. Student Services will look at what other colleges are doing. Jane mentioned that at UW-Madison, students in a second consecutive term of AP take a semester off and then need to prove that they did something to better themselves before reentry is permitted.

The Physics courses have caused many issues for students as well. Could we change the requirement to one semester of Physics? In the EEB department, two semesters of physics is too much. Each department should exam the physics courses to decide whether it is necessary for their students to take two semesters of physics. Perhaps we could create a more biologically focused physics. We should have another discussion with physics department about this.

Action: Taylor will request a couple Physics textbooks for Biologists, and Physics for Life Sciences texts for the DUGs to review. DUGs should think of the pros and cons of having only one semester of physics and what kind of physics material should be covered for a student to be successful in the respective department.

* + Discussion of minors (David)

Proposals from Dean Elde about adding minors directed towards non-majors outside of the college that would allow non-majors to take courses that would be within CBS. We’d like undergrads taking CBS courses for momentary and intellectual gain. We could set up minors that wouldn’t be part of a CBS student’s curriculum. We are already doing this with the Neuroscience minor, for example. Can we group students into a minor that would serve the ‘outside’ community? We need to be clear to CBS students that they cannot take these minors.

First, each department needs to set up a minor and then the minor needs to be approved by the regents, like majors do. Each DUGs needs to set up the minor in a way that CBS Majors who no longer wish to be in the major can switch to the minor instead. What does a ‘minor’ really mean to grad schools/jobs? It means an indication of student interest in topic rather than expertise.

There are quite a few new hires right now in CBS that are told that they can develop a new course, but putting these new courses into the CBS core curriculum will be problematic long-term. However, these newly developed courses could be part of the CBS minor curriculum.

1. Announcements