Academic Standards Committee
February 8, 2006 Meeting Minutes

The meeting started at 4:00 P.M. Present were Tim Zauche, Scott White, David Krugler, Kevin Haertzen, David Kraemer, Shane Drefcinski, Frank Steck, Steve Kleisath, Dennis Ciesielski and Angela Udelhofen. Also present was Mick Viney.

The Jan. 25, 2006 meeting minutes are available on the network but the secretary forgot to bring printed copies for review. The minutes will be available at the next meeting.

Shane Drefcinski met with Provost Butts to discuss the Academic Standards Committee role in assessing general education. The Assessment Oversight committee will assess general education and we may assist it every three years. One potential assessment tool may be an alumni survey to measure general education outcomes.

Mick Viney said he has received many student concerns and statements of frustration with the requirement to take general education courses.

Mick Viney shared information regarding the Tri-State Initiative (TSI). UWP was the only system school to develop a proposal in response to the regents’ request for economic development proposals. The chancellor developed a plan to attract out-of-state students for majors that would promote economic development. The chancellor resisted UW-System and regent demands that the program be restricted to only certain majors. The plan was to provide some flexibility for students who first enroll in the TSI program, declare a major from within the TSI pool of possible majors and later change their minds because their initial choice no longer meets the students’ needs. Likewise, we needed a system to ensure that students did not “play the system” by enrolling in a TSI-major with no intent to remain in the major after they received the lower TSI tuition.

The university is trying to ensure the success of the TSI system by asking for deposits from applicants in order to get a commitment to UWP. Last year, we failed to meet our goal of 200 students because more students than expected asked for a return of their deposits after they were admitted to the university. The program admitted a total of 163 new freshman students and later expanded the TSI opportunities to transfer students as a method of meeting our first year goal of 200 students.

The university registered 150 returning TSI students for Spring 2006 and attracted eleven new students. Mick conducted interviews with those TSI students who did not return in the second semester to learn the reasons the students did not come back. The former TSI students report reasons that are similar to the reasons students generally give: boyfriend or girlfriend issues and finances.

The applicant pool for Fall 2006 is larger than last year. We have 150 more in-state student applications and the number of students applying and admitted to the TSI program has increased over last year.
Tim asked if the terms of the regents’ approval of the TSI program required that any new majors, added to the original list of approved TSI majors, be first reviewed and approved by the regents. Mick said the key criterion for adding majors to the list is that the major is related to “economic development.” He believes the university has remained true to that criterion. We can not simply accept all students, regardless of their intended major, because we are accountable to the political processes of the state.

David Krugler asked a question regarding TSI students who switch to a non-TSI major after arriving on campus. David was concerned that Mick was meeting with all of the students who change their majors and that this was usurping a faculty advising role. Mick said he was not advising students on the wisdom of the change itself, but only to assess the bona fides of whether the student originally came to UWP with the intent to major in an approved TSI major.

David Krugler stated his concern that we will suffer negative publicity if we have many students who lose their TSI eligibility. We need to work for the success of the TSI students and educate advisors so that they may effectively advise TSI students regarding their options.

Tim invited Mick to return again each year to review the TSI program with the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 P.M.

Submitted by

Scott A. White, secretary